



# DEATH PENALTY RESEARCH UNIT (DPRU) ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



CENTRE FOR CRIMINOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

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## *DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT*

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In January 2020, over lunch, I described to my friend and colleague, Roger Hood, my ambition to establish a Death Penalty Research Unit (DPRU). Death penalty scholarship had first been established in Oxford in 1987 when Roger, then a Reader in Criminology and Director of the Oxford Centre for Criminology, was invited to be a consultant to the United Nations on the death penalty, work he continued until 2005. During that time, he researched and prepared three quinquennial Reports of the Secretary-General on Capital Punishment. His first report for the UN was published as the first international survey of the retention and administration of the death penalty, and that project has grown to five editions, published by Oxford University Press as *The Death Penalty: A Worldwide Perspective*.

In 2000, Roger and I, with our colleagues Lucia Zedner and Andrew Ashworth, established the MSc in Criminology & Criminal Justice and I persuaded him to teach a module on The Death Penalty, which proved to be popular. Following his retirement in 2003, I took over that course and nurtured young scholars interested in researching the death penalty through the DPhil programme. About that time, he asked me to co-author the 4th and 5th editions of *The Death Penalty* and other academic articles, securing my position in the world of death penalty research.

While Roger's introduction to death penalty scholarship came via the UN, his empirical research was developed with The Death Penalty Project (The DPP). The absence of empirical criminological research around the world, other than in the United States, had been a serious impediment to understanding about the justifications for its retention, its legal apparatus and how the death penalty is administered worldwide. Hence, Roger, and later I, began to conduct surveys and produce reports with The DPP, particularly in Asia and the Caribbean, and more recently in Commonwealth Africa.

Our research aimed to influence practitioners, policymakers, and governments, as well as to advance academic understanding. This was my explicit goal for the DPRU and Roger was excited about this new venture. The plan had been to launch the DPRU on 10 October 2020, for World Day Against the Death Penalty. COVID restrictions and Roger's declining health put a stop to that. Hence our launch took place a year later, on 24 September 2021, without Roger who had passed away in November 2020.

It is a privilege to establish a legacy for a former supervisor and long-term colleague and friend. However, realising ambitious goals, including conducting empirical work in countries far afield during a global pandemic, is a challenge. With assistance from my researchers—Daniel Cullen and Jocelyn Hutton—and contributions from an energetic team of student interns, we have achieved a great deal in the past year.

However, most of the research has been possible because we have worked with The DPP, who have managed to raise sufficient funding for rigorous opinion research in Zimbabwe, Taiwan, and Indonesia, and to begin research on drugs, deterrence, and the death penalty in Indonesia, work that we hope to develop further over the next year or two. At all times, we have engaged with local academics and NGOs, as well as local media, in the countries we work in, to ensure effective engagement and dissemination to try to ensure that our work has an impact on policy and practice.

When Roger first turned his attention to the death penalty in 1987, there were only 52 abolitionist countries. When Sierra Leone abolished the death penalty in July, it was the 110<sup>th</sup> country to do so. I was delighted to play a tiny part in that by helping The DPP and AdvocAid, a local NGO, to prepare evidence for Parliament on both the case for abolition and the case for replacing the death penalty with a discretionary life sentence, not a mandatory sentence. As I watched on livestream Parliament in Sierra Leone debate and decide on abolition, I was reminded why this work matters to me. My colleagues at The DPP have such experiences reasonably often. Through litigation, they have not only saved the lives of individuals sentenced to death, but have succeeded, with their UK and international colleagues, in abolishing the mandatory death penalty in ten Commonwealth Caribbean countries and in Uganda, Malawi, and Kenya. Such notable legal successes have removed thousands of people from death rows around the world.

Though many thousands remain under sentence of death in various countries, especially China, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, and Nigeria, and many continue to be sentenced to death in those countries as well as in Egypt, Indonesia, India, Yemen, Vietnam and Zambia, gradually the numbers sentenced to death and executed worldwide are declining. Legal and policy change is sometimes, not always, informed by academic research.

