

# Student to march for death row Briton Linda Carty

A GUILDFORD College student has challenged the USA's legal system by organising a march for a death row inmate.

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**Student Verity Mackworth-Praed**

SHE may have been born on Independence Day, but that will not be stopping a Guildford College student challenging the USA's legal system by organising a march for a death row inmate.

Verity Mackworth-Praed, 24, has been granted approval to stage a march in Hyde Park in London in July to raise public awareness about Linda Carty, a British woman sentenced to death.

The 51-year-old grandmother has been living on death row in Texas for the last eight years after being found guilty of masterminding a plot to kill a young mother in order to steal her newborn baby.

Lawyers convinced a jury that Carty had paid the three men to carry out the attack so that she could claim the child as her own.

However, it appears that her original court-appointed defence lawyer Jerry Guerinot, who has seen at least 20 of his clients sentenced to death, let her down badly.

Key witnesses were not called during the case and Mr Guerinot met with Carty only once before the trial began, for just 15 minutes – he also repeatedly got her name wrong in court.

The 24-year-old, who will start her second year of A-levels next year at Guildford College, including one in law, heard about the case, particularly Carty's defence counsel, after reading a newspaper story last year.

"I couldn't believe that not only had she been given the death penalty on the basis of testimony, but also that she could lose her life because of the lack of dedication of one man," said Verity.

She started searching for any campaigns supporting Carty that she could get involved with, but when she could not find any, she decided to do something herself.

Her passion for law led her to research extensively into the case, and she has created a 13-page document outlining the legal failings in the case, arguing that the USA has breached the UK's sovereign rights.

Verity, who worked in admin and pubs when she left school before returning to college, is now intent on becoming a barrister.

"I really love studying law," she said. "I'd always overlooked it as a career because I thought I was just as interested in it as everyone else.

"I used to watch programmes on TV that were to do with the court, most recently Garrow's Law.

"I would look around me and realised that not everyone was as interested in it as I was."

She said she started to appreciate the impact that law has on everyone's lives.

“Depending on society’s approach to law, you can get a grasp of their outlook and the way they think society should conduct themselves,” she said.

“I think a lot of people don’t appreciate the protection they have because of the law.

“If there weren’t those systems in place, a lot of people would be extremely vulnerable.”

The Carty case, though, shows how badly things can go when people’s faith in the law prevents them from challenging miscarriages of justice.

All possible appeal options have now been exhausted for the condemned woman, and her only chance of survival is if the governor of Texas Rich Perry grants her clemency.

If Verity’s march could raise enough awareness and lead to securing Carty’s release, “it would mean the world”.

“It’s not going to happen without the help of everyone reading this,” she added. “If it happened, I would know I wasn’t the only one who cared about the fate of Linda Carty.”

The march will be starting at 12pm on July 16 at Queen Elizabeth’s Gate in Hyde Park, and ending at Richmond Terrace at the Houses of Parliament.

Anybody who wants more details, visit [www.marchforlindacarty.weebly.com](http://www.marchforlindacarty.weebly.com)

<https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/local-news/student-march-death-row-briton-4815048>