

THE DEATH PENALTY  
IN AMERICA

AN ANTHOLOGY

EDITED BY

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## PREFACE

Despite the wealth of discussion that the death penalty has inspired in this country during the past several years, no volume has been published in which all the issues are presented against the background of the latest available research. Unfortunately, much of the information necessary for a thorough study of capital punishment in the United States has never been published or else it is inaccessible except to the scholar with a major research library at his disposal. In preparing this volume, I have been able to examine most of the published and unpublished legal, criminological, penological, and psychological literature touching the subject. The book has been designed to allow the partisans and the authorities on both sides of disputed questions to speak for themselves. The result, I hope, has been to bring under one cover a selection of the best recent writing on capital punishment and, through the footnotes, Index, and Bibliography, a guide to its farthest reaches.

Several principles of selection and organization have been in my mind while writing and editing the book. First of all, a deliberate effort has been made to avoid any extensive discussion of the controversial cases of Cary Chessman, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, and Sacco and Vanzetti. I have not, for example, even mentioned them in my essay in Chapter Eight on errors of justice, though one of the reasons these cases have become notorious throughout the world is that in each instance massive injustice was committed. The intrinsic importance of these cases has understandably enough, permitted them to obtrude upon almost every discussion of capital punishment in America. The powerful emotions aroused and the far-reaching political and social consequences of each case have usually

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