

## Films on the Death Penalty

Most of these films can be obtained from your local video store or ordered directly from the production company. The PADP also has a number of videos that are available on loan; contact Jessie Cohn at 202-544-0200, ext. 244 for details.

**“After Innocence.”** This documentary tells the true life, compelling stories of exonerated prisoners. It examines the trials and tribulations waiting for them upon their release from prison. It also examines the U.S. justice system and the flaws that led to the wrongful conviction of these men. 2005. Check [www.afterinnocence.com](http://www.afterinnocence.com) for screenings in your area. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“The Closure Myth.”** This film traces one woman's dramatic transformation from being consumed by desire to seek the death penalty as revenge for her daughter's murderer to her realization that only in forgiveness would she find closure. 2007. 43 minutes.

**“Dead Man Walking.”** This acclaimed film traces the relationship between a death row inmate and the nun to whom he turns for spiritual guidance in the days leading up to his scheduled execution. 1995. 122 min. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“Deadline.”** This documentary explores two of the most significant, yet unexamined, events in the history of American capital punishment - the abolition of the death penalty in 1972 and the momentous debate in Illinois in 2002 over clemency for all of the state's death row inmates. The film reveals the inner workings of these events and leads to profound questions about America's approach to crime and punishment. To purchase the DVD or to set up a screening, log onto [www.deadlinethemovie.com](http://www.deadlinethemovie.com). You can also download a discussion guide from the website. 2004. 90 min. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“The Empty Chair.”** Four stories of murder victim's families reliving the crimes and confronting the loss of loved ones. Reactions range from revenge and desire for punishment to searching for forgiveness and healing. With commentary by Sister Helen Prejean. 2003. 52 min. [www.justiceproductions.org](http://www.justiceproductions.org)

**“The Execution of Wanda Jean.”** An unflinching investigation of the role that poverty, mental health, race, and sexuality play within the criminal justice system. Wanda Jean Allen was an attractive young woman with what many considered to be an appealing personality. She was also an African-American lesbian whose low IQ indicated borderline retardation. By the age of 29, Wanda Jean had killed twice - and would become one of the most controversial death-row inmates in recent history. 2004. 90 minutes. [www.hbo.com/docs/programs/wanda/](http://www.hbo.com/docs/programs/wanda/) This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“The Exonerated.”** Susan Sarandon and Danny Glover star in this film based upon the stage play of the same name. Actual court depositions, transcripts, letters, and interviews comprise the chilling and moving script that chronicles the stories of six wrongly convicted death row inmates. 2005. 90 minutes. This film can be purchased directly from AIUSA at [www.amnestyusa.org/abolish](http://www.amnestyusa.org/abolish). This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“The Green Mile.”** Set on Death Row in a Southern prison in 1935, this is the story of the cellblock’s head guard, who develops a poignant, unusual relationship with one inmate who possesses a magical gift that is both mysterious and miraculous. 1999. 188 min. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“Interview with an Executioner.”** This documentary goes behind the scenes in a Mississippi Penitentiary during the 14 days leading up to the execution of Edward Earl Johnson. Don Cabana, the executioner, recounts the chilling experience of the execution of Johnson, who maintained his innocence until the end with his final words - “I want you to know exactly what you are doing when you execute me. I want you to remember every last detail, ‘cause I am innocent.” Copies of the video may be obtained from Terry McCaffrey, 11154 La Paloma Dr., Cupertino, CA 95014. Cost is \$12 including postage.

**“The Life of David Gale.”** A respected death penalty opponent, finds himself on death row for the rape and murder of fellow activist Constance Hallaway. With only three days before his scheduled execution, Gale, in an effort to reveal the truth, agrees to give reporter Bitsey Bloom an exclusive interview that ends with a terrible discovery. 2003. 131 min. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“Monster.”** Actress Charlize Theron stars as serial killer Aileen Wuornos, who was executed in Florida on October 9, 2002. Director Patty Jenkins chronicles the love story between Wuornos and Selby Wall, played by Christina Ricci, and the transformation Wuornos undergoes from being a prostitute and victim of abuse, to contemplating suicide, to becoming a cold-blooded murderer. 2003. 109 min. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“Not In Our Name: Dead Man Walking – The Concert.”** This special edition DVD/CD includes never-before-seen footage from the award-winning concert featuring artists such as Eddie Vedder and Steve Earle. Included is the soundtrack CD for the *Dead Man Walking* film (see above). 2006. Available from <http://activemusic.org/>. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“Race to Execution.”** By Rachel Lyon, this film follows the stories of two death row inmates and exposes how race infects America’s death penalty system. Much more information at [www.pbs.org/independentlens/racetoexecution/](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/racetoexecution/). 2006.

**“The Religious Community Speaks Against the Death Penalty.”** Produced by the American Friends Service Committee’s Religious Organizing Against the Death Penalty Project, this video includes Dennis Brutus, South African poet and activist; Rev. Bernice King, Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.’s daughter and author of *Hard Questions, Heart Answers*; Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking*; Millard Fuller, Founder and President, Habitat for Humanity International; Rev. Kobutsu Malone, Zen Buddhist Priest; Marshall Dayan, Jewish activist against the death penalty; and Marietta Jeagar-Lane, with Murder Victims’ Families for Reconciliation. 2002. 31 min.

**“The Thin Blue Line.”** Through the use of reenactments of the crime, photo montages, film clips, and interviews, this is a reconstruction and investigation of the 1976 murder of a Dallas policeman and the subsequent arrest and sentencing to death of a man who claims to be innocent. 1988. 101 min. This film is available through Blockbuster or Netflix.

**“Too Flawed to Fix.”** A powerful documentary that explores and exposes the irreparable flaws in the criminal justice system by examining the 13 individuals who were wrongfully convicted and released from Illinois' death row. 2002. 1 hr. and 15 min. versions available. To order the video, email: [tooflawedtofix@hotmail.com](mailto:tooflawedtofix@hotmail.com). A study guide is also available.

**“The Trials of Daryl Hunt.”** This documentary offers a deeply personal story of a wrongfully convicted man who spent twenty years in prison in North Carolina for a crime he did not commit. 2006. 106 minutes. <http://www.breakthrufilms.org/> This film will soon be available through Blockbuster or Netflix.