



May 19th 2009 - Tuesday



Hour 1: "Should the death penalty be abolished?" Thom confronts Dudley Sharp, Founder of Justice Matters www.deathpenalty.procon.org

Hour 2: "The future of the GOP...could they be a threat in 2012?" Thom challenges Charles W. Dunn, Dean of the Regent University School of Government www.regent.edu

Hour 3 - Could the CIA have misled Nancy Pelosi? Have they done this before? with Lamar Waldron

38 Responses to "May 19th 2009 - Tuesday"



John J O Roland May 18th, 2009, 5:59 pm

The Republican Theme Song, by Groucho Marx.
 I'm Against It
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DtMV44yoXZ0>
 [Groucho]
 I don't know what they have to say,
 It makes no difference anyway,
 Whatever it is, I'm against it.
 No matter what it is or who commenced it,
 I'm against it.

Your proposition may be good,
 But let's have one thing understood,
 Whatever it is, I'm against it.
 And even when you've changed it or condensed it,
 I'm against it.

I'm opposed to it,
 On general principle, I'm opposed to it.

[chorus] He's opposed to it.
 In fact, indeed, that he's opposed to it!

[Groucho]
 For months before my son was born,
 I used to yell from night to morn,
 Whatever it is, I'm against it.
 And I've kept yelling since I first commenced it,
 I'm against it!



Michael Tate May 19th, 2009, 6:41 am

Thom, I just listened to your show from yesterday, and last week I noted that you were slipping on your interviews with right wingers, but your conversation with Kerry Lucas was very well done. You did a good job pointing out some of the absurdity in her arguments, but you also treated her with respect and had a legitimate debate.

Just wanted to catch you doing something good!



Quark May 19th, 2009, 7:51 am

John J O Roland , thanks for referencing one of my favorite pieces — and it works so perfectly for today's politics, too!

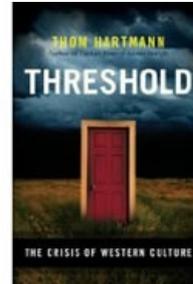


Quark May 19th, 2009, 8:12 am

Murder, Death Penalty: A rose by any other name... the outcome is the same.



KMH May 19th, 2009, 8:13 am



THOM HARTMANN'S
 LATEST BOOK
 "THRESHOLD"





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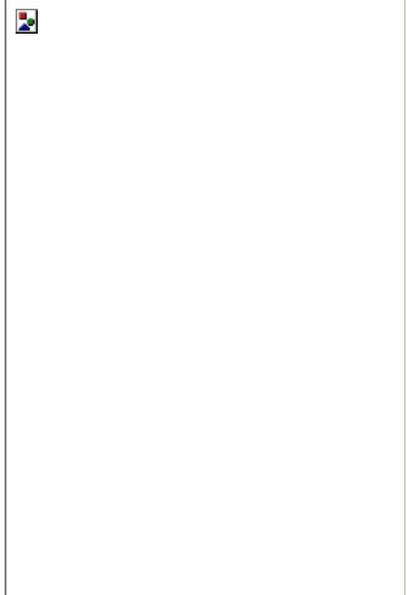
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Was not Thou Shalt Not Kill one of the Ten Commandments?



Quark May 19th, 2009, 8:16 am

KMH, funny how we use the Commandments and the Bible verses that fit our needs.



Lore May 19th, 2009, 8:22 am

With all respect, Mr Dudley Sharp is no speaker. He should try recording what he says and playing back to practice. He did not make any explanation. He made incomplete statements. The only thing he managed to say almost completely is that he considers opposition statements 'morally vacuous' or 'intellectually vacuous'. I would have like to hear his opinions in complete sentences. He didn't manage to convey enough facts to understand his position.



AZAFVET May 19th, 2009, 8:23 am

If a prisoner is sentenced to death by a jury of his peers, then people should also be available in a pool to be picked for execution by his peers service. How many fewer death penalty judgments would be made?



Wes May 19th, 2009, 8:26 am

Dudley Sharp completely missed the point when he said the actual number of innocent people was far lower than Thom's number. So??? As long as ONE innocent person is executed, it is a faulty method of punishment.