Those of us fortunate enough to be asked to serve as expert witnesses to legal challenges to the constitutionality of the death penalty draw on research conducted by our peers around the world, as I did when asked to prepare expert evidence for a challenge to the death penalty in Guyana. In order to produce academic research of sufficient rigour for a court, we need three things as a minimum: funding to conduct empirical research; a new generation of young scholars to work with and train to be the future researchers; and NGOs to work with on conducting, disseminating and using the research we do. The DPRU is committed to training the next generation of scholars and to producing excellent research. Our partner organisations, particularly The DPP, share these goals. But we cannot do this without further funding. The final page of this report details our current funding goals and I encourage you to share this with those in a position to help the DPRU on this exciting new journey.

Carolyn Hoyle, October 2021

## DPRU UPDATES

### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DPRU

The Death Penalty Research Unit (DPRU) started life in 2020 with ambitious aims to develop theoretical, empirical and policy-relevant research on the death penalty and, importantly, to produce and disseminate knowledge in cooperation with civil society, charities, legal practitioners and local academics in those countries where research is ongoing.

The DPRU focuses on the retention, administration and politics of the death penalty worldwide. We aim to understand the rationales for the death penalty, how it is used in practice, and its diverse application and impact on communities.

Led by Professor Carolyn Hoyle, who works with a dedicated researcher, Daniel Cullen, the DPRU builds on the strong foundations laid by the late Professor Roger Hood, Director of the Centre for Criminology from 1973 to 2003.

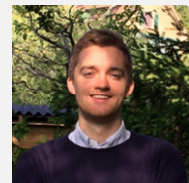
Much of our work is undertaken with [partner organisations](#) in [Pakistan](#), [India](#), [Indonesia](#), [Malaysia](#), [Taiwan](#), [Australia](#), [Iran](#), [Singapore](#) and beyond, but in particular with the London-based legal action charity [The Death Penalty Project](#) (The DPP), which has many years of experience of litigation, capacity building and research.

We recently released a short (4 minute) video which provides an overview of the work of the DPRU, featuring interviews with Carolyn and Parvais Jabbar, Co-Executive Director of The DPP. The video can be viewed [here](#).

The DPRU has been generously supported by Lady Edwina Grosvenor, The British Academy, the Economic and Social Research Council and the University of Oxford's John Fell Fund.

#### DANIEL CULLEN

##### *DPRU Research Officer*



Daniel Cullen is Research Officer in the DPRU, where he is responsible for the administration of the Unit and is Managing Editor of the DPRU blog.

He previously worked in the Strategic Litigation team at Amnesty International, supporting the organisation's programme of international human rights litigation, and as a Programme Assistant at the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva, with a focus on the death penalty and children's rights.



Photo: Parvais Jabbar and Saul Lehrfreund of The DPP 'In Conversation' with Carolyn Hoyle.

## MAPPING PROJECT

In October 2020, Carolyn Hoyle and Jocelyn Hutton, ESRC Research Officer, together with a network of human rights NGOs, started work on a Mapping Project of Foreign Nationals at Risk of Capital Punishment in Asia and the Middle East, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

In collaboration with [HURIDOCs](#) (an NGO which helps human rights organisations gather, organise and present data for social good) they are developing an interactive database on foreign nationals at risk of the death penalty to record socio-demographic, jurisdictional and offence-related data as well as country briefing notes and case studies from each retentionist country in these regions.

Once complete, the database will be made freely available to lawyers, activists, academics and relevant civil society organisations to enable them to better assist foreign nationals on death row through activism, advocacy or litigation.

The network involved in this work includes [The Death Penalty Project](#), [Eleos Justice](#), [Harm Reduction International](#), [Justice Project Pakistan](#), [Project 39A](#), and [Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network \(ADPAN\)](#).

During 2020–21, Jocelyn and Carolyn have been assisted with the Mapping Project by Research Interns Brian Egan, Emma Rice and Caroline Vorce and by a Research Assistant, Chae Yun Bae.

### JOCELYN HUTTON

#### *ESRC Research Officer*



Jocelyn is an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Research Officer in the DPRU, leading on the development of the Mapping Project.

