

Table 2.55

Reported reasons for favoring the death penalty for persons convicted of murder

United States, 1991, 2000, 2001, and 2003

Question: "Why do you favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?"

Reason for favoring	1991	2000	2001	2003
An eye for an eye/they took a life/fits the crime	40%	40%	48%	37%
Save taxpayers money/cost associated with prison	12	12	20	11
Deterrent for potential crimes/set an example	8	8	10	11
Depends on the type of crime they commit	6	6	6	4
Fair punishment	6	6	1	3
They deserve it	5	5	6	13
They will repeat their crime/keep them from repeating it	4	4	6	7
Biblical reasons	3	3	3	5
Serve justice	2	3	1	4
Don't believe they can be rehabilitated	1	1	2	2
If there's no doubt the person committed the crime	NA	NA	2	3
Would help/benefit families of victims	NA	NA	1	2
Support/believe in death penalty	NA	NA	6	2
Life sentences don't always mean life in prison	NA	NA	2	1
Relieves prison overcrowding	NA	NA	2	1
Other	10	10	3	4
No opinion	3	3	1	2

Note: See Note, table 2.51. This question was asked only of the respondents who answered "yes, in favor" to the question presented in table 2.51. Percents may add to more than 100 because up to two responses were recorded from each respondent. For a discussion of public opinion survey sampling procedures, see Appendix 5.

Source: The Gallup Organization, Inc., *The Gallup Poll* [Online]. Available: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/tb/religvalue/20030603c.asp> [June 10, 2003]. Table adapted by SOURCEBOOK staff. Reprinted by permission.

<http://www.albany.edu/sourcebook/pdf/t255.pdf>