

**Thomas Gregory writes:** Dr Bagaric asserts that those absolutely opposed to torture are irrational and over-emotional. He asserts that those opposing torture "aren't sufficiently repulsed by [it] and are too willing to accept the murder of innocent people." Firstly, he does not explain how an absolute ban on torture is (counter-intuitively) actually a position held by people who are not as repulsed by torture as those who support its use. Secondly, he does not explain how a ban on torture equates to acceptance of the murder of innocent people: if he could explain it, then the question of torture really would be the "difficult ethical balance" that he pretends it to be. The "ticking-bomb" scenario that is usually trotted out to support torture is purely hypothetical. There must be the confluence of: a suspect that authorities know to possess the information they seek; a bomb about to explode about which the authorities know all but one final detail; and no other way to get that detail (despite all that the authorities already know). If this situation has ever occurred, Dr Bagaric would be wise to prove so, but I very much doubt he could. After the hypothetical, we have the irrational: copious research has shown that torture does not produce good information. As for the practicalities we have the judicial cliché *par excellence*: The floodgates. Put another way, where would torture end? If the individual doesn't open up, is it permissible to torture their family members? Their pets? To threaten to kill them? Dr Bagaric supports the legal regulation of torture as an interrogation technique, a significant deviation from the status quo, so the burden falls to him to explain how such legal regulation would work. Those opposed to torture do not hold their position irrationally: indeed, as demonstrated above, the case *for* torture is incredibly problematic and thus far devoid of rational and persuasive arguments. However, in addition to the rational position against torture, there is a moral and ethical conviction that torture is abhorrent because it is lazy, inhuman, and degrades the torturer as it betrays the tortured.