Jocelyn previously worked at Middlesex University and the Université du Québec à Montréal (2011–2013, 2015–2016), with Dr Helena Wray & Professor Brad Blitz on a number of research projects regarding the human rights of migrants. She was also involved in writing Expert Witness Reports with Dr Helena Wray and Professor Werner Menski (SOAS) for clients in immigration and asylum cases.



Image: Screenshot from the Mapping Project homepage (in development).

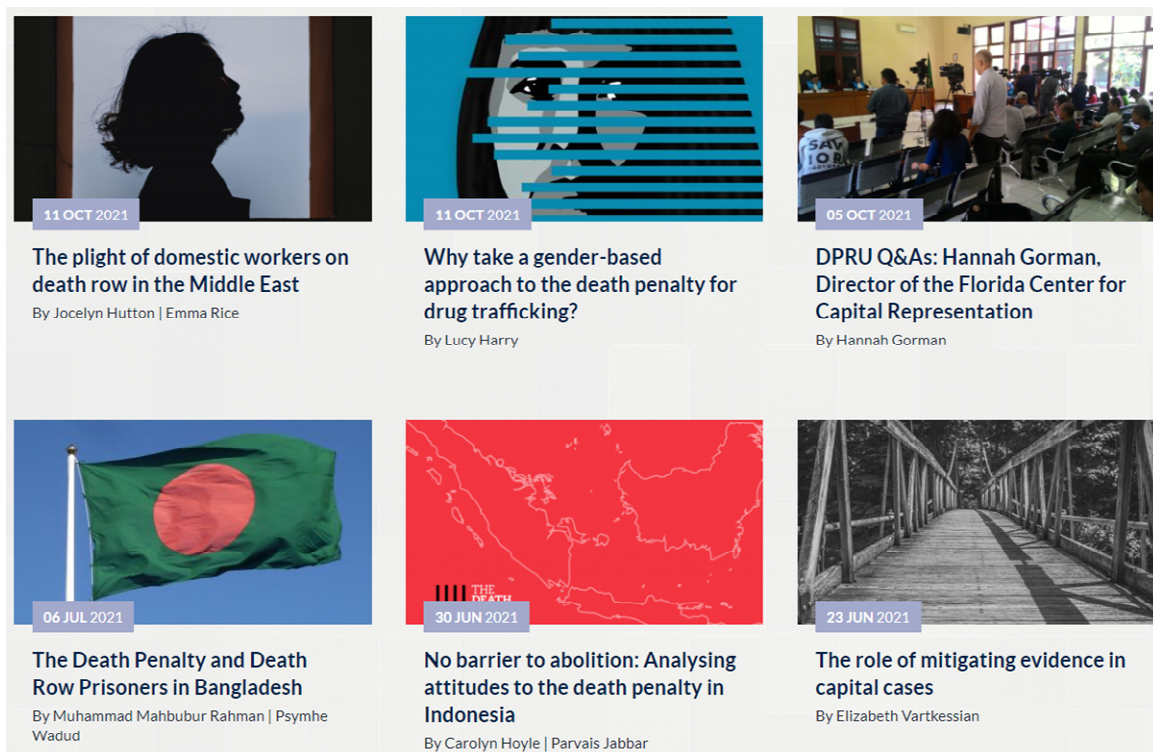


## LAUNCH OF THE DPRU BLOG

In January 2021, we launched [the DPRU Blog](#), publishing posts showcasing death penalty research, as well as articles summarising new publications, opinion pieces and relevant news pieces.

The Blog's initial posts have featured external contributions from legal practitioners, academics, those working with NGOs, and from our partners at The DPP, among many others, alongside contributions from DPRU researchers, including research students Amelia Inglis and Lucy Harry, and Research Officers Jocelyn Hutton and Daniel Cullen.

The Blog has a global outlook, with posts covering a wide range of topics such as the use of [the U.S. federal death penalty under the Trump administration](#), the status of the death penalty [under sharia law](#), the impact of COVID-19 for [women sentenced to death for drug offences in Southeast Asia](#), and [the death penalty in post-coup Myanmar](#).



*Image: A selection of articles from the DPRU Blog homepage.*

The Blog will also host a series of Q&As with death penalty experts from around the world. The first Q&A was with Hannah Gorman, Director of the Florida Center for Capital Representation, who spoke about her work as a mitigation specialist. The Q&A can be read [here](#).