The Acid Test: If the lower number is acceptable, then I presume, if Mr Sharp has a son or daughter on death row who is innocent of charges, then he would accept their execution as an acceptable price to pay for keeping the death penalty. If NOT, then he and ALL other death penalty advocates are hypocrites.



Dusty May 19th, 2009, 8:34 am

The professor was pitifully unprepared. Murder, like torture, is unambiguous.

BTW, that segment was only audible for less than a minute. Is there anybody at KPOJ that is able to listen to what is being aired?



Michael Stubbs May 19th, 2009, 8:35 am

Death, no matter what form it takes, should have an impact upon the soul. When this is no longer the case we should really start to question our own humanity.

Despite what Mr. Sharp would like us to think, the resultant loss of life from having a death penalty law is a question of morality. How much do we become like a murderer when we put a murderer to death? Is there truly any justification for taking a human life? Unfortunately there is too much dissent on this subject to ever come to a resolution for mankind as a whole...



xeyeldinTX May 19th, 2009, 8:51 am

If the death penalty is meant as a deterrent to behavior that is destructive to the social fabric, ie murder, can we implement it against corrupt corporations, executives and politicians whose business practices, lobbying, and votes have directly and adversely affected our social fabric for the last 30 years?



KMH May 19th, 2009, 8:56 am

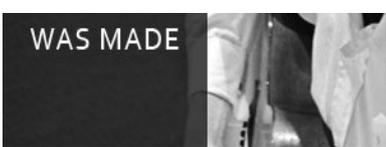
Its called Conflict Resolution- using war to end war is perpetual war.



mathboy May 19th, 2009, 9:04 am

I'm not exactly in favor of the death penalty; I'm on the fence. But it seems weird to me that the first kind of homicide people want to outlaw is the kind that comes after a careful consideration of the facts, rather than those that happen in the heat of the moment: soldiers may kill people that wear the wrong uniform, police may use lethal force against people who look like they're about to do something violent, and citizens may "defend their homes" from burglars under the make-my-day law (as

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it's called in Colorado). Why are those more moral than weighing evidence dispassionately to decide whether someone should die?

The only case in which I can really argue **for** the death penalty is treason committed by releasing state secrets. You never know if they have more secrets to release and even people in prison have ways of getting things done.



Judy May 19th, 2009, 9:04 am

Last year I learned about a fascinating organization, Murder victims' Families for Reconciliation (mvfr.org). Founded in 1976, this organization opposes the death penalties, and it welcomes families of both murder victims and the families of executed prisoners.

I learned about the organization at last year's Unitarian Universalist General Assembly. MVFR had a booth near UURISE (Unitarian Universalist Refugee and Immigrant Services and Information) where I was talking to people. The woman who spoke to me had lost her son and grandchildren to murder and was tormented by the possibility of Florida's threat to execute the murderer. Every time there was a new court proceeding, her grief became fresh. She felt compassion for the murderer's family, and even for the murderer.



Lore May 19th, 2009, 9:14 am

My father was telling me that there were two things that he learned in school that he thought students today would benefit from. One is the Athenian Oath - how we should treat our community. The other was the poem About Ben Adhem - understanding people are not that different. Also, we agreed that the golden rule is much more effective than the 10 commandments and doesn't cross the Church/State divide.

The Athenian Oath

We will never bring disgrace on this our City by an act of dishonesty or cowardice.

We will fight for the ideals and Sacred Things of the City both alone and with many.

We will revere and obey the City's laws, and will do our best to incite a like reverence and respect in those above us who are prone to annul them or set them at naught.

We will strive increasingly to quicken the public's sense of civic duty.

Thus in all these ways we will transmit this City, not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

About Ben Adhem

by Leigh Hunt

About Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)

Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,

An saw, within the moonlight in the room,

Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,

An angel writing in a book of gold.

Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,

And to the Presence in the room he said,

"What writest thou?" Then vision raised its head,

And with a look made of all sweet accord,

Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."

"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"

Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,

But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee then,

Write me as one who loves his fellow men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night

It came again with a great wakening light,

And showed the names who love of God had blessed,

And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Do unto others and you would have them do unto you.



