

# Solitary Watch

## Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://solitarywatch.org/2010/02/12/louisiana-sues-its-own-death-row-prisoners/>

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close

Search

close

close

by [James Ridgeway and Jean Casella](#) | February 12, 2010

The Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections last Friday sued every inmate on death row, in an effort to block any one of them from challenging the state's lethal injection procedures. Each of the 84 prisoners in the death house at Angola State Penitentiary was personally served papers in the suit, said Nick Trenticosta, who has represented numerous clients on Angola's death row.

Trenticosta, who is also director of the non-profit Center for Equal Justice in New Orleans, knows of no other instance in which a state sued its death row inmates en masse over legal questions relating to their execution. I've been hanging around death penalty cases for 25 years, Trenticosta said in a phone interview this morning, and I have never seen anything like this.

The Corrections Department's litigation is a countersuit, filed in response to an earlier lawsuit claiming that Louisiana's lethal injection procedure is in violation of state law. That suit was filed by the Capital Post Conviction Project of Louisiana (CPCPL) on behalf of death row prisoner Nathaniel Code. It stated that Louisiana had not met the requirements of its own Administrative Procedures Act in creating guidelines for execution by lethal injection. The state procedure ought to specify exactly what drugs should be used to kill prisoners, the CPCPL argued, rather than simply calling for the administration of drugs. Without such stipulations, Trenticosta said, They're saying if we want to pour boiling oil into your veins, we can do it.

Just over a month ago, on January 8, a state district court in Baton Rouge dismissed Nathaniel Code's suit, which would have halted all executions in Louisiana until the Corrections Department brought its procedures in line with state law. Attorneys for the state argued that Louisiana's three-drug lethal injection protocol was not subject to the Administrative Procedures Act; the judge agreed, and threw out the suit.

All this happened the day after Gerald Bordelon was executed by lethal injection in Angola's death chamber for the murder of his 12-year-old stepdaughter. The execution on January 7 was the first to take place in Louisiana for eight years, and proceeded after Bordelon chose to waive post-conviction appeals. According to the [Associated Press](#), the hearing on Code's suit was purposely scheduled the day after Gerald Bordelon's execution, because Bordelon's attorneys had told the judge he did not want anything to disrupt his execution.

Nathaniel Code's attorneys said they would appeal the judge's ruling to Louisiana's First Circuit Court of Appeal. The law is being violated. It was violated yesterday, CPCPL director Gary Clements said, referencing Bordelon's execution.

The state of Louisiana, however, has already initiated offensive maneuvers against further challenges to its methods of execution. Immediately after the ruling in Code's suit, the Corrections Department filed its countersuit against all death row inmates. The department's attorney, Wade Shows, told the [Baton Rouge Advocate](#) that Louisiana was asking the court to formally declare once and for all that the state's lethal injection protocol is not subject to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act. Such a ruling, Shows said, means you don't have to go through the rule-making process. It's sort of an internal management decision.

Similar challenges in other states have yielded mixed results. According to the [AP](#), Courts around the country have split over whether states should have to follow the administrative procedures in adopting a lethal injection protocol. Courts in Maryland, Nebraska, California, and Kentucky have ruled that the procedural requirements do apply to the execution method. In these states, executions were suspended while proper procedures were carried out, often including public hearings. Courts in Missouri and Tennessee have ruled that the procedures do not apply. Only Louisiana, however, has dealt with the issue by suing the residents of its own death row.

On a larger scale, execution by lethal injection which is used in 35 states has faced several [legal challenges](#) in recent years, on the grounds that it violates the Constitutional ban on cruel and unusual punishment. These challenges were propelled in part by several horribly botched execution attempts, in which prisoners were stuck with IV needles numerous times over periods of up to two hours, and in a few cases returned to their cells when attempts failed. Opponents have also argued that the later drugs in the three-drug protocol may cause excruciating pain, which dying prisoners cannot express because the initial drugs have paralyzed them.

In April 2008, the [U.S. Supreme Court ruled](#) 7-2 that lethal injection was not unconstitutional; it is the method of execution believed to be the most humane available, Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in the majority opinion. If administered as intended, that procedure will result in a painless death. The decision put an end to a de facto six-month moratorium on death by lethal injection, but some states have

yet to resume their execution schedules.

