

For Your Calendar

ASAP Annual Meeting, March 17, 2005, JW Marriott Hotel at the Galleria Houston, TX

APA Annual Meeting, May 21-26, Atlanta, GA

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Death Penalty., continued from page 1

year during their development) has done seminal work that clearly demonstrates gradual development of prefrontal cortical structures (especially in the Right brain) during late adolescence and early adulthood (early twenties). As the Amicus Brief describes, this correlates nicely with gradually developing the ability to "think through" the management of a variety of impulses so common in teenagers.

Because the brain does not develop fully in young men until early to mid twenties, we argued that teens are not fully culpable and should not be subject to a penalty reserved for "the worst of the worst" murderous adults.

Other Briefs also argued that 7 states have abolished the Adolescent Death Penalty since our original Brief in 1988 (which was cited by the Supreme Court in its' decision to stop the death penalty for teens below the age of 16). Recently, Indiana, Montana, Wyoming (where Dave Fassler argued our case before the legislature and South Dakota (where I cited the brain development evidence to the legislature) became part of that group of seven. Two other legislatures (both houses in New Hampshire and the Florida Senate) passed abolition bills but too late in the sessions for the other House or the respective governors to sign their approval. Also, only three States (Texas, Oklahoma and Virginia) have accounted for 80% of the juvenile executions in the last decade (and Texas alone was respon-

sible for 80% of that!). It is obvious that with only two executions in the U.S. in each of the last two years, that the Juvenile Death Penalty is becoming a relic of the past. Still, there are more than seventy kids (and young adults) on death row across this country. Only Somalia, in the rest of the world still executes adolescents. All of this was presented in Briefs, including arguments by Diplomats, religious leaders, and Nobel Laureates who cited the U.N. Convention on the Rights

IN THE Supreme Court of the United States

DONALD P. ROPER, Superintendent,
Potosi Correctional Center,

Petitioner,

v.

CHRISTOPHER SIMMONS,

Respondent.

ON WRIT OF CERTIORARI TO THE SUPREME COURT OF MISSOURI
BRIEF OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY, AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY, AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PSYCHIATRY AND THE LAW, NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, MISSOURI CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS, AND NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION AS AMICI CURIAE IN SUPPORT OF RESPONDENT

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Front page of the ASAP Amicus Brief

of the Child (the U.S. is the only major nation which has not signed on).

What will the Supreme Court do? No one knows. Four Justices have already indicated they will vote against the Death Penalty but two of the other five have not signaled their intent. So, we wait.

Mark A. Wellek MD.