Spring 2003

Introduction

New Mexico Law Review

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmlr/vol33/iss2/2
In Atkins v. Virginia, 536 U.S. 304 (2002), the United States Supreme Court held that the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution forbids the execution of those individuals with mental retardation. Professor James W. Ellis of the University of New Mexico School of Law successfully represented the petitioner Daryl Atkins in this landmark death penalty case. When the Supreme Court declares capital punishment unconstitutional for a whole class of individuals, as legal scholars, we sit up and listen.

The Beyond Atkins Symposium provided the New Mexico Law Review with a chance to be one of the first journals to contribute to the extensive scholarship that will flow from the Atkins decision. The articles in this issue explore the implications of Atkins for the mentally retarded, mentally ill, juveniles, and various other participants in the criminal justice system. The number of questions that Atkins answered pales in comparison to the number of questions it raises. This issue of the New Mexico Law Review by no means answers all of those questions, but we hope that it generates a dialogue on these difficult issues.