Beowulf killed Grendel. Timothy McVeigh was given the death penalty. Why? They were both killers. Though some think the death penalty is a just way of dealing with criminals and killers other think that the death penalty is an easy escape for them. They're getting off to easily when they're simply executed through lethal ejection after all the pain they caused. They're life is ended in moments while others suffering may have dragged on. In the article *The Death Penalty Does Not Deter Crime* by Robert Grant, he states that "violence breeds violence", he also says that "Retributive justice is fueled by hatred and satisfied only with full and complete revenge -- the more cruel, the more satisfying". This is displayed in *Beowulf* when Beowulf tears the arm of Grendel right from the socket instead of killing him as he could have. He leaves him to suffer and die in pain after all the killing he had done. Unlike Beowulf, the death penalty is apparently quick and painless through lethal injection.

The death penalty is also used as an attempt to scare others out of committing crimes so they themselves do not have to die for their bad decisions. However just because Beowulf killed Grendel, and his mother, that didn't stop the dragon from killing people. Even though the dragon and Beowulf both perished in their battle that doesn't mean that the cycle is over. Beowulf's death could cause his followers to seek revenge for their fallen leader and go on to kill more in his name, eventually them themselves being killed for their crimes. Its a never ending cycle. "Others were willing to forgo his execution because they thought that life behind bars with no possibility of parole would be a greater punishment." (Grant, *The Death Penalty Does Not Deter Crime*). If Grendel had been trapped or put in a prison and unable to kill anymore would that have been a better end for him then being killed? Would his imprisonment have prevented deaths of others and put at least a pause on the never-ending cycle?

"Many violent people -- particularly violent adolescents -- resort to violence toward others only as an alternative to suicide and, in many cases, kill themselves anyway after killing others. Capital punishment wouldn't be a deterrent to them." (Grant, *The Death Penalty Does Not Deter Crime*). In this case, it could've been possible that Grendel was simply looking for an escape from everything and was killing people because he could not kill himself. He knew that if he killed enough someone would come looking for revenge and it would be his time to go finally. So he continued to kill until Beowulf came and ended his life; more brutally then he may have liked. But no matter the circumstances Beowulf may have actually been helping Grendel without realizing it, by doing what he was unable to do himself.

All in all it comes down to the fact that an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind and killing a person because they killed someone else only fuels the vicious cycle of violence. There are other alternatives to killing a person as punishment. Such as they can be imprisoned for the rest of their lives, doomed to live out their days alone without any hope of ever being released. The death penalty does not stop crime. People are going to commit crimes and kill, and others will seek revenge. The death penalty may as well be an escape.