## BLOG SUBMISSIONS

The Blog welcomes new contributions: guidelines for submissions, editorial policies and contact details are available [here](#).

## ROGER HOOD MEMORIAL EVENT

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In September 2021, the Centre for Criminology and The DPP hosted a memorial event in Oxford to celebrate the life and scholarship of [Professor Roger Hood](#), who sadly [passed away](#) on 17 November 2020.

Professor Hood's family, friends and colleagues gathered to celebrate his academic legacy and share their memories and experiences of working with him. A series of short presentations reflected on Professor Hood's long and distinguished career and his extensive contributions to our understanding of crime, justice and penal policy.



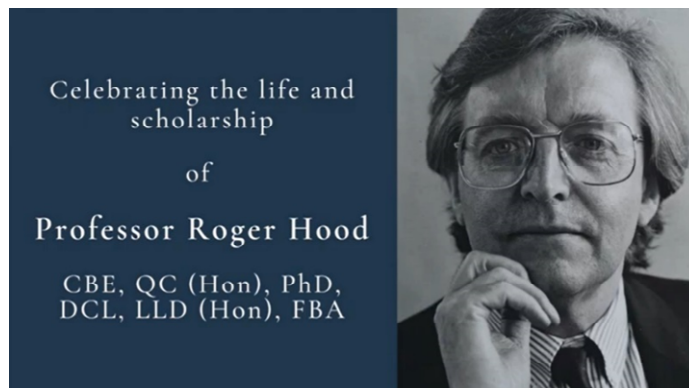
*Photo: Professor Lucia Zedner reflects on Roger's contribution to life at All Souls College, Oxford.*

A video was also shared which presented tributes from friends and colleagues around the world who were unable to join the event in person. The video can be viewed on the DPRU website [here](#).

This event marked the official launch of the DPRU, which builds on Professor Hood's decades of academic and policy work on capital punishment around the world.

### THE ROGER HOOD FUND

To recognise Professor Hood's impressive legacy and deep-seated integrity and humanity, the Centre for Criminology has established a fund in his name towards death penalty research and scholarship. Donations to the Roger Hood Fund can be made [here](#).



*Image: Video tribute to Professor Roger Hood.*



## DPRU RESEARCH

### INDONESIA OPINION RESEARCH

In June 2021, the DPRU and its partners launched a new two-part research study on the death penalty in Indonesia.

Commissioned by The DPP, the first report was written by Carolyn Hoyle. Produced with colleagues at LBH Masyarakat and the University of Indonesia Human Rights Center, the report examines the views of 40 Indonesian 'opinion formers', including influential people from the media, religious groups, the civil service and Parliament. The report found that these opinion formers were keen to move away from capital punishment, with 67% in favour of abolition.

The second report, also written by Carolyn Hoyle working with Diana Batchelor, draws on public opinion survey data from a representative sample of 1,515 respondents. As the report demonstrates, as the Indonesian public learns more about the scope and administration of the death penalty, or are presented with specific, realistic scenarios, their support for capital punishment declines. These findings reflected a lack of knowledge about the death penalty among the public, with only 2% stating that they felt very well informed about the issue.



An overview of the findings of the study can be found on the DPRU Blog [here](#). The two reports can be read in full on The DPP website [here](#) and [here](#).

The official launch of the study was held online on 30 June 2021. Over 70 people attended, including representatives of the Indonesian government, members of the diplomatic community and academics, among many others.

### MEDIA COVERAGE

The publication of the study in June 2021 was covered by various Indonesian media outlets, including, in English, *The Jakarta Globe* '[More Indonesians Oppose Death Penalty: Research](#)', with coverage in Bahasa Indonesia on the *Tirto* and *Asumsi* websites.

In July 2021, Carolyn Hoyle and Parvais Jabbar published an opinion article based on the findings of the public opinion survey in *The Jakarta Post*, one of Indonesia's leading English language newspapers. The article can be read on The DPP website (reproduced with permission of *The Jakarta Post*) [here](#).

