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Exploring the Death Penalty: Perspectives, Impacts, and the Pursuit of Justice

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ABSTRACT

Using a quantitative content analysis that tracks the anti-death penalty movement across fifty years, this research looks at how their framing choices have changed. During this time, the national legal environment saw many significant doctrinal revisions, which in turn shaped and transformed the conversation around death punishment. While several have examined death sentence framing, no one has taken an empirical, systematic method that puts the speakers' frames front and centre. This project examines the following questions: (1) which frames were dominant in the anti-death penalty movement discourse in the early 1970s, during the abolitionist movement's height; (2) how were these frames displaced by subsequent changes in discursive opportunities, as anchored in major court decisions; and (3) which frames were marginalized and the social impacts of their marginalization as other frames became dominant. It also takes into account the diversity of frames held by movement participants. This review seeks to address these problems by examining the anti-death penalty frames used in a statistically significant sample of stories published in the New York Times and the Los Angeles Times between 1965 and 2014. While the findings show that the movement is now more dependent on instrumental frames than moral ones, the movement literature may have exaggerated this trend. This study sheds light on a movement that has failed to make a dent in public discourse and policy debates by examining the media's impact on cultural resonance, the relationship between movement framing and public opinion, and the differences in framing among movement factions.

Keywords: death penalty, legal environment, Pursuit of Justice, framing and public.

I. INTRODUCTION

"The current state of the debate over capital punishment is one of disagreement, controversy, and division"[1]. The reason of that argument is that each side of it seeking to demonstrate a reason that contributes to their opinion, such as the opponents are claiming that death penalty should be illegal because it is inhumane, and the same thing goes with the other side of the argument by telling that death penalty should be legal because it is a deterrent for the criminals to stop their brutal actions. A topic, such as death penalty has been controversial because the

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opponents see that this law is taking people's life which they pursue to repeal this law, but at the same time the disagreement comes from the proponents of death penalty by showing that it is crucial to keep using this law because of its results as deterrent for the criminals which it saves nation's security. Due to the controversy about the death penalty many people in different countries demanded the abolition of the death penalty, and most countries have responded to these demands by repealing the death penalty's law. Although the death penalty is banned in some countries, there is an argument that the death penalty should be legal as it acts as a deterrence for criminals.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Opponents of the death penalty argue to abolish executions due to their brutal and heinous nature, and they consider it savage and atrocious. According to [2], the death sentence is a heinous violation of human rights which should be condemned as a torture method. However, the death penalty benefits society by influencing potential criminals' actions, and according to [3], the execution of capital punishment does not infringe upon the offender's right to life, as they have already relinquished that right, therefore, the death penalty can be justified as a morally acceptable means of dealing with murderers, with the intention of benefiting society. The notion of death prevents criminals from committing the crimes, and it is a good notion to consider the situation before committing crimes. The criminals state that the fear of facing the ultimate consequences makes individuals think twice before committing a crime and works as deterrence, and according to Penal Reform International and SATIO Group of Companies (2013), The death penalty could serve as a deterrent for individuals who are considering committing offenses, as it may discourage them from engaging in criminal activities. Also, according to Penal Reform International and SATIO Group of Companies (2013), the notion that conducting an execution will deter the individual being executed from committing future offenses.

Opponents also maintain that the substantial right to life is an inherent right of every individual as it is both violent and irrevocable [4]. However, the fear of confronting death's final consequence can deter people from engaging in severe criminal activities, thereby avoiding future instances of violence. The deterrence theory may contain traces of ancient concepts like seeking revenge, its primary objective is to protect lives [6]. The opponents claim that it is normal to kill and take the life of other people as way of self-defence. According to [7][8], everyone has the right to defend themselves, even if it means taking someone else's life when their own life is in danger. While the opponents argue that it is acceptable to end another

individual's life, it is not considered as an excuse to attack people when every time some individual feels him or herself in danger as No one has the right to end someone else's life (Penal Reform International & SATIO Group of Companies, 2013)[9][10].

The final argument advanced by the opponents of death penalty is that there is an injustice in executions, and they think there will be mistakes when they judge the criminals, [11][12]. (1983) state that the identification of mistakes made by the courts in cases involving the death penalty highlights the potential for errors in determining someone's guilt. However, It is reasonable to judge these criminals and administer the death penalty, since some offenders present a significant danger to the safety of innocent people and witnesses, and the criminals make a threat for the witnesses after giving their testimony in the court [13] elucidates that, it is crucial to set up a witness protection program to ensure that the voices of victims and witnesses aren't silenced by threats and coercion from powerful accused individuals. The opponents claim that if there were not any mistakes in the job of policemen, and they had worked well, the numbers of the crimes would be reduced, and according to Penal Reform International and SATIO Group of Companies (2013), it was firmly believed that enhancing the efficiency of the police force could lead to a reduction in crime rates. However, if there was not any deterrence as the death penalty, the number of the crimes would have been increased [14][15].states that the elimination of capital punishment leads to a rise in the number of homicides.

III. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, I believe that the death penalty should be legal because it is a fundamental law to maintain security in the society. Certainly, a topic, such as the death penalty is controversial, and the opponents of the death penalty pursue to repeal this law in any way because of the several reasons that they claim about. However, with all the demands of the abolition of the death penalty it is still crucial to keep applying the capital punishment law because of crucial reasons, such as the capital punishment serves as a warning to prospective criminals, and it protects the society besides maintaining the life of the witnesses and different people.

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