

## Race, Politics, and the Criminalizing of Juvenile Justice: Changing Conceptions of Adolescents' Competence and Culpability



**Barry Feld**

**Date: March 15, 2018**

**Time: 5:00-7:00 p.m.**

**Location: Social & Behavioral Sciences Gateway 1517**

### **ABSTRACT:**

The juvenile court lies at the intersection of youth policy and crime policy. Its institutional practices reflect changing ideas about children and crime control. How should the legal system respond when the kid is a criminal and the criminal is a kid? How and why do we think about children and criminals as we do and how have changes in these ideas affected juvenile justice policy? Since its creation a century ago, the juvenile court has evolved through four periods - Progressive Era, Due Process Era, Get Tough Era, and contemporary Kids Are Different Era. In each period, juvenile justice policies have reflected different views about children, crime control, race, and appropriate ways to address youths' misconduct. While conservative politicians advocated get tough policies that equated children with adults, more recent Supreme Court decisions - *J.D.B.*, *Roper*, *Graham*, and *Miller* - draw on developmental psychology and neuroscience research to bolster its conclusions about youths' reduced criminal responsibility and diminished competence. Ultimately, however, providing justice for children requires structural changes to reduce social and economic inequality—concentrated poverty in segregated urban areas—that disproportionately expose children of color to juvenile courts' punitive policies.

### **BIO:**

Barry C. Feld joined the University of Minnesota Law School faculty in September, 1972. He has been Associate Professor, Julius E. Davis Professor, Professor of Law, and since 1990, the Centennial Professor of Law, an endowed chair. Feld received his B.A. in psychology, University of Pennsylvania, 1966; his Juris Doctor degree, *magna cum laude*, University of Minnesota Law School, 1969; and his Ph.D. in sociology, Harvard University, 1973. Feld has written eleven books and more than one hundred law review and peer-reviewed criminology articles and book chapters on juvenile justice. His most recent book is *The Evolution of the Juvenile Court: Race, Politics, and the Criminalizing of Juvenile Justice* (NYU Press 2017). His scholarship has been cited by more than one hundred state and federal courts including the United States Supreme Court.

**Light refreshments will be provided!**

Please RSVP by NOON on Monday March 12, 2018 at:

<https://cls.soceco.uci.edu/webforms/march-15-2018-barry-feld-book-talk>