

Letters

No justification

On Wednesday, Feb. 27, a jury in Albany imposed the death penalty on a murderer. This was the first time a court in Oregon made use of capital punishment since it was reinstated in 1984.

Why is it that most of the states in the U.S. have reintroduced this irreversible form of punishment after it had been abolished in the past? Is it the "Rambo-spirits" that make us feel reluctant to oppose martial measures in the enforcement of the law? Amnesty International, a worldwide "watchdog" for human rights, especially in prisons, repeatedly spoke out against capital punishment. Too often has it been abused throughout the world, as it could be an acceptable punishment in a civilized society.

Life in society is not like war. If somebody kills a person, he sure is an enemy of society, but there is no justification to kill this person in return. Capital punishment doesn't offer a cure for any problems in society, it only satisfies cheap feelings of revenge. As vigorous the pain of relatives of a victim may be, killing the murderer doesn't make an assassination undone.

When Mr. Robert Badinter, the French minister of justice, abolished the use of the guillotine in French prisons, a long fight against simplistic arguments had preceded this step. Don't let us listen to those who suggest the death penalty is a sign of a strong, vigilant

society. It simply is bad "Wild West" style.

Dietmar Adolf
Student

Nothing sexual

In response to Eric Patterson's letter "Unfair label," I can only think he did not read the discussions on rape very carefully. No one is going to deny that male rape occurs and that it is appalling. However, to cite as a reason that women are "as sexual, if not more sexual than men" scares me to death. It is just that attitude that perpetuates the problem.

THERE IS NOTHING SEXUAL ABOUT RAPE! It is a violent crime committed against someone to prove power. Simply using the same equipment does not make sex any more like rape than chopping firewood is like ax murdering someone.

What frightens me even more is your attitude toward date rape. Take the example of a woman (statistically it usually is a woman) who invited an acquaintance in for coffee and he rapes her. Are you saying this never happens or that the woman really wanted it and therefore feels guilty? In the first case, you are an idiot, and in the latter, you are dangerous, so it would be helpful to know.

In either case, Mr. Patterson, I think it would be wise to stay as far from you as possible. You are more of a "potential rapist" than you know.

Debbie Sokol
English

Cultural deceit

I find myself wondering about a phrase I often hear used by advocates of abortion. They speak of a woman's "right to an abortion." Where did this "right" come from? From the courts? Is it moral because it is legal? If so, then a white man had the same sort of "right" to own black people earlier in our history.

Does the "right" to an abortion come from nature? That is, is it a woman's right to abort her child simply because she can do so? One can then argue, as did the Marquis de Sade, that because nature made man stronger than woman, it is a man's right to do whatever he pleases to her. Morality becomes a matter of "what is, is right."

Perhaps God has given women the right to kill their children before they are born. This suggests the sort of god worshipped in ancient Palestine, whose worship included placing living babies on to a bed of coals, where they burned to death.

I suggest that the "right" to an abortion is not a right at all, but rather an inhuman taking of life that our culture has been deceived into accepting as a moral alternative to giving birth.

We do not get to choose whether it is right or wrong to kill an unborn child — only on which side of morality we will stand on the issue.

William Moore
Music School

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