In October 2021, Carolyn Hoyle and Parvais Jabbar published an article on *The Conversation* website, noting that the public opinion survey found that the Indonesian public has little faith in the harshest penal responses, and emphasising the importance of rigorous public opinion methodologies. The article can be read in full on *The Conversation* website [here](#).

## ZIMBABWE OPINION LEADERS REPORT

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In June 2020, The DPP and Zimbabwean NGO Veritas published a report titled *Time to Abolish the Death Penalty in Zimbabwe: Exploring the Views of its Opinion Leaders*.

The report, authored by Carolyn Hoyle, drew on in-depth interviews with 42 opinion leaders; those in positions of influence and power from the fields of politics, public service, law, religion, and civil society. It discusses their views on the death penalty, their knowledge of the criminal justice system, the likelihood of abolition and how it could be achieved.



It found that 90% of those interviewed supported abolition of the death penalty. The report can be read in full on The DPP website [here](#).

## MEDIA COVERAGE

The launch of *Time to Abolish the Death Penalty in Zimbabwe* was covered by a number of media outlets, including an article in *The Zimbabwe Sun* newspaper titled 'Zimbabwe ready to abolish death penalty.'

The article noted the report's finding that 90% of opinion leaders interviewed supported the abolition of the death penalty, and that the country's President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, had expressed his support for abolition in the report's foreword.

The report also received coverage in *The Sunday Mail* ([here](#)), *NewsDay* ([here](#) and [here](#)) and *Bulawayo24* ([here](#)).

## OPINION LEADERS' VIEWS IN TAIWAN

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During 2020, The DPP, working with the Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty, Soochow University, Taipei and Carolyn Hoyle of the DPRU, conducted research into the views of opinion leaders in Taiwan on the death penalty, which is soon to be published.

This research followed on from a 2019 study by Chiu Hei-Yuan and Roger Hood, published by The DPP, which focused on public opinion in Taiwan. Details of the public opinion research can be found on The DPP website [here](#).



Photo credit: Matthew Fang via [Flickr](#).

## BANGLADESH SOCIO-ECONOMIC STUDY

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In June 2021, the University of Dhaka Department of Law, the Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) and The DPP published a new report on the death penalty in Bangladesh, titled [\*Living Under Sentence of Death\*](#).

The report found that almost all prisoners in the sample were young men from low-income backgrounds, the vast majority of whom had very low levels of education, and most of whom were classified as economically vulnerable.



Carolyn Hoyle contributed the foreword to the report, and also spoke at its launch event, which was held online. A summary of the key findings contained in the report is available on The DPP website [here](#), while the full report is available online [here](#).

## ONGOING RESEARCH

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### DETERRENCE RESEARCH IN INDONESIA

In conjunction with The DPP and LBH Masyarakat, the DPRU is currently engaging in new research in Indonesia to provide empirical evidence on the question of whether the death penalty has any deterrent effect in relation to drug offences.

An initial pilot study, based on interviews with prisoners in Jakarta who have been charged with drug offences, is currently underway, conducted by researchers from Atma Jaya University and DPRU student Lucrezia Rizzelli.

### OPINION RESEARCH IN KENYA

The DPP and the DPRU are currently working on a series of studies on opinions on the death penalty in Kenya. A new public opinion report written by Carolyn Hoyle with [Diana Batchelor](#) will be published in November 2021.

A separate study on the views of opinion leaders in Kenya is currently underway, with research support from DPRU ESRC student Lucy Harry, while a further study examining the socio-economic profiles of death row prisoners is due to start soon, with research support from Lucrezia Rizzelli.

## MEDIA & ENGAGEMENT

The launch of the *Living Under Sentence of Death* report was covered by a number of Bangladeshi media outlets, including coverage in English in *The Daily Star* ([here](#) and [here](#)) and *New Age* ([here](#)).

In September 2021, it was cited in an official report on the death penalty issued at the UN Human Rights Council's 48<sup>th</sup> session, held in Geneva.

The UN report cited data from the publication on the total length of time that prisoners spend on death row in Bangladesh as an example of the risks of extreme delays in capital cases, which have been shown to aggravate 'death row phenomenon.'

