

[Menu](#)

[N.H. News](#)

[Maine News](#)

[Lakes Region](#)

[Back Issues](#)

[Commentary](#)

[Weekly](#)

[Local Links](#)

[Site Index](#)

[About Us](#)

[Feedback](#)

Editorial - Friday, November 30, 2001

Chad Evans and the rules of law

The case of Chad Evans will soon go before a jury of 12 men and women. They are the people who will decide if the evidence and testimony is sufficient to convict Evans of second-degree murder in the death of 21-month-old Cassidy Bortner.

The state alleges that Evans, 30, beat to death the infant daughter of his girlfriend, 19-year-old Amanda Bortner. He also faces eight felony counts of assault. While Bortner has been granted immunity from self-incrimination in the expectation she will testify against Evans, she is not immune from being charged with a crime in the death of her daughter in November 2000.

The Evans-Bortner case has been a high-profile one since charges were brought against Evans. It is no surprise.

Few of us cherish anything as much as we cherish our children. The death of a child — most especially allegations of the violent death of an infant at the hands of an adult — evokes the kind of anger seldom felt by any of us.

Let's keep something in mind, however. Chad Evans is not guilty of any crime until a jury says he is. The burden of proof lies with the state. The state must prove its case beyond a reasonable doubt. The only evidence and testimony that is valid for consideration is that which is allowed and presented in a court of law.

The trial of Chad Evans will get a lot of attention in the days ahead, as well it should. We trust that the coverage will be accurate and fair. We know some of it will be.

What Chad Evans, the people of Strafford County and the state of New Hampshire have a right to expect is a process that will allow judgment to be fairly reached and administered.

The days ahead will not be easy for anyone — least of all the judge and the jury. They are the ones on whose shoulders fall the weight of a fairly administered trial and a verdict that is supported by the weight of evidence and testimony. Let none of this be lost in the drama of the moment.