

(S.D.)-Moeller Admits In Court That He Raped, Murdered Girl

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SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) - Convicted killer Donald Moeller has finally admitted in his own words that he kidnapped, raped and killed 9-year-old Becky O'Connell more than 20 years ago.

Moeller spoke with U.S. District Court Judge Lawrence Piersol Thursday during a hearing that was supposed to deal with the constitutionality of South Dakota's capital punishment procedure.

But the proceedings have become mired in a series of bizarre motions that pit Moeller's state court lawyer against Arkansas-based public defenders arguing the federal case.

The Arkansas lawyers contend that the execution method using pentobarbital violates the constitutional ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

Moeller is to be executed in late October or early November in the 1990 killing.

He told the judge that what he did was evil and that he has to pay for it.