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### October 30, 2018: Executing Robert Bowers

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Title: Executing Robert Bowers

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10/30/2018—We can start with the proposition that anyone who kills someone forfeits his right to live. That is why bad guys in movies are killed. That is why life imprisonment is the normal punishment for murder. We can also agree that there is nothing redeeming about the killer in this case, Robert Bowers. He is not someone mentally ill or abused as a child. Bowers is just what he seems—a miserable, hate-filled killer. It would have been satisfying if Bowers had stood his ground and then been killed in a shootout with the police. What is needed is for Robert Bowers to disappear. The problem with the death penalty is that now we will have to think about Robert Bowers. And it will not be the Robert Bowers who pulled the trigger. It will be this other figure that appeared in court yesterday—an empty shell in a wheelchair. The US Attorney, Scott Brady, said, “We have a team of prosecutors working hard to ensure that justice is done.” But there is no real work to be done. They are just crossing all the t’s. Bowers is the killer and this is a hate crime. End of story. All the rest is inflation. If there were no death penalty, the case would be over in a few weeks and we would never hear from, or think about, Robert Bowers again. And that is what I want. I don’t want my consciousness sullied by him. He is not worth it. People who think they want the death penalty don’t understand how things work. What they really want is for someone to kill Bowers right now. Instead of that, the death penalty prolongs the killer’s public life. The death penalty should be renamed to the Robert Bowers show. And this cannot be cured by speeding up the execution. The problem with the death penalty is that you cannot avoid attending to the killer, when the only important people are the victims. One day, when we do get rid of the death penalty, we won’t even notice how good life will be without having to think about killers.