

CLOSING THE TRAPDOOR

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THE ABOLITION OF THE DEATH
PENALTY FOR MURDER IN BRITAIN



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CHAPTER 13

Ruth Ellis was hanged in 1955.

This is the third case which evoked a demand for the abolition of the death penalty. This case was in sharp contrast to the first two cases.

Unlike Timothy Evans and Derek Bentley, the girl who grew up as Ruth Neilson had no developmental handicaps. She lived first in Rhyl, in North Wales, then in Basingstoke, and finally central London.

She was in all ways perfectly normal when she took the life of her lover. She shot him outside a public house in a busy street.

Her only handicap was possibly her greatest asset – she was physically very attractive. Her looks were in the ‘pin-up girl’ style.

Ruth’s good looks got her plenty of attention. They brought her plenty of the good things in life. They also indirectly led to her downfall.

She worked as a shop assistant, a factory hand and a waitress in order to feed herself and her baby son, Andy.

But Ruth was tired of her humdrum life. She took to nude modelling.