## DPRU MEMBERS

### DPRU RESEARCH STUDENTS

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Seven Oxford DPhil students who are conducting research on death penalty topics are currently affiliated as members of the DPRU: **Amanda Clift-Matthews**, **Lucy Harry**, **Amelia Inglis**, **Sabrina Mahtani**, **Abdul Rashid Ismail**, **Lucrezia Rizzelli** and **Serene Singh**.



**Amanda Clift-Matthews** is a practising barrister specialising in criminal law and human rights, with a particular emphasis on capital cases and miscarriages of justice. She was formerly in-house counsel and Legal Director at The Death Penalty Project and has represented at the appellate level individuals facing a death sentence throughout the Caribbean, Asia and Africa, including before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. She is a co-author of [“Sentencing in Capital Cases”](#) (2018) and was shortlisted for an “Employed Barrister of the Year” award by the Bar Council in 2020. Her research focuses on capital drug trafficking cases in Singapore.



**Lucy Harry**’s doctoral research, funded by the ESRC, focuses on the experiences of foreign women who have been sentenced to death for drug trafficking in Malaysia. She has conducted empirical research in Kuala Lumpur, where she was a visiting scholar at Monash University’s Malaysian campus. Her research engages with theorising on women’s criminalisation in a globalised world, and she explores gendered economic precarity as a precipitant of women’s engagement in drug trafficking which leads to the death penalty in Southeast Asia. She is also interested in the nexus between patriarchy, coloniality and penalty in this context.



**Amelia Inglis**’ research, funded by the ESRC, explores the experiences of homicide victims’ families in the U.S., seeking to understand how the protracted capital appeals process can militate against recovery for those whose defendants are sentenced to death. Her research focuses on the experiences of families of murder victims in cases where a death sentence was imposed on the defendant in the U.S. Specifically, Amelia’s project explores the ways in which these family members are impacted by the capital appeals process and resulting sentence reversals (most commonly from a death sentence to a life sentence). As part of this project, she has spent the past few months conducting online interviews. She also previously spent six months interning with the Capital Post-Conviction Project in Louisiana.



**Sabrina Mahtani** is a Zambian/British lawyer. She co-founded AdvocAid, an NGO that provides access to justice for women in detention in Sierra Leone. The organisation has freed 6 women on death row. Sabrina formerly worked for Amnesty International and The Elders and currently curates [Women Beyond Walls](#). She is an independent expert on access to justice for women and consults for a variety of organisations. Sabrina is a regular writer and commentator for a variety of media platforms. Her research focuses on the experiences of women on death row in Zambia and Kenya.

## DPRU RESEARCH STUDENTS *(Cont.)*

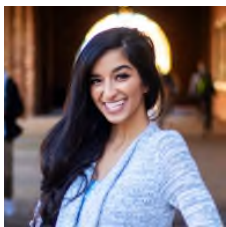
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**Abdul Rashid Ismail** is researching the abolition of the death penalty in Malaysia. Rashid actively litigates in the Malaysian courts on behalf of death row prisoners and those facing capital charges. He has been and continues to be involved in landmark constitutional cases involving the mandatory death sentence, the rights to a fair trial and the rights of the vulnerable including the mentally ill facing execution. His research explores the factors that contribute to the movement for abolition in Malaysia and those that militate against abolition.



**Lucrezia Rizzelli** is researching the death penalty in Indonesia and its deterrent effect, or lack thereof, on drug crimes, as part of a collaborative scholarship with The DPP funded by the ESRC. She aims to examine the motivations that lead people to engage in drug crimes and to better understand the role that punishment plays in the decision-making process. It is hoped that challenging the applicability of general deterrence theory to the reality of Indonesian couriers and drug traffickers will help dismantle the belief that capital punishment is effective in deterring drug crimes.



**Serene Singh** is researching women on death row in the United States. More specifically, she intends to identify the influence of jurisprudence on "cruel and unusual punishment" on the ways in which women sentenced to death experience justice. She plans to work directly with women on death row in her research, making this the very first research project on this specific population of individuals to be comprehensively undertaken.

