

Table 2.56

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

United States, 1991 and 2003

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

Reason for opposing	1991	2003
Wrong to take a life	41%	46%
Punishment should be left to God/religious belief	17	13
Person may be wrongly convicted	11	25
Does not deter people from committing murder	7	4
Possibility of rehabilitation	6	5
Unfair application of death penalty	6	4
Need to pay/suffer longer/think about their crime	NA	5
Depends on the circumstances	NA	4
Other	16	3
No opinion	6	4

Note: See Notes, [tables 2.51](#) and [2.55](#). This question was asked only of the respondents who answered "no, not in favor" to the question presented in [table 2.51](#). 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.