Louisiana seems determined to have the choice to execute if and when it wants to, without interference from prisoner lawsuits alleging administrative technicalities. This despite the fact that in recent years, the state has shown relatively little zeal for carrying out executions, compared to neighboring Texas. While Angolas death chamber has been made famous by the films *Dead Man Walking* and *Monsters Ball*, only [three executions](#) have been carried out there in the last ten years.

Angola Warden Burl Cain, who oversees all executions in Louisiana, has indicated that it [causes him pain](#) to put prisoners to death. But Cain, famously, appears more focused on heavenly justice than on the earthly variety. Cain executed his first prisoner in 1995, and later said, I felt him go to hell as I held his hand. He told the [Baptist Press](#), I decided that night I would never again put someone to death without telling him about his soul and about Jesus.

If executions were ever to resume in Louisiana at the rates common in the 1980s, heavenly justice might be all that's available to some of the inmates on death row. According to the [New Orleans Times-Picayune](#), Since the United States reinstated the death penalty in 1976, Orleans Parish juries have condemned 38 defendants to death. But a recent tally by attorneys for death-row inmates calculated that courts have found errors in 25 of those sentences, or nearly two-thirds. In some cases defendants were retried, resulting in convictions on lesser charges, while in others defendants were released.

James Ridgeway (1936-2021) was the founder and co-director of Solitary Watch. An investigative journalist for over 60 years, he served as Washington Correspondent for the Village Voice and Mother Jones, reporting domestically on subjects ranging from electoral politics to corporate malfeasance to the rise of the racist far-right, and abroad from Central America, Northern Ireland, Eastern Europe, Haiti, and the former Yugoslavia. Earlier, he wrote for The New Republic and Ramparts, and his work appeared in dozens of other publications. He was the co-director of two films and author of 20 books, including a forthcoming posthumous edition of his groundbreaking 1991 work on the far right, *Blood in the Face*. Jean Casella is the director of Solitary Watch. She has also published work in The Guardian, The Nation, and Mother Jones, and is co-editor of the book *Hell Is a Very Small Place: Voices from Solitary Confinement*. She has received a Soros Justice Media Fellowship and an Alicia Patterson Fellowship. She tweets [@solitarywatch](#).

Accurate information and authentic storytelling can serve as powerful antidotes to ignorance and injustice. We have helped generate public awareness, mainstream media attention, and informed policymaking on what was once an invisible domestic human rights crisis.

Only with your support can we continue this groundbreaking work, shining light into the darkest corners of the U.S. criminal punishment system.

by [Juan Moreno Haines](#)

October 25, 2022

by [Solitary Watch Guest Author](#)

October 13, 2022

by [Vaidya Gullapalli](#)

September 29, 2022

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America has got to put a stop to this! Death Penalty is not in my country. However, that's not to say that we don't have murder etc etc. WE DO!!! The victims need compensation Life in Prison is the way to go. Our prisons and country is not as big as the US, but I am constantly confused about how the world views America. Well in this country, America is the GO TO country for welfare reform, education reforms, philosophy EVERYTHING!!!! Confusion all round. How can we have this worldview, knowing that Death is rampant in that country?. Inconsistent penalties handed down. Corrupt Police, corrupt lawyers, corrupt judges, corruption everywhere there. Where is the fairness and equity in that country?. A scary place to live in, let alone visit. Our country is absolutely stupid for placing the USA on a pedestal. All I ask is that EVERYONE is given a fair and equitable chance to have their cases heard. Has anyone heard of Beyond Reasonable Doubt? I wonder what that means to lawyers, police etc? How can circumstantial evidence be enough to put someone to death? How can bribes and bullying tactics by police be enough to put someone to death? How can that happen? What's happened People of America? Why the brutality? Why the constant promotion for blood? Why Why Why. Bloodthirsty nation.. Murder is abhorrent Putting someone to death who hasn't had a fair trial is worse. How can you sleep at night wondering whether that person was innocent after he's been euthanized? Why are the courts allowed to deny someone the opportunity to DNA testing? Surely the courts are there to not only protect the victim, but to also ascertain what is truth and what is lie. What is the problem with allowing it? Surely you will find out whether that person committed the crime or not? What's the problem here? Make it happen! I'm sure the victim/s and their families would want to know. Sure, they'd be pissed off, but wouldn't they be surprised if the DNA pointed to someone else. If that happened, what would those families do? What would they say? Just my thoughts people.. I am sure someone out there will either inform me better, or will growl at me..

