



# Lethal Injection: Capital Punishment in Texas during the Modern Era

*Jon Sorensen, Rocky LeAnn Pilgrim*

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Few state issues have attracted as much controversy and national attention as the application of the death penalty in Texas. In the years since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976, Texas has led the nation in passing death sentences and executing prisoners. The vigor with which Texas has implemented capital punishment has, however, raised more than a few questions. Why has Texas been so fervent in pursuing capital punishment? Has an aggressive death penalty produced any benefits? Have dangerous criminals been deterred? Have rights been trampled in the process and, most importantly, have innocents been executed? These important questions form the core of *Lethal Injection: Capital Punishment in Texas during the Modern Era*.

This book is the first comprehensive empirical study of Texas's system of capital punishment in the modern era. Jon Sorensen and Rocky Pilgrim use a wealth of information gathered from formerly confidential prisoner records and a variety of statistical sources to test and challenge traditional preconceptions concerning racial bias, deterrence, guilt, and the application of capital punishment in this state. The results of their balanced analysis may surprise many who have followed the recent debate on this important issue.

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