

Court system



Casey Anthony Trial: Not Guilty Murder Verdict This essay is based on the ABC news article "Casey Anthony Trial: Not Guilty Murder Verdict" (Hopper, Friedman and De Nies). It is about how the jury decided on the murder charge against 25-year old Casey Anthony who was accused of murdering her two-year old daughter, Caylee in June 2008. The jury found Casey not guilty of either first degree murder or manslaughter. She was instead found "guilty on four counts of providing false information to law enforcement, which are misdemeanors" (Hopper, Friedman and De Nies 1). Casey might just serve one and a half years in prison since she already served two years and the maximum sentence applicable for her case is four years. According to the article, it is even possible for Casey to be set free if Judge Belvin Perry rules that Casey could serve the years concurrently. The article also gave a brief background on the details of the trial. It also discussed the varied reactions on the verdict from the people inside and outside the courtroom. I think that the writers of the article presented the facts of the case in a fair and unbiased manner. They gave both sides of the case in an objective manner. However, there was one part of the article where I doubted their being fair, specifically in page 2. The title given to that part of the article is "Casey Anthony's Shocking Verdict" (Hopper, Friedman and De Nies 2). I think that the word "shocking" implied that the authors expected a guilty verdict. I myself am not in agreement with the "not guilty" verdict given by the jury. I felt that there was enough evidence to convict Casey for the gruesome murder of her daughter. The question left unanswered by the article is whether an appeal could still be made by the prosecutors. However, from my knowledge of the US justice system, I think that the prosecution can no longer make an appeal because it would constitute "double jeopardy". Work <https://assignbuster.com/court-system/>

Cited Hopper, Jessica, et al. " Casey Anthony Trial: Not Guilty Murder Verdict." 5 July 2011. abcnews. go. com. 20 July 2011 . Casey Anthony Trial: Not Guilty Murder Verdict By JESSICA HOPPER (@jesshop23) , EMILY FRIEDMAN (@EmilyABC) , YUNJI DE NIES and AARON KATERSKY ORLANDO, Fla. July 5, 2011 Casey Anthony has been found not guilty of murdering her 2-year-old daughter Caylee. The jury declined to convict her of either first degree murder or manslaughter. Instead, the jurors found Casey Anthony guilty on four counts of providing false information to law enforcement, which are misdemeanors. It's possible she could be released from prison later this week. Clutching the hand of her defense attorney Jose Baez, Casey Anthony began to sob as the verdict was read. The rest of her defense team stood beside her, also clutching hands. She thanked Baez as she was swarmed by the defense team. Her parents, Cindy and George Anthony, left the courtroom as Judge Belvin Perry read further instructions to the jury and did not approach their daughter. They later released a statement saying, " Despite the baseless defense chosen by Casey Anthony, the family believes that the Jury made a fair decision based on the evidence presented, the testimony presented, the scientific information presented and the rules that were given to them by the Honorable Judge Perry to guide them." The jury, comprised of seven women and five men, declined to talk to the media following the verdict. Casey Anthony, who sat grim faced throughout the six weeks of testimony, beamed happily as she was fingerprinted in the courtroom for her misdemeanor convictions. Sentencing on the guilty counts will be held on 9 a. m. Thursday. The maximum sentence applicable in this case is four years, but having already served two and a half years behind bars, Casey Anthony stands to serve one and a half years. ABC News Casey <https://assignbuster.com/court-system/>

Anthony smiles as she gets... View Full Size ABC News Casey Anthony smiles as she gets fingerprinted after hearing the verdict in her murder trial, July 5, 2011. It is also possible that Judge Belvin Perry rules that Casey Anthony could serve the years concurrently, which would set her free. Casey Anthony could be let out on bail before her Thursday sentencing if the defense asks for it and the judge agrees. In a press conference after the verdict, defense attorney Cheney Mason railed at the media for their wall-to-wall coverage of the trial, remarking that it was "media assassination" filled with "bias and prejudice and incompetent talking heads." In a more tempered statement, Baez said, "While we're happy for Casey, there are no winners in this case. Caylee has passed on far, far too soon." "What my driving force has been for the past three years has been always to make sure that there has been justice for Caylee and Casey because Casey did not murder Caylee. It's that simple," said Baez. "And today, our system of justice has not dishonored her memory by a false conviction." "I'm very happy for Casey, I'm ecstatic for her and I want her to be able to grieve and grow and somehow get life back together," said Baez. Prosecutor Jeff Ashton, who had entered the courtroom to roaring applause, sat shaking his head after the verdict. Ashton declined to speak after the trial, but the state attorney's office announced that Ashton had promptly retired. Outside the courtroom, spectators screamed "Lord!" as the learned of the not guilty ruling. People comforted each other and cried, one man remarking that Casey Anthony should leave town because she's not welcome in Orlando. One woman said, "[The verdict] is going to make millions of people think they can get away with killing their child... That isn't a good depiction of what our justice system is like or should be." Another woman: "I just think it's going to make millions of people think they