America Sucks Full Stop

Oops the source of the above economic data was:

The BBC reported startling economic inequality figures in a 2008 documentary: the top 200 wealthiest people in the world control more wealth than the bottom 4 billion. But what is more striking to many is a close look at the economic inequality in the homeland of the

American Dream. The United States is one of the most economically stratified societies in the western world. As THE WALL STREET JOURNAL reported, a 2008 study found that the top .01% or 14,000 American families hold 22.2% of wealth. The bottom 90%, or over 133 million families, control just 4% of the nations wealth.

Found at:

<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/profile4.html>

Facts presented by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, epidemiologists whose book THE SPIRIT LEVEL: WHY GREATER EQUALITY MAKES SOCIETIES STRONGER

[http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/transcript\\_inequality.html](http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/transcript_inequality.html)

Inequality begins to rise in the 1970s and now we have:

The top 200 wealthiest people in the world control more wealth than the bottom 4 billion.

The top .01% or 14,000 American families hold 22.2% of wealth.

The bottom 90%, or over 133 million families, control just 4% of the nations wealth.

Bill Moyers Journal on April 4th 2010:

<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/transcript3.html>

BRYAN STEVENSON: In this country the opposite of poverty is not wealth in America, the opposite of poverty is justice.

The prison populations have been steadily increasing in this country since the early 1970s and 2/3s is due to a harsher judicial system enforcing such laws as three strikes.

Weve gone from 300 thousand people in jails and prison in 1972, to 2.3 million people in jails and prisons today. With nearly 5 million people on probation and parole most of that increase is explained by this so-called war on drugs.

The United States reinstated the death penalty in 1976.

BRYAN STEVENSON: For every eight people who have been executed, weve identified one innocent person.

If we will tolerate that kind of error rate in the death penalty context, it reveals a whole lot about the rest of our criminal justice system and about the rest of our society.

BILL MOYERS: In this richest of countries, more than 40 million people are living in poverty. At some point in their childhoods, half of Americas children will use food stamps to eat.

The most unequal countries have more homicide, more obesity, more mental illness, more teen pregnancy, more high-school dropouts, and more people in prison.

The United States, they report, has the greatest inequality of income of any major developed country. Thats the betrayal of the American promise.

A society whose economic system cannot make those opportunities widely available is in deep trouble, the dreams of its people mocked and denied.

ATUL GAWANDE: Our first supermaxour first institution specifically designed for mass solitary confinementwas not established until 1983, in Marion, Illinois.

The number of prisoners in these facilities has since risen to extraordinary levels. America now holds at least twenty-five thousand inmates in isolation in supermax prisons. An additional fifty to eighty thousand are kept in restrictive segregation units, many of them in isolation, too, although the government does not release these figures.

Advocates of solitary confinement are left with a single argument for subjecting thousands of people to years of isolation: What else are we supposed to do? How else are we to deal with the violent, the disruptive, the prisoners who are just too dangerous to be housed with others?

Prison violence, it turns out, is not simply an issue of a few belligerents. In the past thirty years, the United States has quadrupled its incarceration rate but not its prison space. Work and education programs have been cancelled, out of a belief that the pursuit of rehabilitation is pointless. The result has been unprecedented overcrowding, along with unprecedented idlenessa nice formula for violence. Remove a few prisoners to solitary confinement, and the violence doesnt change. So you remove some more, and still nothing happens. Before long, you find yourself in the position we are in today.

The simple truth is that public sentiment in America is the reason that solitary confinement has exploded in this country, even as other Western nations have taken steps to reduce it.

In much the same way that a previous generation of Americans countenanced legalized segregation, ours has countenanced legalized torture. And there is no clearer manifestation of this than our routine use of solitary confinementon our own people, in our own communities, in a supermax prison, for example, that is a thirty-minute drive from my door.

Read more: [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/03/30/090330fa\\_fact\\_gawande#ixzz0kRCiyRum](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/03/30/090330fa_fact_gawande#ixzz0kRCiyRum)

So Kain wants to kill a brother cheaply. Interesting!

After reading all the posts on this subject I thought about this interview by Bill Moyers this weekend.