## DPRU INTERNS

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### *DPP-Oxford Criminology Research Interns*

Since 2018, Oxford Criminology and The DPP have collaborated on Research Internships, with Oxford MSc or DPhil students conducting small death penalty research projects under the joint supervision of Carolyn Hoyle and The DPP's Saul Lehrfreund and Parvais Jabbar. The DPP-Oxford Criminology Research Interns for 2020-21 were:

**Brian Egan**, an MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice student from Dublin, Ireland, whose research focused on the use of the death penalty in Iran as a tool of political oppression.

**Emma Rice**, an MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice student from the U.S., who researched the experiences of migrant workers facing the death penalty, specifically those in Arab Gulf countries.

**Caroline Vorce**, an MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice student from the U.S., whose research focused on procedural safeguards for death row prisoners, specifically in Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.

### *DPRU Summer Intern*

The first DPRU Summer Intern (2021) was **Annalena Wolcke**, an incoming MSc Criminology and Criminal Justice student. She conducted research on why certain countries abolished the death penalty at the time they did, focusing on a few countries from Europe and South America.



## DPRU IMPACT & ENGAGEMENT

### UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL PANEL

In February 2021, Carolyn Hoyle was invited to appear as a panellist at a high-level panel discussion on the death penalty hosted by the UN Human Rights Council.

The topic of the biennial panel was human rights violations related to the use of the death penalty, with a particular focus on the question of whether the death penalty acts as a deterrent.

Carolyn's presentation provided analysis of deterrence theory with reference to social scientific research evidence, concluding that deterrence arguments were not substantiated by existing research and should never be allowed to influence policy on the death penalty.



Photo credit: UN Geneva via [Flickr](#).

A recording of the presentation can be viewed online [here](#).

### SIERRA LEONE ABOLITION

In July 2021, Sierra Leone made history by becoming the 110<sup>th</sup> country in the world to abolish the death penalty for all crimes. The Abolition of the Death Penalty Act 2021 passed unanimously in the country's Parliament, ending the use of capital punishment for future convictions and removing the threat of execution for the 78 individuals on death row.

In a progressive move, Sierra Leone chose to replace the death penalty with a system of judicial discretion, under which judges are able to consider mitigating circumstances.

This momentous change built upon years of activism and engagement to abolish the death penalty by AdvocAid and other organisations including the Sierra Leone Bar Association and the Institute for Legal Research and Advocacy for Justice, among many others.

The DPRU was thrilled to have played a small part in this achievement. In March 2021, The DPP, AdvocAid and Carolyn Hoyle had formally set out the case for abolition in a [memorandum to the country's President](#), presenting an evidence-based perspective on the fundamental problems with the death penalty, and in May 2021 made a further [submission to the Attorney General](#) advocating for its replacement with a discretionary sentencing regime.



## NEW NARATIF ARTICLE

In September 2021, Southeast Asian media outlet [New Naratif](#) published a news article on the socio-economic circumstances of women on death row in Malaysia, featuring recent research published by Lucy Harry.



Image: New Naratif website.

The article, by lawyer Ngeow Chow Ying, focused on death sentences imposed for drug trafficking under the country's Dangerous Drugs Act, which make up the majority (73%) of capital convictions.

It drew on Lucy's January 2021 journal article on the role of economic factors in the experiences of women facing the death penalty in Malaysia, many of whom are involved in precarious work. The article is available to read on the [New Naratif](#) website [here](#).

## GREAT BRITAIN-CHINA CENTRE SEMINAR

In August 2021, Carolyn Hoyle and Saul Lehrfreund and Parvais Jabbar of The DPP were invited to speak at a series of online seminars on restricting the use of the death penalty in China, hosted by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's Great Britain-China Centre and attended by delegates from the China University of Political Science and Law as well as judges and lawyers.

Carolyn's presentation, titled 'Drugs, deterrence and the death penalty,' discussed DPRU and DPP research on deterrence and drugs in Indonesia.

