

MEMO FROM: WATT ESPY

C/O LAW LIBRARY -- P. O. BOX 6205 -- UNIVERSITY, AL. 35486

PHONE (205) 348-5925

7-1-1983.

To: Rick Dent.

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter relative to interviewing me for the Dallas TIMES.

I attempted to call you over the telephone this morning and was referred to the Supreme Court Law Library, but the lady there did not know you. She did state that Tim Lewis was working there and I know him, so, if you should see him, give him my regards.

I shall be glad to see you at your convenience. As you state that a weekend would be preferable, I would prefer that we set the interview up for one Sunday and you may call me as to time, etc, either here at the Law Center or at my home number which is 556-4921 (as this is unlisted, please do not give it to anyone else.)

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,

PS: Wednesday night we organized a local chapter of the Coalition Against the Death Penalty and elected Professor Wythe Holt our co-ordinator. I hope that you will be interested in joining up with us when you return to the University this Fall.



Mr. Espy :

I wanted to drop this quick note to you. I am a law student at the University and was the friend John Evans asked to attend his execution.

A friend of mine, David Eden, the editor of the Dallas Times Magazine, has heard of your work on executions and has asked that I try to interview you. The magazine is one of the most influential in the Southwest, has a circulation of over 400,000 and is interested in a cover story. David is excited about the prospects of a story and is willing to give all the space needed. I think it would be a grand opportunity to present some of your findings and for me to write a much-needed story about the death penalty.

Because of my legal job in Montgomery, I can only come to Tuscaloosa on the weekends. If it is possible for us to get together for a few hours please let me know. My address is 3691 Southmont Drive, Montgomery, AL 36105. I believe a magazine piece showcasing your work is an important opportunity to help change some attitudes. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Rick Dent



July 15, 1983.

To: Rick Dent.

On May 11, 1977, Governor David Boren of Oklahoma signed into law that state's lethal injection bill and Oklahoma thus became the first state to enact this means of execution. The very next day, the legislature of Texas enacted ~~the~~ lethal injection bill.

Technically speaking, the hanging of Rainey B. thea at Owensboro, Kentucky on August 14, 1936, was the last public hanging and it was witnessed by thousands. Roscoe "Red" Jackson was executed behind a planked in stockade at Galena, Missouri, on May 21, 1937. However, as over 500 persons were allowed to witness the execution, those not being inside the stockade seeing it ~~XXXXX~~ thru a "window" cut in at the top of the wall. (Please see enclosed newspaper clipping concerning this latter execution.) Thus, the law in the case of Jackson was, to some extent circumvented and it would have to also be considered public, in my opinion, since those unauthorized by the statutes were allowed to witness it.

When you have finished your manuscript, I would be glad for you to send me the names of the persons mentioned on the taps to insure correct spelling.

Best wishes -

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Alan".



Mr. Espy,

I need some info clarified. Was the first state to pass lethal injection Texas or Oklahoma? I've seen both. Second, when was the last public execution. I've seen two names: Rayney Bethea in Kentucky and Roscoe Jackson in Missouri. Also, after I've completed the rough draft I'd like to send you names of the victims mentioned on the tapes to insure correct spelling.

Thanks.

Rick



July 27, 1983.

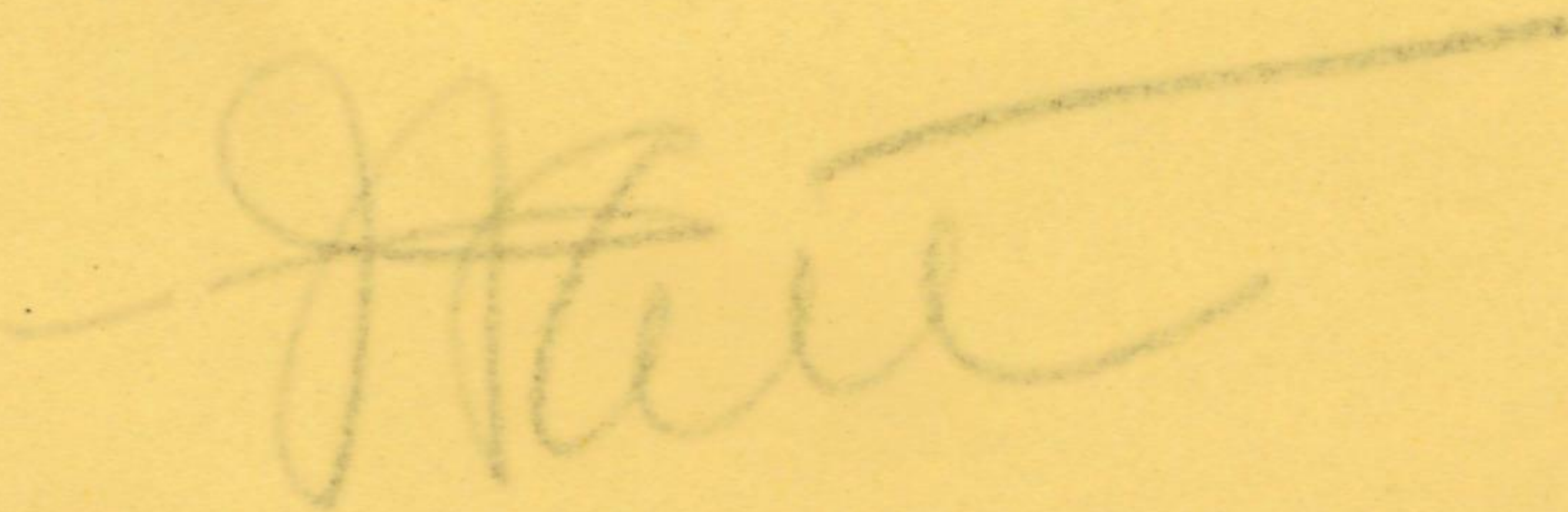
To: Rick Dent  
3691 Southmont Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36105