An excerpt from Bill Moyers Journal on April 4th 2010:  
<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/transcript3.html>

BILL MOYERS: Your passion is the abolition of capital punishment. Each case is horrendous in its own right but relatively few people are affected by capital punishment. Why has capital punishment become so symbolic of what you see as the crisis in American justice and American life?

BRYAN STEVENSON: Its only in a country where you have the death penalty that you can have life without parole for somebody who writes bad checks and somebody else who steals a bicycle. And so, it shapes the way we think about punishment. You know, weve gotten very comfortable with really harsh and excessive sentences.

And I think the death penalty permits that.

But I also think that it really challenges us, if we will execute innocent people.

For every eight people who have been executed, weve identified one innocent person.

If we will tolerate that kind of error rate in the death penalty context, it reveals a whole lot about the rest of our criminal justice system and about the rest of our society.  
[http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/transcript\\_inequality.html](http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/transcript_inequality.html)

RICHARD WILKINSON: Well, what weve discovered is health is just one of many issues which are worse in more unequal societies, including violence or teenage births and all sorts of other problems. These are not just a little bit worse in more unequal societies, but are much worse.

You find three times the amount of mental illness, or six or eight times the homicide rate or eight times the differences in teenage birth rates; all sorts of huge differences and on almost any of these kinds of measures, more unequal countries do worse.

Almost everything gets worse: homicide rates, how kids get on at school, math and literacy scores, teenage birth rates, obesity. Mental illness is worse, how much people feel they can trust others, the size of prison populations, what proportion of the population are locked up, measures of social cohesion, how much people are involved in community life. Everything seems to get worse.

From about the 1930 onwards, youve been becoming steadily more equal, until you get to sometime in the late 1970s. And then the inequality rises again.

BILL MOYERS: You have a chapter here on imprisonment and punishment. And you point out that prison populations have been increasing steadily in this country since the early 1970s.

KATE PICKETT: I think what surprised us is that while theres clearly a much higher rate of imprisonment in the more unequal countries, and its not particularly closely related to crime rates. I think thats the most interesting thing.

BILL MOYERS: What do you mean?

KATE PICKETT: Criminologists here in the USA have estimated that for your changing state levels of imprisonment, only about a third of that can be explained by change in crime rates. The rest is due to a harsher judicial system.

RICHARD WILKINSON: Punitive sentences.

KATE PICKETT: I mean, some people have said that the easiest and surest route to creating a violent criminal is to send them to prison.

RICHARD WILKINSON: But this punitive sentencing in more unequal countries is part of a wider picture of how the quality of the social fabric in a society can deteriorate. Its not only the harsher sentencing or more punitive sentencing, its that the levels of trust go right down, community life weakens, and we have less to do with each other. We become more competitive with each other. And we value less the idea of a sort of shared reciprocity and common interests, or interest in the general well-being, and that kind of thing.

Statistics found on Bill Moyers Journal:  
<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/04022010/profile4.html>

The BBC reported startling economic inequality figures in a 2008 documentary: the top 200 wealthiest people in the world control more wealth than the bottom 4 billion.

But what is more striking to many is a close look at the economic inequality in the homeland of the American Dream.

The United States is one of the most economically stratified societies in the western world.

As THE WALL STREET JOURNAL reported, a 2008 study found that the top .01% or 14,000 American families hold 22.2% of wealth. The bottom 90%, or over 133 million families, control just 4% of the nations wealth.

Back to BMJ on Aril 4th 2010:

BRYAN STEVENSON: In this country the opposite of poverty is not wealth in America, the opposite of poverty is justice.

MICHELLE ALEXANDER: There are two Americas in the United States, one where people have great opportunities and can dream big dreams, and another America where people are mired in poverty and stuck in a permanent second class status. Those two Americas still exist today.

Today, people are targeted by law enforcement for relatively minor, nonviolent, often at very young ages, for these relatively minor

offenses. Arrested, branded felons, and then ushered into a parallel social universe, in which they can be denied the right to vote, automatically excluded from juries, and legally discriminated against in many of the ways in which African Americans were discriminated against during the Jim Crow era.

We have a system of laws, policies, and practices in the United States today that operate to lock particularly poor people, in an inferior second-class status for life.

