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## Immanuel Kant And Capital Punishment

Immanuel Kant is the philosopher chosen for this paper for their philosophy on morals, what is right and wrong, whether the judgement of what is right or wrong, the right choice, and freedom to preserve one's own happiness. His philosophy most likely has a part on whether it is still used today, whether it be with us, the people, or in political issues.

Immanuel Kant is a philosopher whose ideas revolved mostly around morality, that a person's actions or a person's judgement on said action determines if it is something to be judged with a "good will" or whether it interferes with a person's rights depending on the action or judgement. Kant refers to this as the "Good Will", because in Kant's way of thinking, it does not refer to a person's actions or even from an act of God but the good will itself. It Kant goes even further in his ideas or theories that it could even include a person's humanity and desires. One of his theories that seemed fascinating to me is his thoughts on respect. He views respect as a feeling not being depended on an outer influence. Kant's ideas are something that can really be thought upon that can and probably without a doubt, be still used today as said before.

One of the contentious issues that have been a big part of controversy in Texas, as well as other states, where the death penalty is legal and used as punishment for serious offences such as murder. In recent events for example, Rodney Reed, that is currently on death row, has gained millions of signatures on petitions even getting the attention of celebrities such as Kim Kardashian, Rihanna, and even one of the presidential candidates, Bernie Sanders, calling upon the Governor of Texas, Greg Abbot, to halt the execution. That all and current evidence must be looked over once again in order to make a decision on whether its right or wrong to truly decide a person's life over a crime.

Capital Punishment or the death penalty, have been used for many years dating back in history for millennia. Being used as punishment for wrongdoings that seemed fit for criminals that have done inconceivable acts. Nowadays in the modern area, capital punishment is only reserved for certain specific crimes with the most common being murder and terrorism and in some countries, even extending the crimes ranging from adultery to drug trafficking. Throughout the years, public opinion about the death penalty seemed to be on the fence, probably depending on the situation or crime. For crimes that were too severe that it was felt that a sentence of life to jail wasn't enough, it was assumed the best course of action would be the death penalty, however on the other hand, people have been questioning that if this punishment is a violation of a person's right to life.

A person's right to life is a moral belief that every person has the right to live and should not be killed by another person or in this case, the government. Such is the same mentality, for example, when it comes to another contentious issue being the abortion of an unborn baby. Whether it was right for a mother to abort her child if she was a victim of rape when the unborn baby has been gifted the chance of life. These issues have changed drastically over the years pertaining to public opinion and have garnered vast opinions changing different laws, how it should be performed, etc. Kant's philosophy pertains to these issues, for Kant believes in equality in terms of crimes.

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Kant exemplifies a pure retributivism about capital punishment: murderers must die for their offense, social consequences are wholly irrelevant, and the basis for linking the death penalty to the crime is “the Law of Retribution,” the ancient maxim, *lex talionis*, rooted in “the principle of equality .”

Kant’s view on capital punishment seems very ironic considering how his theories and views are mostly about a person’s character and actions, how well they could choose right over wrong, to know which is and in what scenario, but then it also makes sense for he believes in good morality that people must strive for it in order to attain that “good will”. That this is something that is attained by choosing the right thing, because it is the right thing to do. If you choose to do otherwise, you are basically walking in the wrong path and that your personality or what you chose is the main reason for doing so and because of this, follows consequences.

In terms of the present, as said before, the death penalty varies between person on what their opinion about it is. Again, the death penalty now, at least in the United States, is only considered for extreme cases such as murder and terrorism. When comparing Kant and own opinion, when it comes to these cases, as much as it does seem very cruel, it does seem like it would be the best form of punishment? Where the person did something so inconceivable such as taking a life or multiple lives, that the same type of action would be brought back to the person. Of course, this all depends on evidence and if it is clear, that the person who has done the act is clearly found guilty, but what about people who are accused of murder, yet do not have the full evidence to fully support the claim.

The death penalty is without a doubt, the last form of punishment to be given, so with that said, many steps must and should be taken to ensure whether the punishment is justified. First off, well did the person in question do the crime? Were there any witnesses? Was he the one that did the crime or did the person pay someone else, a hitman, to do the job? Many questions should be taken into consideration and all evidence looked over or seek even more evidence to ensure what the court and jury chooses is right. After all, the person in question is a living being that may or may not be falsely accused and doesn’t that person also have a right to life as well?

In the end, what it mainly comes down to, is the type of crime and the situation. If we were to have Kant be in the jury, I believe he would also do the common sense. He would ask the same questions said before, look at all the evidence and determine if its justified. Nothing would change from his views that he thought about many years ago, it still applies today even though it’s a hard pill to swallow, where the saying goes, “if you can’t do the time, don’t do the crime.”