Lore May 19th, 2009, 9:21 am

correct - sorry for errors above

My father was telling me that there were two things that he learned in school that he thought students today would benefit from. One is the Athenian Oath - how we should treat our community. The other was the poem About Ben Adhem - understanding people are not that different. Also, we agreed that the golden rule is much more effective than the 10 commandments and doesn't cross the Church/State divide.

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Abou Ben Adhem
by Leigh Hunt
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But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow men."

The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names who love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you!

Note: we will revere and obey the City's laws incite ... those about us who are prone to annul them or set them at naught . Seems to me that speaks of holding our politicians accountable and not above the law.



B Roll May 19th, 2009, 9:25 am

I don't know how the Republican Party can get its footing back, but I know how they can start. Start by keeping their feet out of their mouths. The problem is that putting their feet in their mouths seems to be a reflex.



mathboy May 19th, 2009, 9:27 am

On the "EIT" thing, I love the idea of the Bush Admin. being hanged on its own penchant for obfuscatory lingo.



Yellowbird May 19th, 2009, 9:59 am

We should make the people who believe in the death penalty financially support the families damaged by the loss of that bread winner. Send their children to college, pay for their homes, health care, food.

No argument. If you do it, you pay. If you don't believe in paying for it, you don't do it.

As for you republican callers from Rush's show? See ya in 2010. You're done.



mathboy May 19th, 2009, 10:02 am

Eliminating the death penalty doesn't fix the flaw in the justice system that convicts innocent people in the first place. I worry that the attention paid to the **form** of punishment obscures the need to refine how we decide **whether** to punish.



AZAFVET May 19th, 2009, 10:02 am

Isn't it interesting that pro-life people generally support the "death" penalty?



Stan May 19th, 2009, 10:26 am

Dudley Sharp's argument in comparing incarceration/kidnapping and death penalty/murder inadvertently gave me new insight not only into the Death Penalty but into Due Process and the 14th Amendment.

When someone is incarcerated in a civilized country he is promised Due Process throughout his incarceration. He is promised not to be tortured, not to be held incommunicado throughout his term, to be given a chance to prepare a defense, to be fed, etc. When someone is kidnapped none of these promises are given.

When someone is put to death any promise of due process beyond the moment of death is silly. Obviously, murder is the same.

When I've listened to John Yue argue in favor of the actions of the Bush Administration in holding prisoners the way they did, I've been struck with how he simply could not see what damage is done to individuals and civilized society in general when due process is ignored. This why I think the California Legislature should impeach him, if it constitutionally can, as an official of the State of California in his position as a Constitutional Law Professor.

When a government ignores due process, it devolves into just a gang of cutthroats. When a government imposes the death penalty it devolves into just another gang of cutthroats.



IndigoE May 19th, 2009, 10:28 am

About the "ugly republican" caller who exhibited such willingness to murder innocent people wrongly accused... Is he not an accessory to the crime of murder. And wonder if it was himself or someone he loves wrongly accused. Can't these people imagine the possibility of this affecting them personally at some time?



Kai Wen May 19th, 2009, 10:31 am

Boehner says that the CIA has never lied to him. That statement is not provable. He could prove that they have lied to him with a single example, but it is impossible to probe non-existence.

In California we have a special election on a bunch of budget issues. I want 2 bumper stickers:
Repeal prop 13
Recall Grover Norquist



B Roll May 19th, 2009, 10:36 am

No No No Thom...

You are mistaken... I missed the callers name, but I have long agreed with his sentiments. I've even posted them on this page.

You constantly have conservative guests on your show, sometimes 2 or 3 a show and many over and over again. But progressive guests are few and far between. And when you have them on, it's usually on topics on which there will be little if any disagreement.

But make no mistake about it, there are credible people on the left who would be willing to come on your show and have much to offer your audience.

I've felt for a long time that you want to be seen as the voice of the left. That's odd when you sometime call yourself the "radical middle". And I have to wonder if you avoid having more progressives (and more progressive) guests on your show so your conservative side won't be revealed.

I've heard you say that there is no Left in this country, but then you used a definition that only would include groups like the Socialist or Communist Parties as the left. Today's left isn't like that. It's fragmented. That's one of its major weaknesses. But that doesn't mean that there is no Left.

If you don't think there are people who are to the left of you and willing to come on your show, listen to Democracy Now! or any of the Pacifica radio stations. You can do that online.

