



Promoting Moratorium Movement from Meredith to Methodist

Director speaks on the Death Penalty at Tally Center for Leadership Development

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Page Design Editor

The death penalty should be a deterrent for crime. It does just the opposite according to the lecture, "Moratorium Movement: Life and Death Decision for Justice" given last Monday in the Tally Center.

The lecture given by Dr. Rhonda Zingraff was well attended. President Hendricks, Dean Williams, Dean Blanc and Dr. Champion were some of the administration and faculty members present.

Zingraff earned her undergraduate degree from Virginia Commonwealth University and her Masters of Art and Ph.D. in Sociology from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. She is currently a Professor of Sociology in the Department of Sociology and Social Work at Meredith College. Her areas of specialization are social stratification, criminology and corrections, social theory and environmental sociology.



photo by Teppi Watasuki

Dr. Rhonda Zingraff was invited to Methodist College to speak on the death penalty both historically and at it's present state.

This movement to halt the motion of death penalty support in the United States is endorsed by the American Bar Association since 1997. The ultimate goal of the movement is to permanently

stop the death penalty, which is still administered in North Carolina. Zingraff defined the problems with the death penalty, regarding flaws with class bias, racism and basic human error. She discussed former Governor of Illinois George Ryan, who removed death row prisoners from death row after almost half of their convictions were determined to be wrongful. "I will no longer tinker with the 'Machinery of Death,'" quoted Zingraff of Governor Ryan. Several times Zingraff used precedents from court cases dealing with the death penalty to strengthen her argument. Furman vs. Georgia was the case that shut down the death penalty when the Supreme Court determined it to be "arbitrary and capricious."

Historically, the gap between punishment for white offenders and punishment for black offenders is wide. Also, the death sentence is received more often for felons who have killed white people than those who have killed black people. Eighty-one percent of death row cases are for the murder of a white person, while 14% are for the murder of a black person.

"People are using the death sentence to avenge the life of white people," Zingraff said. "It is impossible to say race does not play a role."

Zingraff was invited to speak by students who are taking Leadership 301 with Dr. Cheek. Some of the students included in organizing the event were Robert Gill, T.J. Johnson, Cedric Stout, Bryan Davis, Roni Wilkinson, Teppi Wakatsuki, Aldric Hodan and Steve Aiello.

If you would like to learn more about wrongful convictions involving the death penalty you can visit www.law.northwestern.edu/wrongfulconvictions/.

Red, Black and Gold Pageant winners



From Left to right: Second runner up, Rachel Bethea. First runner up Keva Wilson. And the winner, Ms. Red, Black and Gold Venika Bazemore. See page 10 for more pictures.

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