The answers to your questions are as follows:

- 1) The first name of Weisinger was Al and the ~~second~~ <sup>first</sup> name of Ledlow (not Ludlow) was Bill.
- 2) Shumway's victims were Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Martin.
- 3) In view of Henry Schwartzchild's memo of July 14th, a copy of which I sent to you, and his statement that Delaware had enacted lethal injection legislation, the only jurisdictions that I now show with hanging statutes on the book are Montana (choice of hanging or lethal injection); Utah (choice of hanging or firing squad); Washington State (choice of hanging or lethal injection); and the U. S. Military which prescribes hanging.

Am looking forward to your article and would like to have copies of both the article from the TIMES and the magazine article. Will look forward to seeing you on your return and to having you join our coalition, the second meeting of which will be held tomorrow night when we will discuss the Johnny Harris case.

Regards.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Hau", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.



Mr. Espy,

Here are the following names I need confirmed.

Wiesinger and Ludlow, Dallas County, March 31, 1882. What are their first names?

R. Meade Shumway. Killed the Martins. What is the Martins' first name?

Only 4 states still prescribe hanging? Correct?

The story should be completed by Monday. Another magazine has asked for reprint rights. I think you'll like it. Thanks.

Rick

1) Al Weisinger + Bill Ludlow

2) Mr. + Mrs. Jacob Martin

3) Mont - h or l d

4) ~~h~~ atah - h or j s  
was h or l d

military h



Monday, November 18

Dear Watt:

Thanks for taking me on the trip. I had alot of fun. However, I'm not so sure that Suzanne was glad that I came back. Remember how I got sick in Nashville. Apparently it was not the prime rib but a virus. I gave it to Suzanne and she was in the bed for two days.

I writing to remind you to send that photo of you. I'll get it back to you but I'm going to try to find someone to take a picture of the picture. Send it as soon as you can because I'm close to deadline.

Tell Danny and the shiteater hello for me. Is the computer working? Take care.

Rick

11-19-1985.

Rick:

The photograph was mailed to you on the 16th via first class mail and I cannot understand why you have not received it. It probably arrived yesterday or will today. If you don't have it by the time that you receive this letter, please advise.

Sorry to hear that Suzanne got sick and I agree that you must have had a stomach virus. My prime rib was delicious and I had no bad effects. Hope both of you are better now.

Radelet called last night and said that he had attempted to call Felice Levine yesterday but did not get her. Would continue trying. He wants to work out an arrangement, if we can get financing, for me to do work of correcting through him which I would prefer. I told him I just did not want Smykla or Fisher having anything to do with it or getting any recognition for my work that they messed up so thoroughly.

Regards -

PS: Dan says hi and the shiteater says for you to come down as he needs a good meal!



11-16-1985.

To: The Honorable Richard Blakb Dent,  
Honorary Assistant Attorney General  
of the State of Alabama.

Sorry that I did not get to drop by on Thursday morning. When I got to Neil's, I lay down and promptly fell asleep on the sofa. I slept late and barely made my luncheon date with little Mark.

Enclosed is the photograph which you requested. Please return to me after you have it copied as it is the only copy that I have. When you have it copied, see how much about 10 extra copies, this size, would cost and, if feasible, I might let you have some made for me also.

Please send me copies of any articles that you might publish concerning me and the project. Hope that you will also mention in them the fact that I am unemployed and "virtually penniless" - stating that I hope to earn a living through consulting, writing and lecturing. It might get me some bites.

