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NEWS RELEASE

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Pennsylvania Supreme Court Upholds Conviction, Death Sentence For Walter Ograd
Defendant Convicted in 1996 of Murdering 4-year-old Barbara Jean Horn and Putting Her Body in A Cardboard TV Box

December 31, 2003—The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has upheld Walter Ograd's 1996 convictions for first-degree murder and attempted involuntary deviate sexual intercourse of 4-year-old Barbara Jean Horn. The Court also upheld his sentence of death.

"We are gratified by the Court's decision to uphold the conviction and death penalty," said District Attorney Lynne Abraham. "The murder of four-year-old Barbara Jean Horn was especially brutal, and justice was done in this case."

On July 12, 1988, Walter Ograd, DOB 02-03-65, murdered his neighbor, 4-year-old Barbara Jean Horn by offering her chocolates and luring her into the basement of his home at 7244 Rutland St. in Northeast Philadelphia. Barbara Jean Horn lived across the street at 7245 Rutland St. Once inside, he attempted to sexually assault her and when she screamed hit her over the head with an iron bar, which was part of a weight lifting set. He then put her body into a plastic bag, stuffed it into a cardboard television box, and walked it around the corner to a home at 1409 St. Vincent St., where he thought it would be picked up that day with the trash.

Her murder remained unsolved for the next 4 years. In 1992, Philadelphia police detectives reinvestigated the case. During their investigation, Ograd confessed to killing the little girl. Ograd's first trial in 1993 ended in a mistrial. He was tried again in 1996, and the jury found him guilty of the above crimes. After a penalty hearing, the jury also sentenced Ograd to death.

The Court rejected several arguments including the argument that defense attorney Mark Greenberg was ineffective. Assistant District Attorney Lorie Dakessian handled the appeal.

The full opinion is available at www.courts.state.pa.us