Shame on you for the way you responded to the caller who asked you have more progressive guests on. The DUMP BUTTON is a coward's tool. As soon as he started his point, you cut him off and declared yourself just about as left as it gets.

Topics you're not very left on:

- 1) Israel/Palestine: You're totally and shamefully biased in favor of Israel. I really don't think you can face the truth of the situation there. Let me give you an example. You almost never mention Israel's treatment of Palestinians. On the day you interviewed Amy Goodman about her book, Amy had around 5 stories in her headline stories about Israeli mistreatment of Palestinians.
- 2) Capitalism vs Socialism: You say you're not afraid of the word "socialism" but you are if the word "Democratic" doesn't precede the word socialism. You don't want the government making your shoes.
- 3) Economic Fairness: You make no bones about the fact that you favor well regulated capitalism. But to you it's perfectly fine for a CEO or corporate owner to be paid 30 to 40 times more than the companies workers. Don't you think there are a lot of people to the left of you on that issue.
- 4) Illegal Immigration: You're too nice and may think you'll get too much flak from your listeners if you said round up the illegal immigrants and throw them out of the country. So instead, you say we don't have an illegal worker problem, we have an illegal employer problem. Crack down on the employers and the illegal immigrants will leave. I call that a starve them out strategy. You feel they'd rather starve in their country than here. And you invoke the name of Cesar Chavez to support your position. When you have, I've asked you, on this blog, to have Dolores Huerta, the co-founder of the United Farm Workers as a guest because I know she doesn't agree with you. So far, you haven't. Why?
- 5) AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD: You're aware of the way the United States has conducted itself in world affairs. You know about the work of Howard Zinn, Noam Chomsky, John Perkins, Stephen Kinzer and many

more. You choose to see the United States as the "good-guys" and disregard this well known history.

That's just a partial list of topics that there are many credible and well spoken people who are to the left of you. But it seems you don't want the less informed members of your audience to know that.

So instead of having informative and valuable guests who are to the left of you, you continue your ritual of repetitive word wars with your conservative guests.

It was shameful the way you dumped the caller who asked that you have some more progressive guests. And then you told us that you do a fine job of representing the views of the left. I hope you didn't hurt your arm patting yourself on the back. Is that what you call your humble opinion?



Yellowbird May 19th, 2009, 10:38 am

I thought you all would like to know that Dick Cheney has announced his support for Jeb Bush for President in 2012:

<http://features.csmonitor.com/politics/2009/05/13/cheney-supports-bush-for-president/>



Stan May 19th, 2009, 10:39 am

Please, please repeal Prop 13 for commercial enterprises and corporations. (There are very few small homeowners still eligible for Prop 13 relief.)

Back to a progressive tax system!!!!



KMH May 19th, 2009, 10:42 am

The money system is like a heating and cooling system! If described as CHI - in Feng Shui we know that energy stagnates. Time for Feng Shui Master Society!



Yellowbird May 19th, 2009, 10:57 am

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/05/19/cafferty.bush.administration/index.html>

Jack Cafferty gets it.



Quark May 19th, 2009, 11:37 am

KMH,

Re: KMH, funny how we use the Commandments and the Bible verses that fit our needs.

It always amazes me how many people who call themselves "Christians" do NOT live their lives guided by Christ's words to forgive and love, especially as detailed in the Sermon on the Mount. Instead, they harken back to the Old Testament and channel an angry, vindictive, punishing God. They should call themselves "PreChristians." This love of the death penalty is vindictive and PreChristian.



Tony in Maine May 19th, 2009, 12:00 pm

Hi Thom,

I know you're talking about the death penalty, which i am totally against. I thought you and your listeners might be interested in an e mail i recieved from my congresswoman. Rep. Chellie Pingree wrote me to let me know about a bill that she is co-sponsoring, which is for expanding Medicare to all Americans. Its HR 676, so maybe if all of your listeners, and web viewers write their members of congress and urge them to vote for this bill.



Textynnn May 19th, 2009, 12:06 pm

This whole Nancy Pelosi thing is the Republicans' version of the old playground game "I know you are, but what am I". It is so stupid I can't believe the country isn't screaming to get these mentally deficient, developmentally impaired, rich, socially backward, dorks placed in a home somewhere. None of this infantile logic would be accepted in the real world, only in this Alice IN Wonderland Reality our leaders are forcing the American public to accept.