BRYAN STEVENSON: At the same time, we've gone from 300 thousand people in jails and prison in 1972, to 2.3 million people in jails and prisons today. With nearly 5 million people on probation and parole most of that increase is explained by this so-called war on drugs.

We didn't have to incarcerate people for 10, 20, 30, 40 years for simple possession of marijuana, for drug use. We made choices around that. And now the consequences are devastating.

And this culture of despair is a function of this so-called war on drugs; which has diminished the aspirations and hopes of people in ways that contribute to cycles of violence, destruction and hopelessness.

MICHELLE ALEXANDER: Now, the rules and laws that exist today, the drug laws and the ways in which they're enforced, all of the forms of discrimination that people who have been branded felons now face. All the forms of legal discrimination against them these are all wires of the cage that serve to keep people trapped in an inferior, second-class status.

BRYAN STEVENSON: The states that have had the lowest rates of incarceration growth have actually had the greatest rates of reduction of crime.

A three strikes law, where you can be sentenced to life imprisonment without parole for four felony convictions.

It's only in a country where you have the death penalty that you can have life without parole for somebody who writes bad checks and somebody else who steals a bicycle. And so, it shapes the way we think about punishment. You know, we've gotten very comfortable with really harsh and excessive sentences.

And I think the death penalty permits that.

MICHELLE ALEXANDER: The entrance into this new caste system can be found at the prison gate, because that is when you are branded. Once you are branded a felon, right? Your life as you knew it before is over. All the forms of discrimination that are illegal for the rest of the country, now can be practiced against you with impunity, you know?

There are white families, particularly poor white families that have been shattered by the incarceration of loved ones. Truly few benefit from the imposition of these vast systems of control.

BRYAN STEVENSON: You judge the character of a society by how you treat the poor, the condemned, the incarcerated. And I think this is an American challenge that Dr. King understood. But that we haven't embraced.

BILL MOYERS: In this richest of countries, more than 40 million people are living in poverty.

At some point in their childhoods, half of America's children will use food stamps to eat.

The more equal the society, they found, the longer its people live, while the most unequal countries have more homicide, more obesity, more mental illness, more teen pregnancy, more high-school dropouts, and more people in prison. The United States, they report, has the greatest inequality of income of any major developed country. That's the betrayal of the American promise.

I've come to understand that what the richest and strongest among us want for their families is what most all members of society want for theirs, too: a home, steady work, enough money for a comfortable life and secure old age, the means to cope with illness and other misfortunes, and the happiness of living freely as citizens without fear.

A society whose economic system cannot make those opportunities widely available is in deep trouble, the dreams of its people mocked and denied.

Bob, I bought a box of bullets earlier today for 19 dollars and change how much does it cost to house and feed a murder for a year?

Just wondering how if you both for the death penalty and against the death penalty which should be done? Should they die or not..?

Carrie,

You state Having watched a friend be executed with the lethal injection at Huntsville, I can assure you, it is neither quick nor painless

I have several questions:

How long did it take? How was the pain manifested and for how long did such pain endure? Do you know which drugs were used and the effect of each drug?

For what crime was your friend executed. How long did he live after committing the crime? How quick and painless was his victim's death?

Thank you for considering your answers.

To date 251 people on death row have been totally exonerated post conviction: that's not new evidence which has cast doubt on their convictions, rather evidence which means they cannot have done it comes to light. Imagine how rarely such evidence will be preserved

over 15, 20 or 25 years, and one can only conclude that these are a lucky few.

We have to accept that, until we can read peoples minds or go back in time as observers, it is impossible to prove definitively that someone is guilty: juries are directed that the standard of proof is merely beyond all reasonable doubt for this very reason.

I would ask all those who profess to be in favour of the death penalty to explain, if killing another human being is so terribly wrong (and I of course believe that it is), why they would seek to emulate the behaviour.

The death penalty is not necessary. Proof? Well, you can look at the record of the many other countries who do not accept it, you can look at those states in the US who do not accept it, and you can look at the record in the US as a whole during the years when it was not permitted on Constitutional grounds. All of those records show that the use of the death penalty does not reduce the rate of capital crimes, and that we can all muddle through just fine without it.

