

# Young killers

Law, Capital Punishment



“ Vast majority of the teenagers, even young ones, know enough to be tried in adult court”, said the legal director of the conservative Criminal Justice Legal Foundation. In today’s world we tend to underestimate teenagers making the excuse that they are “ growing up” and don’t know the long term consequences of their actions. Since little children start to understand the difference between what is right from what is wrong. At what age do children develop a moral sense, and understand what it mean to commit a crime? The world needs to stop treating teenagers as irresponsible people that don’t know what they are doing, because they do. As a teenager I can say that we know exactly what we are doing because we have lived enough to see that everything we do has consequences, either good or bad. “ Kids are kids-Until They Commit Crimes” an article by Marjie Lundstrom, that argues whether young Lionel Tate, who was twelve, savagely beat to death a six year old girl, is a boy or a man. This boy beat to death a girl third his size and did not know what he was doing? Unbelievable. Yes, like Paul Thompson explains in the article “ Startling Finds on Teenage brains”, a massive loss of brain tissue is lost during the teenage years, but that definitely does not remove their accountability, like many would like it to be. Fourteen-year-old Nathaniel Brazill, charged for shooting his middle school teacher, was found guilty of second degree murder and called for the death penalty. Many outside the court expressed their feeling in placards saying, “ A child is not a man”. Yes, a child is not a man, but Brazill was not a child either he was a teenager that should know better than to bring a fire arm to school. “ But what really caught our eye was a massive loss of brain tissue that occurs in the teenage years”, stated Pual Thompson, who with his research group performed a

study to map the patterns of the human brain. A twelve-year-old Michigan boy, Nathaniel Abraham, will soon become the youngest child ever to be tried as an adult for murder in the United States. Psychiatrists say this short and frail boy functions at the level of a six-year-old, but could receive the same sentence for murder as an adult. Young Nathaniel is not alone. In the last twenty years, more than 150 children have been sentenced to death in the United States. Each year there are over 750, 000 delinquency cases that go before judges in the United States. Tens of thousands of these children are tried as adults. (White)