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can get away with killing their child or committing major crimes and getting away with it. This isn't a good depiction of what our justice system is like or should be. In New York's Times Square, the reaction to the verdict was emotional. " I'm sick, you know, she killed a little girl," said Susan McDougal. " So she gets off and she goes home and maybe has another baby that she can abuse and hurt." Law enforcement officials roped off a door where Cindy and George Anthony were expected to exit out of, and bystanders chanted " Appeal! Appeal!" and " justice for Caylee." Page 2 of 3 ORLANDO, Fla. July 5, 2011 Casey Anthony's Shocking Verdict At the heart of the case was Casey Anthony's fantastic lie that a babysitter named Zenaida, referred to in court as " Zanny the nanny," had stolen Caylee Anthony. Prosecutors claimed that Casey Anthony killed her daughter by drugging Caylee with chloroform and suffocating her with duct tape over her mouth and nose. She killed Caylee, prosecutor Jeff Ashton claimed in his closing argument, because Casey Anthony had to choose between her child and " the life she wanted." " We submit to you the evidence in this case shows that the choice she made was her child," Ashton said. Lawyers for Casey Anthony, who never took the stand, admitted on the first day of the trial that the 25-year-old single mother had made up a complex web of lies. Defense attorney Jose Baez said that the truth was that Caylee had accidentally drowned in the family pool and instead of reporting her death, Casey " went into a dark corner, to pretend as if nothing was wrong." Baez said Casey Anthony behaved that way because she had been " trained to lie" through years of sexual abuse by her father. Judge Belvin Perry ruled, however, that there was no evidence that Casey Anthony was abused by her father and ordered that it not be mentioned in closing arguments. The prosecution was hampered in its case

by the fact that Caylee's body, found in a swamp six months after she disappeared, was so badly deteriorated that the medical examiner could not determine exactly how she died. Caylee's cause of death was listed as a "homicide of undetermined means." Intent on proving duct tape could have killed the toddler, the defense showed the jury a controversial video that showed a smiling Caylee morphing into a skull with duct tape on it. Red Huber/Orlando Sentinel Casey Anthony reacts to being found not guilty on murder charges at the Orange County Courthouse Orlando, Fla., Tuesday, July 5, 2011. At left is her attorney, Jose Baez. Prosecutors built a case of circumstantial evidence that documented how Casey Anthony moved in with her boyfriend Tony Lazzaro shortly after Caylee disappeared, partied at clubs, took part in a "hot body" contest, and got the phrase "bella vita" -- or beautiful life -- tattooed on her shoulder in the month after Caylee died and while her mother was pretending she was still alive. As her lies unraveled, it became apparent that Casey Anthony had created a fictional world in which she made up a job at Universal Studios and a dozen people who were friends, co-workers, lovers, babysitters and even Caylee's playmates. Jurors watched hours of jailhouse tapes in which Casey Anthony elaborated on her lie about the babysitter, offering extensive details about this fictional nanny. Much of the case turned on forensic evidence found in the trunk of Casey Anthony's Pontiac Sunfire. Prosecutors brought in experts in the arcane specialty of the smell of death to prove that an odor in the trunk of Casey Anthony's car was that of human decomposition. Casey Anthony's lawyers argued that the foul smell in Casey Anthony's car trunk was from rotting garbage, not a rotting body. An FBI hair and fiber analyst testified that a lone piece of hair in the trunk belonged to Caylee and showed post-mortem

banding, what prosecutors said was proof that a dead body had been in the car. The prosecution also claimed that Casey Anthony used the family computer to visit a site on how to make chloroform 84 times. Baez countered by arguing that the state's case was based on untried and unproven forensic theories, what Baez dismissed as "fantasy forensics." He shocked the courtroom when he called Cindy Anthony, Casey Anthony's mother, to testify in her daughter's defense and take responsibility for some of the chloroform searches. The computer searches were key to the prosecution's claims of premeditated murder, an essential element for first degree murder and the possibility of the death penalty. When the prosecution attempted to impeach Cindy Anthony's testimony by presenting evidence that she was lying, Baez said in closing arguments, "I told you she was a liar the first day." The trial exposed supposed secrets of a fractured Anthony family and shocked spectators with allegations of incest and a cover-up. Baez attempted to display a dysfunctional family where lying was rampant. He played on the emotions of Lee Anthony, Casey Anthony's brother, by having him describe his frustration with his family hiding Casey Anthony's pregnancy with Caylee. He also attempted to cast shadow on Lee Anthony with allegations that he molested his sister. Baez also attempted to make George Anthony into a villain.

