

**GUS AND AUDREY LAMM,
Oregon
Husband and daughter of Victoria
Zessin, murdered in Nebraska in
1980**

Victoria Zessin and her friend Janet Mesner were murdered in 1980 by Randy Reeves, an adoptive cousin of Janet Mesner's. Reeves was sentenced to death for the murders. Years later, Victoria's husband Gus Lamm and their daughter Audrey, who had been 2 years old at the time of the murders, joined the Mesner family in publicly opposing the upcoming execution. The Lamms also filed suit when the Nebraska Pardon Board forbade them from testifying at a hearing regarding Reeves's commutation but allowed a relative who supported the death penalty to present testimony. Reeves's sentence was eventually commuted to life in prison.

Audrey and Gus Lamm

In addition to the public speaking that Gus and Audrey Lamm did at the time of the pending execution, Gus participated in the "Committing to Conscience" conference in California in 2000 and Audrey spoke on a panel during the Anti-Death Penalty Alternative Spring Break that several groups sponsored in Texas in 2006.

"Killing another person would not do any honor to Victoria's memory. The death penalty perpetuates a cycle of vengeance and violence that goes beyond what most Americans could ever imagine. Most people would prefer not to think about the real horror of executions, but if we speak out, people can be educated as to the reality of the death penalty, its senselessness, its ineffectiveness, and its discriminatory nature."