

WHEN CRIME VICTIMS REVENGE

By Christopher Allen Balmer

First and foremost, this article is not an attempt to undermine victims of criminal acts. This article is to bring reality to the table for individuals to recognize the impact that their pain may have on others. I am leaning more towards crimes involving murder and the death penalty as a sense of alleged "closure" to the victims of murder.

Families that are victims to murder rely on the American justice system for the most part as a way to gain closure. Watching the person, who killed one of your loved ones, slowly die, strapped down to a table, in my eyes isn't a sense of closure. It's more so vengeance and a personal feeling of having the state murder a man or woman you couldn't murder. Crime victims never have closure, no matter what course of action they take. The thoughts of losing a loved one still flash through their minds and the hateful feelings still remain dormant inside their hearts. Many Americans stand strong with the belief that capital punishment (the death penalty) is an avenue that allows crime victims to receive closure for a family member lost. The death penalty is a way of satisfying the hateful feelings and the vengeance inside a person.

What is really backward is the fact that the crime victims claim it was wrong to kill their loved ones but it's absolutely correct for a crime victim to sit behind bulletproof glass watching the state murder another human being. Some crime victims cheer or clap after the warden pronounces the inmate dead. Directly supporting my accusation of the crime victims' personal satisfaction of seeking vengeance through the assistance of the state rather than seeking personal closure amongst themselves and God.

I have a lot of respect for a crime victim and his or her family to look at the same person who killed their loved one and say, "I forgive you for what you have done." *This* is closure! For those families who were crime victims to sit and eagerly wait for the day to watch a man die at the hands of the state is sick-minded and goes against the goals of seeking closure.

Closure starts with you and you only. No other human being can bring a sense of closure to your doorstep nor is allowing the anger, rage, frustrations, and seeking vengeance going to provide closure either. Sadly, crime victims don't even understand that the state collects money from them for being victims. The crime victims aren't provided a dime of the money that states around the country collect for victim compensation from inmates.

Every state prisoner incarcerated in the state of Pennsylvania is mandated under *Act 85 of 2002* to pay a fee to the Crime Victim's Compensation Fund (CVCF) and the Victim/Witness Service Fund. The fees are imposed *as part of the court costs for each sentencing event*. Moneys that are to be forwarded to crime victims are being deducted from inmates' accounts at ten percent (10%) of all incoming funds and sent to the court. The same system that promotes

justice for crime victims is capitalizing off those who suffer in order to keep the system running. View 18 P.S. § 11.1101 - Act 85 of 2002 of Pennsylvania law to see for yourself how much the court system really cares about crime victims.

Outlined in a policy provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections entitled DC-ADM 005 - Collection of Inmate Debts, it reads as follows in Section D.2.b.: “payments of 10% of all inmates’ account balance and monthly income for the crime victims compensation and victim/witness service funds, provided that the inmate has a balance that exceeds \$10.00”. Now in Section D.3.: “The business office shall send the funds deducted to the county probation department or other designated agency”.

This is a second source of proof that moneys collected for crime victims are collected and are forwarded right to the courts rather than to the crime victims themselves. Each and every one of us need to recognize that we, as Americans, are not recognized as a part of the state. If a criminal act is done to you today, the state will prosecute the offense and then collect the benefits from the criminal proceedings. When a person reviews the different classifications of law, you will recognize that public law and private law focus on two different interests. Public law more so focuses on the rights *in rem* which literally means a right in respect of a thing. Private law more so focuses on the rights *in personam*. That is a right against or in respect to a person. When one commits a crime, he or she goes against absolute duties which are those imposed by law to protect the social interest in the peace, order and well-being of the community. They don’t protect individual interests against infringement. Relative duties on the other hand are those recognized by law to protect the interest of a particular individual. The Rules of Criminal Law impose absolute duties as explained above and Rules of Civil Law impose relative duties.

Therefore, the state is not at all representing the interests of individuals who suffer from criminal acts in a criminal proceeding. The state is representing their own system because a person has violated social interest.

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