

8 HOW DOES IT FEEL TO TAKE THE LIFE OF AN 8 YEAR OLD?

In 1985, Morris Odell Mason was put to death by the State of Virginia despite an IQ of 66, a mental age of 8, and a diagnosis of schizophrenia. Mason apparently had no understanding of the finality of what awaited him; before his execution he asked what he should wear to his funeral.

At least 12 percent of prisoners currently on death row have been diagnosed as being mentally retarded or of borderline intelligence.



The death penalty. It's not a punishment. It's a crime.

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1. What do you notice most about this advertisement?
2. What story does it tell? Is it a good argument for not having the death penalty (:dødsstraf)?
3. How do you feel about the death penalty? List arguments for and against it. You might make a one-page advertisement with one or more reasons for or against.
4. Read 'The Green, Green Grass of Home' (page 132). What is the idea behind the song? Does it have a stronger or weaker effect on you than this advertisement?

des'pite på trods af
 IQ intelligenskvtient
 ('normal' er 100)
 schizo'phrenia
 skizofreni, en sindssygdom
 ap'parently
 tilsyneladende
 fi'nality endegyldighed
 exe'cution henrettelse
 funeral begravelse
 currently just now
 death row cellerne for de
 dødsdømte
 re'tarded tilbagestående,
 sinke
 borderline grænse
 punishment straf

Talking about punishment

An eye for an eye, a
 tooth for a tooth...
 It's not right to...
 Killing someone will
 never...
 Society wants revenge
 (:hævn).
 It is a good way to
 stop...
 If people think they can
 kill and rape (:voldtage)
 and get away with it...
 If I was in the family of
 someone who...
 There are some crimes
 that...
 If the judge makes a
 mistake...
 It has happened
 before...
 You can never be 100%
 certain...

9 Green, Green Grass of Home

The old home town looks the same
As I step down from the train.
And there to meet me is my Mama and Papa.
Down the road I look, and there runs Mary,
Hair of gold and lips like cherries.
It's good to touch the green, green grass of home.
Yes, they'll all come to meet me,
Arms reaching, smiling sweetly.
It's good to touch the green, green grass of home.

The old house is still standing
Though the paint is cracked and dry,
And there's that old oak tree that I used to play on.
Down the lane I walk with my sweet Mary,
Hair of gold and lips like cherries.
It's good to touch the green, green grass of home.
Yes, they'll all come to meet me,
Arms reaching, smiling sweetly.
It's good to touch the green, green grass of home.

Then I awake and look around me
At four grey walls that surrounded me,
And I realise that I was only dreaming.
For there's a guard and there's a sad old padre
Arm in arm we'll walk at daybreak:
Again I'll touch the green, green grass of home.
Yes they'll all come to meet me
In the shade of that old oak tree,
As they lay me beneath the green, green grass of home.

cherry *kirsebær*
cracked *revnet*
oak *eg*
lane country road
sur'round that are
around
guard *vogter*
padre (here) prison
priest
daybreak as soon as it is
light

1. How long do you think it is since he was at home?
2. What does he remember about his home?
3. Where is he having this dream? Describe the place and what is happening.
4. Why is the song called 'The Green, Green Grass of Home'?
5. What do you think he has done? Does he seem sorry about it?
6. How do you feel about the narrator (:fortæller)?

