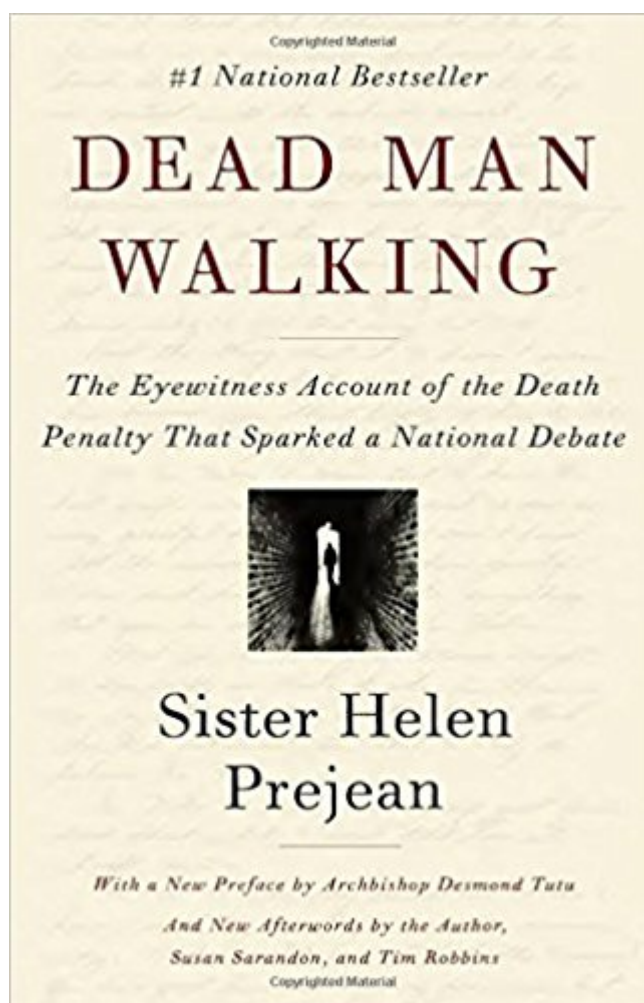


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Dead Man Walking: The Eyewitness Account Of The Death Penalty That Sparked A National Debate



Synopsis

In 1982, Sister Helen Prejean became the spiritual advisor to Patrick Sonnier, the convicted killer of two teenagers who was sentenced to die in the electric chair of Louisiana's Angola State Prison. In the months before Sonnier's death, the Roman Catholic nun came to know a man who was as terrified as he had once been terrifying. She also came to know the families of the victims and the men whose job it was to execute "men who often harbored doubts about the rightness of what they were doing." Out of that dreadful intimacy comes a profoundly moving spiritual journey through our system of capital punishment. Here Sister Helen confronts both the plight of the condemned and the rage of the bereaved, the fears of a society shattered by violence and the Christian imperative of love. On its original publication in 1993, *Dead Man Walking* emerged as an unprecedented look at the human consequences of the death penalty. Now, some two decades later, this story "which has inspired a film, a stage play, an opera and a musical album" is more gut-wrenching than ever, stirring deep and life-changing reflection in all who encounter it.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A Catholic nun's compelling polemic against capital punishment. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Prejean, a Catholic nun, has written a moral indictment of capital punishment. This book is the result of her visits to two death-row inmates at the Louisiana State Penitentiary where she serves as a

spiritual advisor. Although she documents the inequalities of the judicial system that has condemned these men, her main point is that if society is to inflict this extreme punishment, it should, itself, be perfect. Needless to say, it is not. Opponents of the death penalty will find reinforcement for their cause here. The general reader, however, will probably find the book too narrow in focus, too self-righteous. Prejean writes well, but her material will not attract the wide audience she wants. An optional purchase.- Frances Sandiford, Green Haven Correctional Facility Lib., Stormville, N.Y. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This true story was very awakening. But I found it cumbersome to plod through all the authenticating details that the author provided. I think that's why I usually prefer fiction. The story is an interesting one, and although I sympathize with the cause in general, I was not able to sympathize with the subject character in this book. The basic premise was certainly thought-provoking.

When I first seen the movie for "Dead Man Walking" a few years ago I was captivated right away by this story of Redemption! I must say however, the book is so much better because in all honesty that blended the stories of Patrick Sonnier & Robert Lee Willie who was also sentenced to die in the electric chair. This Book has completely changed my view on Capital Punishment. I used to believe in the "Eye for an Eye" Scripture when I read this book it got me to thinking, would Jesus Christ if he were living on earth today would he pull the switch or inject these poisons into someones body? I don't think Christ would do that! I'm not saying that I don't understand the victim's family's rage and want for revenge because I do. My point is this though Yes, Patrick Sonnier & Robert Lee Willie committed some horrible crimes and I in no way condone what these two men did, however I have learned things about Capital Murder trials that it is more expensive to execute a prisoner than life imprisonment is. Sister Helen Prejean is a wonderful writer and she draws you into the book. I felt like I was there with Patrick Sonnier & Robert Lee Willie. This book has completely changed everything on my outlook on the subject of the Death Penalty here in the United States and now I do think it should be abolished. These are just my opinions of course, but if you have ever been torn over the Death Penalty I recommend this book to anyone who can remain open to both sides read this book! The decision is yours on whether you will let it change your heart or not! My heart has changed!

Best thing I've read on the death penalty. This draws a careful and kindly picture of how the death

penalty affects the criminal, the criminal's family members and his/her victim(s), how it is applied in an unjust manner and with racial malice. It often executes innocents and many whose guilt is questionable, and it is essentially useless and backward for a society that we would like to think of as civilized. It cannot be shown to provide closure for either the victims or society. Vengeance is really the only reason for allowing it, and that reflects poorly on our nation. A true sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole would be a more humane solution, reflect better on our country, eliminate killing innocents and relieve the pain and agony felt by the accused and his/her family members. Essentially, it most certainly is cruel and unusual punishment for the 21st century.

This book gripped me from the opening page. I had not ever questioned myself much about the death penalty until this most excellently written book. I praise Sister Prejean for sharing her heart and life with the suffering, the suffering of not one, but many. This book will forever be embedded in me, and especially since I am going to be playing her in our community theater in six weeks. I am honored to be portraying this strong woman of faith. I wish everyone would read this story.

So far so good. I saw the Movie and had to get the book to read. Thanks. Judy Larson

I met Sr. Helen when I was in graduate school becoming a social worker. At the beginning of her two hour seminar, I thought I was a silent proponent of the death penalty. By the end of the meeting, was (and am) a vocal activist against it.

It was a great read. If I was to get a chance to read it again, I would. The author did a great job at directing the reader towards the social truths regarding the death penalty. Sadly we have many people who face the death penalty daily. This book, if read by many, will definitely open the closed eyes of the public if we unite together to push toward the abolition of capital punishment. We are never in the position to charge someone to the death seat. Murder in an holistic view is a crime. When we force to go after another's life, it only perpetuates crime.

I read this book after seeing the movie for the first time. The movie features a composite of characters and is well edited. The book is more of a memoir, so the story rambles at times. However, the story is a fascinating view of our capital punishment controversy. It is well balanced in that it presents both the victims' and the murderers' side, along with the reactions of the author. Sister Prejean was basically thrown into the position of counseling prisoners on death row, and the

reader learns the facts along with her. It is a thoughtful book, and it is worth reading regardless of your beliefs about capital punishment.

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