

To whom this may Concern:

It is with sadness that I am writing this letter. I had come across an article in a Beacon Hill Newspaper regarding a young man who is Barry Massey.

First, I must introduce myself. My name is Michele Andrews (Sherrill). My sister Shirley Sherrill was one of the Victims of the Green River Killer a.k.a. Gary Ridgeway. I was only 12 years old when she went missing and was taken away from her mother, my twin sister, our dad, myself and several aunts and uncles.

It was not until three years later that her body was discovered in Portland Oregon on of all things; A Christmas tree farm. I was and still am quite angry, bitter, hostile and disgusted by the acts of a man who was able to kill so many women and show no remorse; with the only exception of being caught then having the nerve to plead for his own life in order to not be sentenced to death. While I am certain my sister and all of the victims plead for theirs. The State of Washington made a deal with a devil.

I am appalled that the same State has made a decision on a child who was 13 years old at the time of sentencing. Life without the possibility of parole. Barry had no chance at life, as his was just beginning. It is absolutely horrendous to think as a young boy Barry would have been able to cognitively understand the act which took place. Research clearly supports brain development in children and young men as not being age appropriate. While we know that there are several factors which influence brain development, it was stated that Barry was only at a 9.9 brain development at the time of the crime by a licensed psychologist with whom the State of Washington hired. Does this warrant life in prison without parole; absolutely not. It is impossible to think a child with the brain development of 9 year old could possibly rationally commit such a horrendous crime. Research also clearly points that boys cognitively need to increase skills in problem solving, creative thinking and planning and organizing. As this case had several options, stated facts and professional opinions, it seems that Barry was in fear, scared, uncertain and brought into a situation which he lacked the necessary ability to rationalize what was happening. This crime as I have found it to be described does not indicate that a young boy could have possibly planned nor organized such a tragedy. Only to be an unwilling participant. Although I am quite positive that if the hands of time could be turned back Barry as well as his co-defendant would rather things would have turned out differently, unfortunately the chance will never come.

My intent for writing this letter is to provide a view that is one of a victim as well as a view of an in just prison sentence and optimism that the State would let Barry Massey have a second chance at life, his punishment clearly is an injustice to a young man who has since grown into an adult within the State of Washington's prison walls.

While I am sure that the family members of his victim feel it is still not fair nor will it ever be, unfortunately no amount of time that a person is sentenced to will ever bring back a loved one. During the trial of Gary Ridgeway, all I wanted was my sister back, no amount of jail, prison; punitive damages being awarded etc. could ever undo the circumstances which took place. I am sorry for and understand their loss. But I also need to speak out and say that I truly believe Barry Massey has earned his release.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'M' followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to the right.

Michele Andrews