

A Broken System: Error Rates in Capital Cases

State Report Card

WYOMING, 1974-1995

History

First Death Sentence	1974
First Direct Appeal	1977
First Consensual Execution	NONE
First Non-Consensual Execution	1992

Sentences and Executions

Total Number of Death Sentences	30
Total Number of Executions	1
Percentage of Death Sentences Carried Out	3%

Error Rates

State Direct Appeal

Number Reviewed on Direct Appeal	9
Number Reversed on Direct Appeal	6
Percentage Reversed on Direct Appeal	67%
Number Awaiting Direct Appeal	21
Percentage Awaiting Direct Appeal	70%
Number Forward to State Post-Conviction	3

State Post-Conviction

Number Reviewed on Post-Conviction	Unknown
Number Reversed on Post-Conviction	1
Percentage Reversed on Post-Conviction	33%
Number Forward to Federal Habeas Corpus	Unknown

State Direct Appeal and State Post-Conviction Combined

Overall Rate of Error Found by State Courts	78%
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Federal Habeas Corpus

Number Reviewed on Habeas Corpus	2
Number Reversed on Habeas Corpus	1
Percentage Reversed on Habeas Corpus	50%

Overall Rates Including [and Excluding] State Post-Conviction

Overall Error Rate	89% [84%]
Overall Success Rate	11% [16%]

Timing

Time From First Death Sentence to First Non-Consensual Execution	18.00
Average Time from Sentence to Execution	11.50
Average Time from Sentence to Final Federal Relief	6.00

Sentencing and Execution Rates

Death Sentences per 1000 Homicides	58.48
Death Sentences per 100,000 Population	6.44
Death Sentences per 1000 Prison Population	37.57
Non-Consensual Executions per 1000 Homicides	1.95
Non-Consensual Executions per 100,000 Population	0.21
Non-Consensual Executions per 1000 Prison Population	1.25

Demographic Information

Average Population	456,589
Average Homicides	23
Average Homicide Rate per 100,000 Population	5.11
Average Prison Admissions	319
Average Prison Population	799
Percentage Population Non-White	8%

Court Factors

Political Pressure (judicial elections)	8
Party Competition (gubernatorial elections)	0
State Court Criminal Caseload per 1000 Population	26.67
Expenditures per Capita on Courts	63.57

Sources: DRCen; Death Row U.S.A., Winter 2000; DADB; HCDB; Appendix C; USCen; UCRDB; USCen; PrisCen; PolPres; CtCaLd; CtExpen