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**Exploratory Paper**

The three topics I decided to explore for this project are the continued use of the death penalty in the United States, child trafficking and the torture used by governments. These are the 3 issues I decided to pursue further because they are all enormous issues that deal with morally upsetting topics. We live in a world today where many of the social issues that were not given enough attention or even outright ignored earlier in time, are now being brought up constantly to be discussed. It is no longer taboo or seen as too deep to openly question some of the seedy things occurring in our country. With the advent of the internet and social media so many more problems are being brought to the forefront so that everyone can get information and join the discussion.

The topic of the death penalty in the U.S. is constantly being debated and will always be a hot topic for as long as its use is continued in this country. The major issue that comes up is the fact that the United States is the only well developed country in the world that still a practices this archaic method of punishment. Taking the life of someone as a punishment for a crime to me seems like something designated for the middle ages. However, a majority of the county still legally practices this method. 31 states in fact are still putting prisoners on death row. There are numerous reasons why the death penalty is an outdated and inefficient method to be used. The biggest issue of all is the chance that an innocent person is accidentally executed. New evidence always has the chance to prove a person formerly convicted as guilty, as actually being wrongly accused. Now if they are serving a normal jail sentence they can be released from prison and be thankfully free. But what if that person was put on death row? What if they were killed by lethal injection prior to their proof of innocence? Then do we hold the government responsible? Are they held to the same standards since, theoretically they just committed the murder of an innocent human? This small chance of accidental murder should be enough to abolish the use of capital punishment. The United States wants to be seen as the most advanced country in the world yet we are still punishing our prisoners as if we’re living in ancient times.

The issue of child trafficking is one that bothers me very much. It is a problem that hasn’t necessarily become any better but for some reason is one that seems to be ignored almost entirely. One of the problems is that many people in the United States don’t think the trafficking occurs in their home country. They see it as an issue that happens in foreign countries and even though it is still a major dilemma, if the public doesn’t believe it is happening in their backyard they won’t be able to truly muster up the caring that is necessary. The United States is actually one of the biggest places for kidnapped children to be transported to. (citation) When most people think of trafficked children they only think of the sexual trade as a destination for these victims. However, these victims are also forced to work in restaurants, sweatshops or even as illegal soldiers. It is tragic when adults feel like they have no choice but to take on these soul crushing lines of work, but it is absolutely terrifying to think that innocent children are being forced into these awful things. Being taken against their will to do these things is something that we should be constantly paying attention to and actively trying to prevent no matter how difficult.

The third topic I decided to do further research into is the torture acts committed by governments. The idea that such people as prisoners are being tortured to try and extract information from them is astounding. It is already awful that lesser developed countries have used torture in modern times, but to know that the United States and other developed nations that get assistance from the U.S. have also actively used torture as a means to get information or as crowd control techniques is terrible. Not only are torture methods used by higher powers such as armies, but lower level law enforcements have also engaged in such things. One of the most astonishing uses of torture is its occasional use by police detectives to try and gain a confession from suspects. This can result in false confessions. This was the case when a man named Damon Thibodeaux confessed to murdering his wife. It was later found when his confession had extreme inconsistencies compared to actual evidence, that he made a false confession since he was thoroughly interrogated through the night and deprived of sleep and food. When we factor in the idea that police brutality can also be seen as a type of torture then we’re looking at a large number of cases constantly occurring in the United States. Torture has no place in this modern world, especially in a country that wants to be known seen in the forefront of ethical nations.

The topic I decided to do further research into is the use of the death penalty in the United States. This topic really struck a chord with me when I was reading sources on its use and effects. Seeing how other countries that aren’t even close to being on our level of opulence have banished capital punishment was really what did it for me. I see how often people in power want to discuss how great of a nation this is and how ahead of other countries we are in terms of issues of social justice. However we still take part in a disgusting practice as outdated and ineffective as the death penalty, so really how advanced can we really be?