The following article was posted on the National Public Radio on Friday, April 8, 2011:

For Two Decades, Defending Death Row Inmates
by NPR Staff

This interview was originally broadcast on Feb. 8, 2010. 'The Autobiography of an Execution' is now available in paperback.

Attorney David Dow has made a career out of defending death row inmates in Texas — a state that boasts the highest number of death row executions nation-wide since 1976.

In the last twenty years, Dow has defended over 100 inmates sentenced to death. Many of his clients have died — most of them were guilty — but Dow says they should have been sentenced to life in prison instead of death at the hands of the state.

"The person that we're executing is simply not the same person who committed the crime that landed that person on death row in the first place," Dow tells Terry Gross.

Dow's new book, The Autobiography of an Execution, is in part an exploration of the politics behind the death penalty and an argument for its abolition. It's also a memoir; Dow delves into how this line of work has affected his family life.

David Dow is the litigation director at the Texas Defender Service and teaches law at the University of Houston Law Center. Copyright 2011 National Public Radio. To see more, visit http://www.npr.org/.