

# Letters on the Andrea Yates case

21 March 2002

*Below we post a selection of recent letters on the Andrea Yates case.*

Dear Editors:

I could not agree more with David Walsh's article on the trial of Andrea Yates. The state of American jurisprudence is indeed shameful and frightening. If it were not heinous enough that a woman so deeply disturbed as Yates should stand trial as a criminal (and with prosecutors holding birds in the hand in case they did not achieve the desired result first time around), she barely escapes the death penalty in favor of life imprisonment. Surely the fate of this woman serves as a harbinger of even greater constraints against the rights of the mentally incompetent people who already fill the prisons in disproportionate numbers. Why should Yates be the target of such a "witch trial," as Mr. Walsh so aptly calls it, if not to send the message that even the most documented and dire mental illness is no longer any defense against "self-accountability"?

In her sentencing, I suppose we are to see a compassion of the sort that President Bush so heartily espoused in his campaign and has so ruthlessly enacted ever since. Of course, one might assume that any state interested in compassion, in fostering the well-being and advancement of its citizenry, would have abolished the death penalty long ago, not broadened it to encompass greater numbers of crimes and persons. Compassion, however, requires understanding and the leaders of both parties have a decided interest in limiting the understanding of the American people lest they realize the extent of the infringements upon their rights and the limitations placed upon their hopes of progress. Now more than ever, with opposition being suppressed and the weakest of society being preyed upon, it is imperative that we search for the causes, become conscious of them and their effects, and learn to take action.

Sincerely,  
MS

18 March 2002

I understand Andrea and the horrible ways your brain goes awry. I've been diagnosed with a psychotic depression, and schitzo effective. I understand what it is like to be taken off your medicine only to find yourself in a state of weird and crazy thoughts. I can understand how Andrea could kill her children in a state of psychosis. I'm angry that she was convicted! I don't think people really understand. They should be there once and then, maybe they would. It's horrible and confusing and a helpless place to be.

DW

12 March 2002

I am responding to the Andrea Yates story that has been written on your web site. It is so sad to see that the communist liberal media has sucked the life out of any traditional, God fearing family. Andrea Yates is not a very good example of the traditional religious right-winged family. The article is layered with ridicule of the fact that the family was deeply religious and could have done such a horrible thing. You criticized home schooling and the fact that they should have fit the mold of Republican but were somehow more hypocritical than that. The fact is that the Yates family was a very unorganized family; reports show that the house was in shambles on the day that the police entered the home. She was not insane (in my opinion), but she lost control, because her life was out of control. She made a bad choice and needs to be held accountable for this. Not because she was a so-called Christian and did not act as such, but because she committed a crime and needs to serve the sentence for it. Be it death, or imprisonment.

Thank you for trying to persuade other socialists (as yourself) to believe that Americans need to wake up because this is how Republicans really behave, but you did a very poor job in conveying your message.

Deeply God-fearing Republican,  
VH

13 March 2002

A most interesting and informative article. If only religious fundamentalists would realize how disastrous their beliefs are to themselves and the world.

C and DT

12 March 2002

A thoughtful and measured piece on the Texas tragedy, which the media has not generally recognized. Thank you for the time and thought that went into this.

CO

18 March 2002



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