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What is the Reason Behind Very Few Women Receiving Capital Punishment?

It is important to highlight the fact that death sentencing and death row rates are lower for women than for men (Death Penalty Information Center). Actual executions are very rare. Since the act being implemented in the United States of America (though at the time it was colonized by England) beginning in 1632, there have been only 575 documented executions of female offenders.

The main reason why these numbers are so low is that women are less likely to commit serious crimes (as well as crimes in general). Let us take a closer look at statistical data:

- women account for approximately one in ten murders (10%)
- women account for only one in one hundred people that are executed (9%)

However, there is a belief that female criminals are often spared because there is a gender bias within the system. In other words, there is some sort of chivalry when it comes to the way in which jurors see women who have committed serious crimes. Some of them are convinced that women were either emotionally unstable when they were doing a horrific thing, or they were under the influence of others (Oliver 2016). For this reason, it is sometimes believed that women should not be held accountable for what they did. Thus, they should be spared from death row. The picture of a weak and sad woman is quite often painted in court, which makes it easier to convince a jury that a woman suffers from emotional distress.

Another aspect to take into consideration is the way in which a female criminal presents herself. What this means is that women who act feminine and motherly are more likely to be viewed in a

positive light by a jury, while those who seem manly and aggressive are typically viewed as a 'threat' to society, which is the reason why they may get a harsher sentence.

Taking everything into consideration, statistical data proves that very few women receive capital punishment, even though one cannot be 100% sure that the reason for that is based purely on gender. The most important thing to take into consideration is that there are fewer women who commit crimes which perhaps tells us a lot about the factors that lead somebody to breaking the law. Another aspect to highlight is the necessity of capital punishment in today's society and the possibility of getting rid of this form of punishment once and for all. A lot of people are convinced that being sentenced to death row is not as harsh as spending the rest of your life in prison thinking about the crime you have committed and the people that you have wronged.

Works Cited

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