



Anne Arundel County Bar Foundation High School Essay Contest Spring 2008

All high school students in Anne Arundel County are invited to enter an essay contest focusing on a current Supreme Court case regarding the [8th Amendment](#) prohibition of [cruel and unusual punishment](#).

The contest is sponsored by the Anne Arundel County Bar Foundation. The contest is open to all public or private high school students in grades 9-12, and home-schooled students at corresponding grade levels.

Prizes

1st place: \$500; 2nd place: \$250; and 3rd place: \$100

The winners will be honored at a special ceremony. All participants will receive a certificate.

** Remember that college admissions offices look more favorably upon applications of students who have received writing awards.

How to Enter

To enter, a student must submit an essay of up to 1,200 words on the stated topic. Entries should be double-spaced and either typewritten or printed using a computer word processor.

The essay must be accompanied by a cover sheet that includes the following information: the student's name, address, phone number and e-mail address; school's name (if applicable), address and phone number; and the name of the teacher sponsor (if applicable).

Deadline for submissions: May 13, 2008

Essays must be postmarked no later than May 13, 2008, and mailed to: Anne Arundel County Bar Foundation, Essay Contest, PO Box 161, Annapolis, MD 21404.

Please e-mail any questions to aaba@circuitcourt.org

Topic

The case under consideration: *Baze and Bowling v. Rees*, Docket No. 07-5439

On January 7, 2008, the Court heard arguments in the appeal of two men, [Ralph Baze](#) and [Thomas Bowling](#), who were [sentenced to death](#) by lethal injection in [Kentucky](#). The men contend that executing them by [lethal injection](#) would violate the [8th Amendment](#) prohibition against [cruel and unusual punishment](#) because the procedures and chemicals used to execute them would inflict unnecessary pain during the process. They argue that prisoners who receive lethal injections suffer agonizing pain during the execution process. Because the specific "cocktail" used for lethal injections in Kentucky is the same as that used in virtually all 36 states that administer lethal injections, this case has nationwide implications.

On April 16, 2008, the Supreme Court handed down its decision, rejecting the challenge to the Kentucky death penalty. Although the Justices voted 7-2 in favor of affirmance, there was substantial disagreement among the Justices regarding the case, and seven of the nine Justices wrote separate opinions.

For your essay, please identify one or more of the opinions you find most persuasive and explain your reason for selecting that opinion (or those opinions).

To view the case and relevant background information, log onto the following link:

http://supreme.lp.findlaw.com/supreme_court/docket/2007/baze-v-rees-07-5439.html

or log onto the AABA website: www.aabar.org

