

Tune in

1 Before you listen, think about the death penalty. Does it exist in your country? What sort of crimes are usually considered serious enough for the death penalty?



2 Now listen to Michael Swarovski, a candidate for the Senate in the State of Texas. In this radio interview he gives his views on the death penalty. Is he for or against it?

3 What do these numbers on the tape refer to?

32 500 2 20 100,000 3 million

4 Here are some points on the other side of the argument. What does Mr Swarovski say about each of these points?

- a We must not kill a person just to save money.
- b A killer can be treated by a psychologist and become a normal person.
- c Revenge is not the same as justice. We must look for the right punishment.
- d While a prisoner is alive, he has hope.
- e The death penalty does not stop killers.

Key Language

Look at this sentence from the tape.

"Would you shoot the clerk?"

You can see that this is a question, but in fact Mr Swarovski is not expecting an answer. This is called a **rhetorical question**. The meaning is *You wouldn't shoot the clerk.*

5 Listen to the tape again. Can you hear four more rhetorical questions?

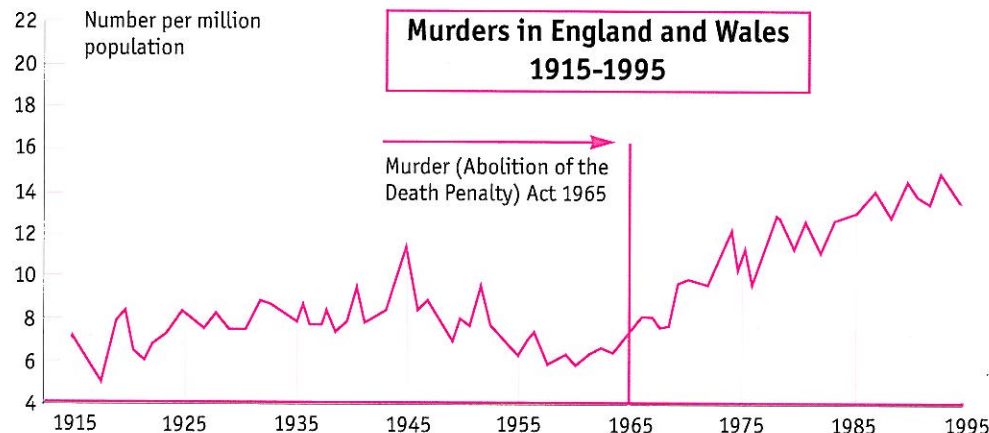
6 Now put these ideas into the form of rhetorical questions.

- a We should learn from experience.
- b There are enough people in prison already.
- c Murderers don't deserve to live in peace.
- d We can't forgive people like this.
- e This is not the best way to solve the problem.
- f You wouldn't actually do the execution yourself.

Now turn to page 102 for more practice!

Over to you

7 Britain gave up using the death penalty in 1965. In the argument for and against this issue, what does the table below mean to you?

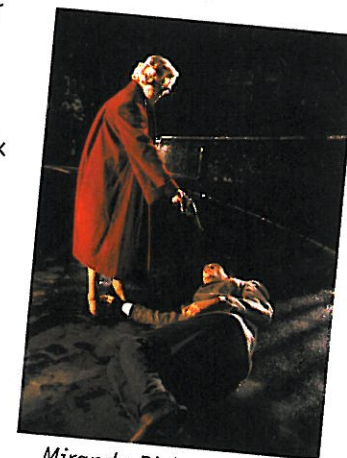


8 The courts sometimes make mistakes, and innocent people are found guilty. Is this an important point in the argument?

9 Some people say the death penalty is against the constitution of the USA, because the constitution forbids "cruel or unusual" punishments. Do you agree that the death penalty is cruel?

10 In different states of the USA, different methods of execution are used, eg. hanging, the electric chair, lethal injection, shooting by firing squad, lethal gas. Which do you find the most and the least acceptable?

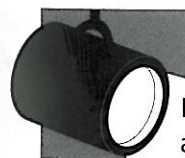
11 The last woman to be executed in Britain was Ruth Ellis. She was hanged in 1955. She had shot her lover because he had another girlfriend. It was a "crime of passion". Do you think the death penalty should be used for this type of crime?



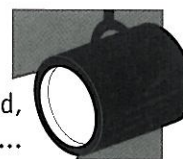
Miranda Richardson as Ruth Ellis in the film *Dance With A Stranger*

Write about it

12 You are writing a screenplay for a film about a murder. Write the dialogue between a man who is going to be executed tomorrow morning, and a priest who is visiting him. Start like this:



FATHER PATRICK: How are you feeling, Bruce?



BRUCE: Not too good, Father. I don't want to...

13 Write a letter to Mr Swarovski, either supporting or opposing his views on the death penalty. Start like this:

*Dear Mr Swarovski,
I heard your interview on the radio this morning.
I would just like to tell you...*