How long has the entire American public been aware of torture? How long have pictures of hooded prisoners been circulating? Long before the Bush Administration went away. Our entire Congress and Senate has played possum the whole damn time while the country screamed "Impeach, Impeach Impeach". Nothing happened. Nancy P sashayed up to the podium and smiled gratuitously and said, "IMPEACHMENT IS OFF THE TABLE" Then she basically treated the country like a child and sent us to bed on the subject.

How long has Dennis Kucinich been trying to wake up the American public

that we are being led by an elite government in which a good chunk of Democrats are working for. Again, How long has the whole nation known about Torture

Dennis J. Kucinich of Ohio
In the United States House of Representatives
Monday, June 9th, 2008 (Almost a year ago this was written)
A Resolution

Article XVIII
Torture: Secretly Authorizing, and Encouraging the Use of Torture Against Captives in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Other Places, as a Matter of Official Policy
Article XIX
Rendition: Kidnapping People and Taking Them Against Their Will to "Black Sites" Located in Other Nations, Including Nations Known to Practice Torture
Article XX
<http://kucinich.us/impeachment/articles.pdf>

How long has Vincent Bugliosi's book been published? And how long before that did it take to write it. Everybody's known for a long long time, the entire world has known. So who ordered and who made the country stand down and live with it??? Any other conversation is a big slow bully forcing us to play his game.



jacmacc May 19th, 2009, 12:50 pm

Below is what TPMuckraker is reporting about the CIA-Pelosi controversy at http://tpmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2009/05/source_eit_term_wasnt_in_use_when_pelosi_was_brief.php.

Thom Hartmann's discussion of the EIT incident was much better and appears to have been a scoop on everyone else. But it is regrettable that his show is not available in archives and there apparently is no transcript, so the invaluable discussion may be lost. What Thom and Lamar Waldron discussed about the history of CIA lying and connecting it to the EIT should be made available for wide distribution to inform the public, which the media are unlikely to do. If nothing else, Thom and/or Waldron should publish something covering their research and analysis into this incident, which could help to expose the deceit of the CIA.

UPDATED: Source: "EIT" Term Wasn't In Use When Pelosi Was Briefed By Zachary Roth - May 19, 2009, 12:27PM
Here's yet another reason (as if more were needed) to doubt that that CIA briefings document perfectly reflects what lawmakers were told about torture back in the early days of the war on terror.

Almost every briefing described in the document — including the September 2002 Pelosi briefing that's directly at issue — refers to "EITs," or enhanced interrogation techniques, as a subject that was discussed. But according to a former intelligence professional who has participated in such briefings, that term wasn't used until at least 2006* (see correction below).

That's not just an issue of semantics. The former intel professional said that by using the term in the recently compiled document, the CIA was being "disingenuous," trying to make it appear that the use of such techniques was part of a "formal and mechanical program." In fact, said the former intel pro, it wasn't until 2006* (see correction below) that — amid growing concerns about the program among some in the Bush administration — the EIT program was formalized, and the "enhanced interrogation techniques" were properly defined and given a name.

The former intel professional, no partisan defender of Democrats, faulted Nancy Pelosi for not pressing harder in the briefing to determine exactly which techniques had and hadn't been used. "The extent to which members ask questions should drive what's going on," said the former intel pro. "It's your job to ask."

Still, the impression created by the CIA, and by Republicans looking to use the document to damage Pelosi, is that as early as 2002 there was a universally agreed upon definition of enhanced interrogation techniques (the document, remember, doesn't say that waterboarding was mentioned during the Pelosi briefing). In reality, it appears, the term, and the techniques it encompassed, occupied a far murkier realm.

*Correction: A Nexis search which we should have done earlier shows that the term "enhanced interrogation techniques" was used by CIA from June 2004 onwards. That month, the Associated Press reported: The CIA has suspended use of some White House-approved aggressive interrogation tactics employed to extract information from reluctant al-Qaida prisoners, The Washington Post said. Citing unnamed intelligence officials, the newspaper reported in Sunday's editions that what the CIA calls "enhanced interrogation techniques" were put on hold pending a review by Justice Department and other lawyers.