The death penalty is final, and in the extreme case of the Orleans parish example given in the article show, in as many as 2/3 of the cases in which a human being has been sentenced to death, errors are found that reduced the sentence or freed the individual. Two-thirds. This is undoubtedly a very high error rate, but the death penalty turns the process of correcting errors into a desperate race against the clock. And, particularly in cases based solely on circumstantial evidence, eyewitness testimony by strangers, or dishonest and/or incompetent prosecutors, defenders, or judges, there is a high risk that the errors will never be revealed. It seems almost certain that people who have been executed in the US actually have a wide range of degree of guilt, from completely innocent in some cases, to guilty but with undisclosed mitigating circumstances in many others, to fully guilty as charged in others. Our technology and our criminal procedures are simply not good enough to prevent executions due to errors of some kind; this means that there has been and will be significant collateral damage in the form of unjustified state homicides. This should be completely unacceptable, even to those who accept the (pre-Christian, pre-enlightenment) talionic principle that taking a life can be an appropriate penalty for a crime.

Once the crime prevention and eye-for-an-eye arguments have been dismantled, we are left with victims rights, in other words, vengeance. Yet, the very reason for having a system of laws, from the ancient Talion to our more complicated system of constitutions, statutes, laws, and administrative procedures, is to replace the concept of vengeance with a more controlled system of punishments and preventative measures that is less harmful to the public order. Vengeance is the argument given by lynch mobs, by the vendetta, and by packs of animals; it is not a respectable argument for an American to make (in my opinion). And, it inherently causes disorder because one groups vengeance is so often seen by its victims as an attack or an escalation. I would hope that in this new millennium, we would be capable of keeping such playground morality out of our courts.

Having watched a friend be executed with the lethal injection at Huntsville, I can assure you, it is neither quick nor painless. The death penalty is barbaric, and still being used in the countries with the worst human rights records, ie Iran, China and of course the USA. Capital punishment, actually means, those with no capital get punished. The Canadian Coalition against the Death Penalty states that since Bush came to power, 2 out of every 3 executions are of Gulf War veterans. Having written to 5 people on death row, I know that 3 of them were in fact ex-veterans, and two were found guilty and executed on the sole evidence of witnesses. In one case it was a paid informant, paid \$500 by the police to give evidence, the other was a witness that confessed to having 14 cans of lager, a bottle of wine, and went on to recant her statement, having said she was lent on by the police. Those who are in favour of the State murdering their own, have surely never had any real experience of how arbitrary justice is or how easy it is to find yourself on death row.

I have mixed feelings about the use of capital punishment so I am neither 100% anti or 100% pro, but this lawsuit against the people on death row seems deeply wrong.

Hey Gary-  
Maybe we can just go back to using the Guillatin

We could reduce the costs of incarceration on Death Row by much reducing the wait times. If we have sure proof ie video or other for sure incriminating evidence, lets put them to death within 30days and stop playing around.

Race to the bottom.

I understand drowning is one of the most painless ways of dying. Maybe we could just water board them to death. This would give Cheney a second career and something to do rather than run his mouth about Obama.

China has probably the surest and most painless and very cost effective execution of any in the world.

The prisoner is place on their knees and one bullet is fired at point blank range into the back of their head. Then if needed their body organs are harvested and the family of the person executed are send a bill for the use of the bullet.

Now thats justice on the cheap.

Capitol punishment is by far the most costly and inefficient course of action that the government can persue. Lifetime incarceration is so many times cheaper that the death penalty that it boggles the mind why this law hasnt changed in most states. Like so many other things these days it just goes to show that the current justice system is just stuck on stupid..

The deathpenalty is barbaric anyway. But to countersue is the height of hypocrisy by the state.

Sorry, but having to be stuck with a needle several times to find a vein or returning a prisoner to their cell when unable to find a vein is not a horribly botched execution.

\* A firing squad that misses the heart and leaves a prisoner conscious while the gunners reload for a second try is horribly botched.

- \* A hanging where the drop is not long enough and the prisoner slowly strangles to death is horribly botched.
- \* A beheading with an axe that takes five or six strokes to get the head off is horribly botched.
- \* An electrocution where the prisoner doesn't lose consciousness immediately and burns while conscious is horribly botched

Even when it isn't successful, an execution by lethal injection isn't any worse than the experience some patients have in hospitals every day.

I think lethal injection is an abomination. Especially when some states have botched the actual execution.

Having said that, I think we should return to the firing squad. It's a much more honorable way to go about this.

I also think we should abolish the death penalty altogether.

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