Lawyer Seeks Juvenile Court For Boy This essay is about the CNN's news article "Lawyer Seeks Juvenile Court for Boy, 11, Accused in Woman's Death" (Dolan). The article is about Jordan Brown, an 11-year old boy accused of killing his father's pregnant girlfriend, Kenzie Marie Houk in 2009. Brown was charged with one count each of criminal homicide and homicide of an unborn child (Dolan, par 9). The Pennsylvania's lower court decided to try him as an adult. Lourdes Rosado, Brown's lawyer filed an appeal with the <https://assignbuster.com/court-system/>

Superior Court to try Brown as a juvenile instead. The CNN article stated further that Rosado asserted that the Pennsylvania state law has one of the most stringent laws in the country affecting juveniles and that anyone who committed murder and homicide who is above 10 years old is automatically tried as an adult (Dolan , par 12-13). According to Rosado, it is up to them to prove that Brown should be tried as a juvenile. Brown faces the possibility of facing life imprisonment without a parole. I think that this article was not presented in a fair and biased manner. Although the author was objective in discussing the case and presenting statements given by Rosado, Brown's father and Houk's mother, I tend to believe that the author does not agree with trying Brown as an adult. I arrived at this conclusion because the author cited in her article a statement by Amnesty International spokesman, Folabi Olagbaju that children " require special consideration in the criminal justice system" (Dolan , par 16). The inclusion of this statement seems to give the readers a hint that the author thinks that Brown should be tried in a juvenile court; otherwise, this statement should not have been included. The question left unanswered in this article is the reason why Brown should be tried as a juvenile and not as an adult. The author could have justified the appeal by Rosado by stating that Brown could still be rehabilitated and trying him in an adult court would deprive him of that right. Furthermore, if Brown is tried in a juvenile court, he can just be placed in a juvenile facility and will have a chance to be paroled, unlike in the adult court. Although the author was not vocal as to her stand on what court should try Brown, I have an inkling that she wants Brown tried in a juvenile court. Given this, I agree with her opinion. It is my firm belief that Brown can still be rehabilitated. The courts should focus on this and not on the punishment of the crime that he

committed. Work Cited Dolan, Laura. " Lawyer Seeks Juvenile Court for Boy, 11, Accused in Woman's Death." 27 January 2011. cnn. com. 20 July 2011 .

Lawyer Seeks Juvenile Court for Boy, 11, Accused in Woman's Death (CNN) -- Attorneys for a boy accused of killing his father's pregnant girlfriend have asked a Pennsylvania court to overturn a lower court's decision to try him as an adult. Lourdes Rosado appealed the decision Tuesday on behalf of Jordan Brown, who is suspected in the death of Kenzie Marie Houk. Brown faces life in prison without parole. Houk was eight months pregnant, and the child was also killed. Brown was 11 at the time of the deaths. His attorney has said Brown should be tried in juvenile court, pressing the Superior Court to review an earlier ruling that labeled his client a poor candidate for rehabilitation, which allows him to be tried as an adult. " Pennsylvania law does not require that a person admit guilt to show they are amenable to treatment," Rosado said. But the attorney general's office has deferred to the ruling. Lawrence County Judge Dominick Motto " ruled based on the evidence, and he was within his authority to do that," said office spokesman Nils Frederiksen. The boy was arrested in February 2009 after police say he shot Houk once at point-blank range in her farmhouse in western Pennsylvania. Brown, who was living with his father at the time, was charged with one count each of criminal homicide and homicide of an unborn child in the death of Houk, 26. Houk's 4-year-old daughter found her in her bed, according to police. The child alerted landscapers working near the home, who called authorities. The weapon was a youth model 20-gauge shotgun, designed for use by children, that belonged to the boy, according to investigators. Pennsylvania has one of the most stringent laws in the country affecting juveniles, Rosado said. Anyone older than 10 who has committed a murder or homicide is

automatically tried as an adult, according to Pennsylvania state law. The burden of proof is on the defense to downgrade a suspect to the juvenile court, Rosado added. Brown is thought to be the youngest person facing a life sentence without the possibility of parole, according to an Amnesty International statement. " Children lack the capacity to truly understand the impact of their actions, as they are still developing physically, mentally and emotionally," Amnesty spokesman Folabi Olagbaju said. " They require special consideration in the criminal justice system." Brown's father, Chris, says he believes that his son is innocent. He travels more than an hour each day to visit him in prison. " He's never lied to me about anything, and I have no reason to believe he's lying right now," the elder Brown said of his son's innocence claim. But Houk's mother, Debbie, said she wants the boy to be tried as an adult. " I've lost my daughter and my grandson," she said. " Ain't nothing going to bring her back, and justice needs to be served."