**DRUGS, DETERRENCE & THE DEATH PENALTY**  
毒品、威懾与死刑  
PROFESSOR CAROLYN HOYLE  
DEATH PENALTY RESEARCH UNIT  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD (牛津大学死刑研究小组)

ATMA JAVA

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

**THE DEATH PENALTY PROJECT**

**The Death penalty & the 'war on drugs'**  
死刑与“反毒品战争”

1979: death penalty imposed for drug offences in just 10 countries 只有10个国家对毒品犯罪判处死刑

1985: 22 countries 22个国家

Today: 35 countries 35个国家

All 'high application' countries are in Asia 所有“高度适用”的国家都在亚洲

At least 3,000 people on death row for drug offences worldwide 全世界至少有3000人因毒品犯罪而被关进死囚牢房



## JUSTICE PODCAST INTERVIEW

In November 2020, Carolyn Hoyle appeared as a guest on the JUSTICE podcast, hosted by Edwina Grosvenor.

The interview covered global research into the death penalty, the challenges in obtaining information on the death penalty, particularly in secretive jurisdictions, and the potential impacts of death penalty research. The episode is available to listen online [here](#).

## GUYANA LEGAL SUBMISSIONS

In January 2021, Carolyn Hoyle submitted an expert report in a landmark case before the Court of Appeal of Guyana, in which the appellants are challenging the constitutionality of capital punishment itself.

The case, which is being supported by The DPP, could see Guyana become the final country in South America to abolish the death penalty.

Carolyn's report focused on the presence of arbitrariness in relation to the use of the death penalty, drawing on extensive research evidence and relevant national, regional and international jurisprudence.

Setting out a range of forms of arbitrariness which can arise within discretionary death penalty regimes, the expert report argued that at present, it is highly unlikely that any system could be designed which could entirely guarantee the absence of arbitrariness from every stage of the criminal justice process in the use of the death penalty.



Litigation is currently ongoing, with further hearings scheduled during the coming months. While Guyana has not carried out any executions since 1997, death sentences have continued to be imposed and 14 individuals remain under sentence of death. If the death penalty was declared unconstitutional, they would be removed from death row and resentenced. But this case also has the potential to influence other retentionist countries in the Caribbean and the wider Commonwealth. Further details on the case itself can be found on The DPP website [here](#).

## WORLD DAY AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY 2021

This year, [the World Day Against the Death Penalty 2021](#), organised by the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, focused on 'Women and the death penalty: An invisible reality.'

The DPP published an interview with a group of female lawyers, human rights activists and academics, including Carolyn which can be read in full on The DPP website [here](#).

The DPRU Blog also published two new posts on women on death row to mark the World Day. Research Officer Jocelyn Hutton and Research Intern Emma Rice wrote on [the plight of female domestic workers on death row in the Middle East](#), while DPhil student Lucy Harry wrote on [the need to take a gender-based approach to the death penalty for drug trafficking](#).



Image: World Coalition Against the Death Penalty.

## FUNDING GOALS

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The DPRU was established with generous support from Lady Edwina Grosvenor, a philanthropist and committed penal reformer. This donation funds a part-time researcher for three years and has enabled us to have a very busy and productive first year.

Our second researcher is funded for only a few more months on a small ESRC grant. She runs our exciting 'Mapping Project' and we are keen to secure further funding to complete that work and to develop it further. In particular, we would like to expand the interactive database on foreign nationals across the African continent and the Caribbean. We would also like to develop similar databases for those on death row for drug offences around the world and for women on death row.

Small grants from the University of Oxford, including from the Law Faculty, have helped to progress other work on deterrence, but significant further funding will be necessary if we are to realise our goals. Deterrence is the key rationale for retaining capital punishment in many countries, particularly in Asia. This research is very costly to do well and so we seek funding for deterrence studies, especially in Southeast Asia, where many people are executed for drug offences.

Student interns can play a small part in collating data for our research and develop skills and expertise while doing so. A small donation would enable us to pay a stipend to those who assist us, opening up opportunities for those students who cannot afford to do unpaid work.

Finally, 'core funding' will allow us to continue to run the DPRU, to have a lively blog, organise events, and to produce briefing papers to introduce policymakers, practitioners and civil society to academic research.

### THE ROGER HOOD FUND

To recognise Professor Roger Hood's impressive legacy and deep-seated integrity and humanity, the Centre for Criminology has established a fund in his name towards death penalty research and scholarship. Donations to the Roger Hood Fund can be made [here](#).