

It wasn't so funny after all

Contributed by Jim Greene
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Dying was nothing to laugh at

Patrick Bryan Knight did not die with a smile or a joke rather he died with a whimper and sob. The state of Texas has executed Patrick Bryan Knight for the killing of an Amarillo couple in the summer of 1991. He had become somewhat of a celebrity as he promised to go to his death with a Joke. He asked for Jokes on a website and received over a thousand suggested last lines. In the end he said that he really wasn't who he said he was and the ultimate punishment of death was in fact setting him free. He said that was the ultimate Joke. Mr. Knight in his own way has raised the issue of the justification and necessity of executions. His ridicule and contempt for the system was clear. He even stated in his last statement that though he deserved his punishment there were others that did not deserve to sit on death row and did not deserve to die. Even hard line supporters of the death penalty had to feel uncomfortable as Knight literally was making a joke out of the entire process. The spectacle of a condemned man mocking the system and joking about his own demise should shake a few lawmakers up and possibly limit such executions to the most extreme cases. This may have been an extreme case but many people after reading what was really said as a last statement started feeling sympathy for the double murderer. In many states details of the last meal are not made public as there has developed a bizarre morbid almost sick obsession with the last acts of a condemned man. There need to be safeguards so spectacles of this kind do not repeat themselves. In medieval times executions were even made public to satisfy this morbid sickness, a civilized society needs to curtail this as much as possible. Being put to death isn't funny and it should not entertain anybody.