So the use of the term does indeed appear to have coincided with the emergence of widespread concern about the use of such techniques, and it doesn't seem to have been in use when Pelosi was briefed in September 2002. But clearly the term was in use two years earlier than we originally said.

#



jacmacc May 19th, 2009, 3:34 pm

More on CIA and Pelosi from the Daily Kos:

Let's count up all the evidence for Pelosi's claims by toughliberal

Tue May 19, 2009 at 11:22:35 AM PDT

Nancy Pelosi says the CIA lied to her. The CIA said they didn't. Classic she said/they said, right? Well, let's tally up all the evidence from both sides, and find out.

The CIA's notes and Pelosi's recollection are each one piece of evidence. So far it's even - Pelosi 1, CIA 1.

Porter Goss, who was there at the crucial September 2002 briefing, said, "I can't believe anyone would have heard the briefing and not realized the practices were actually being used." In other words, it wasn't explicit - exactly what Pelosi is claiming. Pelosi 2, CIA 1.

toughliberal's diary :: ::

The CIA spreadsheet of briefings shows Democrats were briefed later (months later) than Republicans (they are listed on the same day, then there's an asterisk that explains it wasn't actually the same day - a blatant attempt at misleading all by itself). So the CIA was treating Dems differently than Repubs, by their own admission. Pelosi 3, CIA 1.

Cheney, Addington, Rove, etc. were well-known as being secretive and refusing to submit to any oversight. Even Bob Novak in his memoir complains about this. Bush's head of Faith-Based Initiatives John Delulio quit in 2001, complaining that "everything is run through the political office." So it flies in the face of reason to think they'd have let the CIA tell Nancy Pelosi about waterboarding 2 months before the midterms. They probably got the CIA briefer to mumble at the crucial point. (If you think that's crazy, consider this: Reagan's CIA Director William Casey would pull the same thing. According to Bob Woodward's book Veil, when Casey told Secretary of State George Shultz that they'd laid some mines in Nicaragua, Shultz thought he'd said "paid some fines on some joggers." You can't make this stuff up). Pelosi 4, CIA 1.

Leon Panetta backs up the CIA, but all he did was regurgitate the original report. He is an old-school congressional baron who has long-documented problems with women in power, as documented in Jeffrey Birnbaum's book Madhouse (when Panetta runs Dee Dee Myers out of the White House). Panetta's pick to replace her, Mike McCurry, was criticized for not including female reporters. Plus Panetta is much closer to Pelosi rival Rahm Emanuel. His motivation here is obvious: he's trying to be buddy-buddy with his new agency, and doesn't care what some female says. No new evidence for the CIA's story here.

Final score: Pelosi 4, CIA 1. Pelosi wins easily.



tom May 19th, 2009, 3:58 pm

In the last call at the end of Hour 1 Thom said that Gandhi was not assassinated.

He was, after 5 attempts, they were successful on the 6th:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination_of_Mahatma_Gandhi#Assassination



Martutu May 19th, 2009, 7:05 pm

With regard to today's discussion of the death penalty, I've always thought that the arguments in favor or against, skirt the core issue. I am opposed to the death penalty but acknowledge that if someone committed the worst crimes against someone I love that I would want to kill that person myself. This is our natural human instinct. This aggressive nature is a part of our evolution; pro and con. I would submit that it's more con than pro at this stage and that it is the heart of the problem. We need to acknowledge this and find a way forward that values peace over aggression. We cannot do this if we are constantly waging war and committing government sponsored executions. The goal is to have our children grow up in a world where they are taught early that killing is wrong and that you are ostracized from society as a result. This does not mean I believe we should let the worst criminals in our societies get a second chance; I do not. It's about the future, not the present.



Tim May 19th, 2009, 7:34 pm

My solution to the problem of the death penalty is that if someone innocent is put to death (discovered after the fact of course) then the original DA, and prosecutor(s), the appeals DA and prosecutor(s), anyone in charge, loses all rights to hold a government job, with the loss of benefits. So if the original prosecutor is now state senator when it is discovered that the death penalty case they were in charge of person was innocent, well they are out of office. This would reduce the death penalty cases to ones where you have 100% proof, and if they are not sure, no death penalty.

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