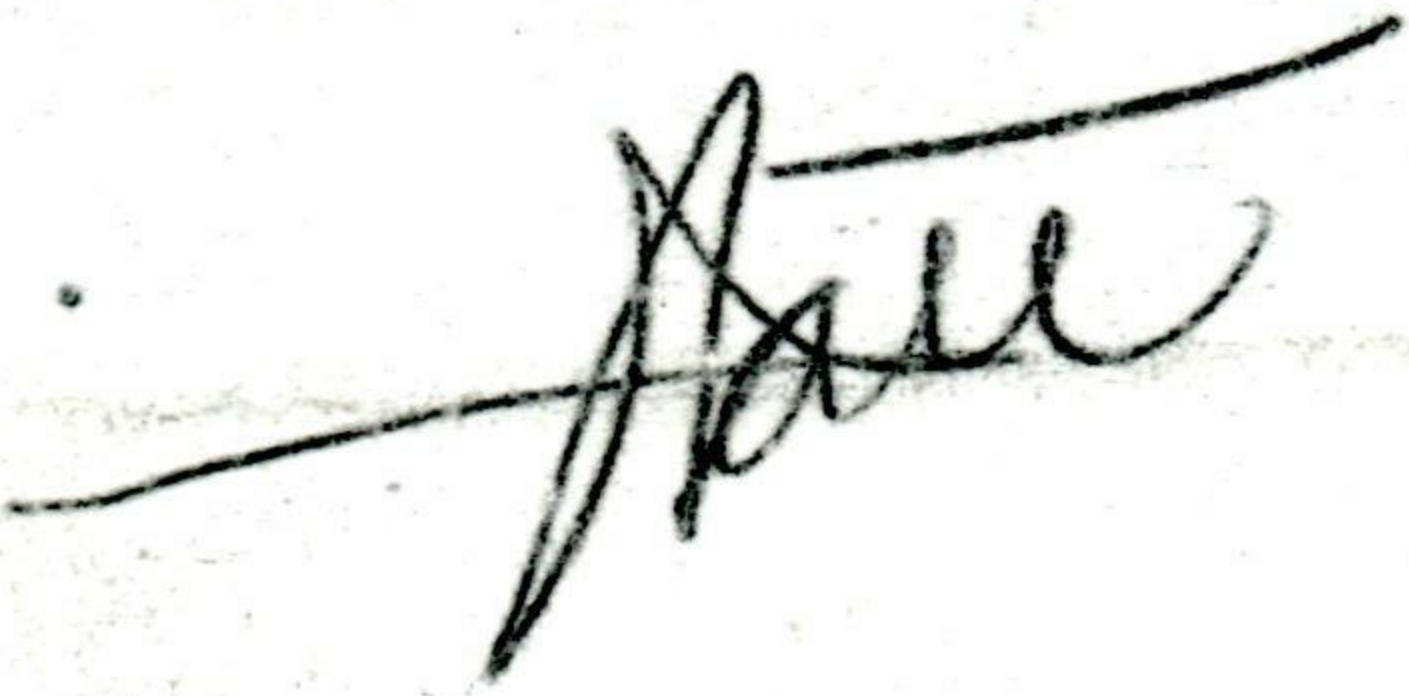
Give my best to Suzanne, and when y'all come to Dothan, come on by and help me with this damned computer.

Incidentally, while we were gone, Teena called and said she had just learned that I was no longer at the University. Danny says that she seemed to be com-  
pletely and even went



"she did not want to even hear Smykla's name mentioned." Of course, I must accept this with a certain amount of skepticism though it is possible that she was sincere and I hope that she was.

Sincerely, your friend,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Paul', written in a cursive style.

Armstrong Hensley

Feb. 6, 1902

25-44-52



Watt:

Just wanted to drop this note and let you know Im alive. Washington is a gas. Ive only been here for a week but I know the town like you would not believe. Ive had a blast in Georgetown--lots of bars and great places to eat. They work my ass off here but I have plenty of free time to play. Let me know if you are coming up for the TV program. Be prepared to do a lot of walking. The places we go are gained by foot--the subway would not do us any good. By the way, this old Southerner had his first ride on a subway the other day, what an experience.

My place is just two buildings down from where I work and right in the middle of everything. I could not ask for a better location. But my aprtment is nothing more than a glorified dorm room with a kitchen and bathroom.

Memorial Day was a moving experience here. I went down to the Viet Nam Memorial and just watched. It really was very sad. Until now Memorial Day has meant nothing to me.

Do you happen to know the address of North Carolina's death row?

My phone is not connected to something they tell me so I cant make long distance calls on it, just locals. My phone will take all calls though if you need to get in touch. The # is 202-676-2364.

Dont get too drunk. Say hello to Danny, George and the Shiteater for me. Let me hear from you.

*Rick*  
Rick



Tuesday, 1:30 p.m.

WAH,

I hope you didn't think I forgot you. My girlfriend's grandfather passed away Thursday and I've been in B'ham. Here is the material I'm sending to the ACLU.

Now about your proposal. Below I have an outline that you should follow. It should be within 2 single-spaced pages if all possible.

Your first paragraph or first 2 should be eye-catching and should be as if excerpted from the book i.e. ... maybe the beginning of one of the most strange cases, or an introduction of the book. This gives the editor a short glance at your ability and grabs his attention.

Then go into detail about your book. Give the way you plan to develop it, the layout, the headings, the style. Sell your book. This is more of nuts and bolts ... what you plan to do and how, what you will cover.

Then explain why you should author the book. Sell you.

Then explain why the book is important, why it will sell and who will buy it.

Type it up and send it to me over the holidays .... I'll show it to my friend in Montgomery and editor in B'ham, who will correct, edit, make suggestions. I should be back around Jan. 3.

My address is

3691 Southmont Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36105  
☎ 263-1997

Don't put this off.

Rick Dent

14<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Blue-White Top  
'72 Cutlass