



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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2012-R-0020

## DEATH ROW INMATES

By: Christopher Reinhart, Chief Attorney

You asked for information on each death row inmate including the crimes they committed, their offense and sentencing dates, and the status of their appeals and habeas corpus petitions.

Eleven inmates are currently sentenced to death. Robert Breton, first sentenced to death in 1989, has been on death row the longest. Although the Connecticut Supreme Court overturned his sentence and ordered a new sentencing hearing, Breton remained on death row and was again sentenced to death in 1998. Joshua Komisarjevsky is the most recent person sentenced to death (2011).

The cases for seven of the 11 inmates have not completed the initial appellate review by the Connecticut Supreme Court (including Komisarjevsky's, where the sentencing process is not yet complete). The remaining four have finished their direct appeals to the Connecticut Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court denied their petition for review. All four of these inmates filed state habeas corpus petitions which were denied by the Superior Court. All four are appealing the Superior Court's decision.

Table 1 provides, for each of the 11 inmates sentenced to death, a brief description of their crimes, offense and sentencing dates, and the status of direct appeals and habeas petitions. It is in order of the offense dates from earliest to latest.

In addition to the habeas petitions listed in the table, most death row inmates and some others are part of a habeas proceeding consolidating all racial disparity claims by inmates sentenced to death. The trial in the Superior Court on the habeas petition is scheduled for June 2012 (*In re: Racial Disparity et al. v. Commissioner of Correction*).

Table 1: Information on Inmates Sentenced to Death as of March 30, 2011

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description of Offense</b>	<b>Offense Date</b>	<b>Sentencing Date</b>	<b>Direct Appeal</b>	<b>Habeas Corpus</b>
Robert Breton	Convicted in the beating and stabbing deaths of his ex-wife, JoAnn Breton, and their 16-year-old son, Robert Breton, Jr. at his ex-wife's apartment	December 13, 1987	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 27, 1989</li> <li>January 9, 1998</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecticut Supreme Court overturns sentence: August 22, 1995</li> <li>Connecticut Supreme Court upholds new sentence: June 24, 2003</li> <li>U.S. Supreme Court denies petition to hear case: December 1, 2003</li> </ul>	State habeas petition: Superior Court denies petition, appeal to Appellate Court is pending
Daniel Webb	Convicted of kidnapping, attempted rape, and murder of Diane Gellenbeck	August 24, 1989	September 12, 1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecticut Supreme Court upheld sentence but remands for hearing on constitutionality of lethal injection: July 30, 1996</li> <li>Connecticut Supreme Court affirms lethal injection: February 15, 2000</li> <li>U.S. Supreme Court denies petition to hear case: October 2, 2000</li> </ul>	State habeas petition: Superior Court denies petition, appeal to Appellate Court is pending
Sedrick Cobb	Convicted of rape and murder of Julia Ashe, whom he kidnapped from a Waterbury department store parking lot	December 16, 1989	September 24, 1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecticut Supreme Court ruling on racial disparity: August 8, 1995</li> <li>Connecticut Supreme Court affirms sentence: December 7, 1999</li> <li>U.S. Supreme Court denies petition to hear case: October 2, 2000</li> </ul>	State habeas petition: Superior Court denies petition, appeal to Connecticut Supreme Court is pending the result of the racial disparity habeas litigation

**Table 1 (Continued)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description of Offense</b>	<b>Offense Date</b>	<b>Sentencing Date</b>	<b>Direct Appeal</b>	<b>Habeas Corpus</b>
Richard Reynolds	Convicted of murdering Waterbury police officer Walter T. Williams	December 18, 1992	April 13, 1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecticut Supreme Court affirms sentence: June 3, 2003</li> <li>• U.S. Supreme Court denies petition to hear case: March 8, 2004</li> </ul>	State habeas petition: Superior Court denies petition, appeal to Appellate Court is pending
Todd Rizzo	Convicted of killing 13-year-old Stanley Edwards with a 3-pound sledgehammer	September 30, 1997	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 13, 1999</li> <li>• June 23, 2005</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecticut Supreme Court ordered a new penalty hearing: November 14, 2003</li> <li>• Connecticut Supreme Court upholds new death sentence: November 29, 2011</li> <li>• Motion for reconsideration filed December 19, 2011</li> </ul>	
Russell Peeler, Jr.	Convicted of ordering the killing of a woman and her 8-year-old son, a potential witness against Peeler in the shooting of the mother's boyfriend	January 7, 1999	December 10, 2007	Connecticut Supreme Court appeal pending	
Jessie Campbell III	Convicted of killing his son's mother and her friend and attempting to kill another woman who witnessed the shootings	August 26, 2000	August 16, 2007	Connecticut Supreme Court appeal pending	
Eduardo Santiago	Convicted of shooting Joseph Niwinski in a murder-for-hire scheme in exchange for a snowmobile	December 13, 2000	January 31, 2005	Connecticut Supreme Court appeal pending	

Table 1 (Continued)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description of Offense</b>	<b>Offense Date</b>	<b>Sentencing Date</b>	<b>Direct Appeal</b>	<b>Habeas Corpus</b>
Lazale Ashby	Convicted of raping and murdering his 21-year old neighbor in her apartment	December 2, 2002	March 28, 2008	Connecticut Supreme Court appeal pending	
Steven Hayes	Convicted of Cheshire home invasion and the deaths of Jennifer Hawke-Petit and her two daughters, Hayley and Michaela	July 23, 2007	December 2, 2010	Connecticut Supreme Court appeal pending	
Joshua Komisarjevsky	Convicted of Cheshire home invasion and the deaths of Jennifer Hawke-Petit and her two daughters, Hayley and Michaela	July 23, 2007	December 9, 2011 (jury verdict but sentencing process not yet complete)		

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