

Racist Roots:

Origins of North Carolina's Death Penalty

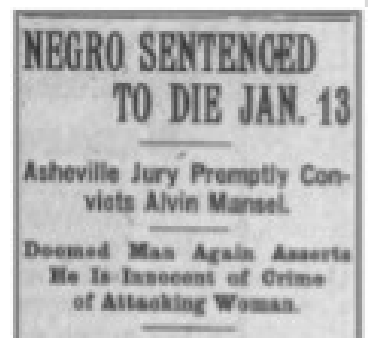
Just like a confederate monument, the death penalty has always been a symbol of racism. We must tear it down.

North Carolina's death penalty grew from a seed planted in the soil of slavery. In the beginning, it was used to ruthlessly enforce the dominance of enslavers.

It matured in the years of Jim Crow, when Black people, including children, were frequently sentenced to death under the watchful eyes of lynch mobs, who were ready to do the job themselves if the all-white jury didn't do it for them.



In 1925, 17-year old Alvin Mansel was nearly lynched by a mob. Soon after, an all-white Asheville jury sentenced him to death. He was innocent.



In the early 1970s, the U.S. Supreme Court acknowledged that the death penalty was often imposed on the basis of race and briefly declared it unconstitutional.

But the death penalty wasn't uprooted yet. The court soon reversed itself and, in the 1980s and 1990s, the death penalty surged with new growth, nourished by racist backlash to the Civil Rights Movement.

Today, there are over 130 men and women on North Carolina's death row. The roots of racism continue to bear fruit...

North Carolina's Death Row Today



"Hang him from the nearest traffic light as a warning to the rest."

In 2010, Andrew Ramseur was sentenced to death in Statesville, after online comments threatened a lynching and compared him to a "beast" and a "monkey."
He remains on death row.

People of color make up less than 30 percent of North Carolina's population but **60 percent** of its death row.

Nearly half of people currently on death row had an all-white jury or a jury with only a single person of color.

Prosecutors dismiss qualified Black citizens from capital juries **two and a half times more often** than they exclude whites.

Defendants are still **twice as likely** to be sentenced to death if they're accused of killing a white person, rather than a person of color.

Innocent Black defendants are still far more likely to be wrongly convicted. In the modern era, **11 of 12 NC death row exonerees** are people of color.

Almost half of the people on North Carolina's death row were sentenced to death in a courthouse with a Confederate monument, a visible reminder of the system's racist roots.

Help end the racist death penalty



Learn more & schedule a
film screening at
[RacistRoots.org](https://racistroots.org)

Join the movement at
[NCCADP.org](https://nccadp.org)

Why I Oppose the Death Penalty

