The Better Angles of our Nature
The Decline of Violence

- Murders
- Torture as legally legitimate
- Capital punishment
- Slavery
- Wars
Back in the day: Medieval Europe
Homicide in Europe, 1300-2000

Source: Eisner, 2003
Legal Means to Interview Suspects: Rack and Wheel
Abolition of Judicial Torture

Sources: Hunt, 2007; Mannix, 1964
Last Public Hanging in America, 1936, Owensboro, Kentucky
Abolition of the Death Penalty in Europe

- European countries with capital punishment
- European countries that carry out executions
American Executions for Crimes other than Murder, 1650-2002

Sources: Espy & Smykla, 2002; Death Penalty Information Center, 2010
Abolition of Slavery
Based on the figures below, Pinker estimates that the 100 million killed in all the wars of the 20th century would be 2 billion if tribal warfare rates were used.
Decline of War

• The following kinds of wars have decline dramatically
  – Colonial
  – Interstate (between major nations)
• But there has been no clear decline in
  – Civil wars that often pit nation peoples in the states that rule them
  – International involvement in civil wars within states
Number of Wars, 1946-2008

Source: UCDP/PRIO; Human Security Report Project
There has been a clear decline in the number of total war deaths even though it is uneven across types of wars.

**Deadliness of Interstate & Civil Wars, 1950-2005**

Source: UCDP/PRIO; Human Security Report Project