

# Judge denies new trial in death of 4-year-old

United Press International  
DURANGO, Colo. — A district judge has denied a new trial

for a woman convicted of felony child abuse in the death of her 4-year-old son, who was killed by

a karate kick from the woman's companion.

A public defender claimed Jeannette Macak, 24, was denied effective counsel at her trial.

The public defender claimed the trial attorney, Robin Auld, failed to file motions, did not investigate the case thoroughly, and failed to secure certain witnesses.

District Judge James Childress Thursday dismissed all 59 alleged deficiencies listed by the public defender.

"Although Mr. Auld was inartful in asking questions and could have been better prepared to examine witnesses, the court does not find this to be constitutionally ineffective," Childress said.

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## Mother can't say why

# Teen suicide a mystery

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — A heartbroken mother struggled Thursday to tell sympathetic House members why her 18-year-old son killed himself, but finally acknowledged she really doesn't know.

Mrs. Elaine Difiglia of Plano was among a dozen witnesses who went before a House panel

investigating teenage suicides and other problems of the young.

Difiglia said her oldest son, Scott, shot himself two months ago as he was getting ready to leave home for college. He left a note saying "he could no longer go on living with the pain he had inside him."

"Scott couldn't tell us about this pain — we had no idea he was suffering," she said. "He showed us no signs of depression."

"This committee wants to know what we feel could have prevented this tragedy. I don't know if I can fully answer that question."

But she said she was willing to testify at the hearings on "Teenagers in Crisis" because she and her husband felt they could gain some comfort from "trying to help other parents and troubled teenagers."

*The first step toward preventing teenage suicide is better communication between parents and children — Mrs. Difiglia*

One thing that helped them, she said, was talking with the parents of other children who had taken their own lives.

Difiglia said perhaps a step toward preventing suicide is better communication between parents and children. She said many teenagers come to her since the son to complain that they do not talk with their parents.

"I tell them: 'Before bed tonight, I want you to write your mom and dad and tell them you'd want them to know they wouldn't be here tomorrow or forever more,'" she said. "And you, parent, tell your children the same. You'd want them to know you'd never have a chance to tell them again."

"There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about Scott. I hug him again, to hug him that I love him and know we care. My son ended his life, and I hope time God will help me stand."

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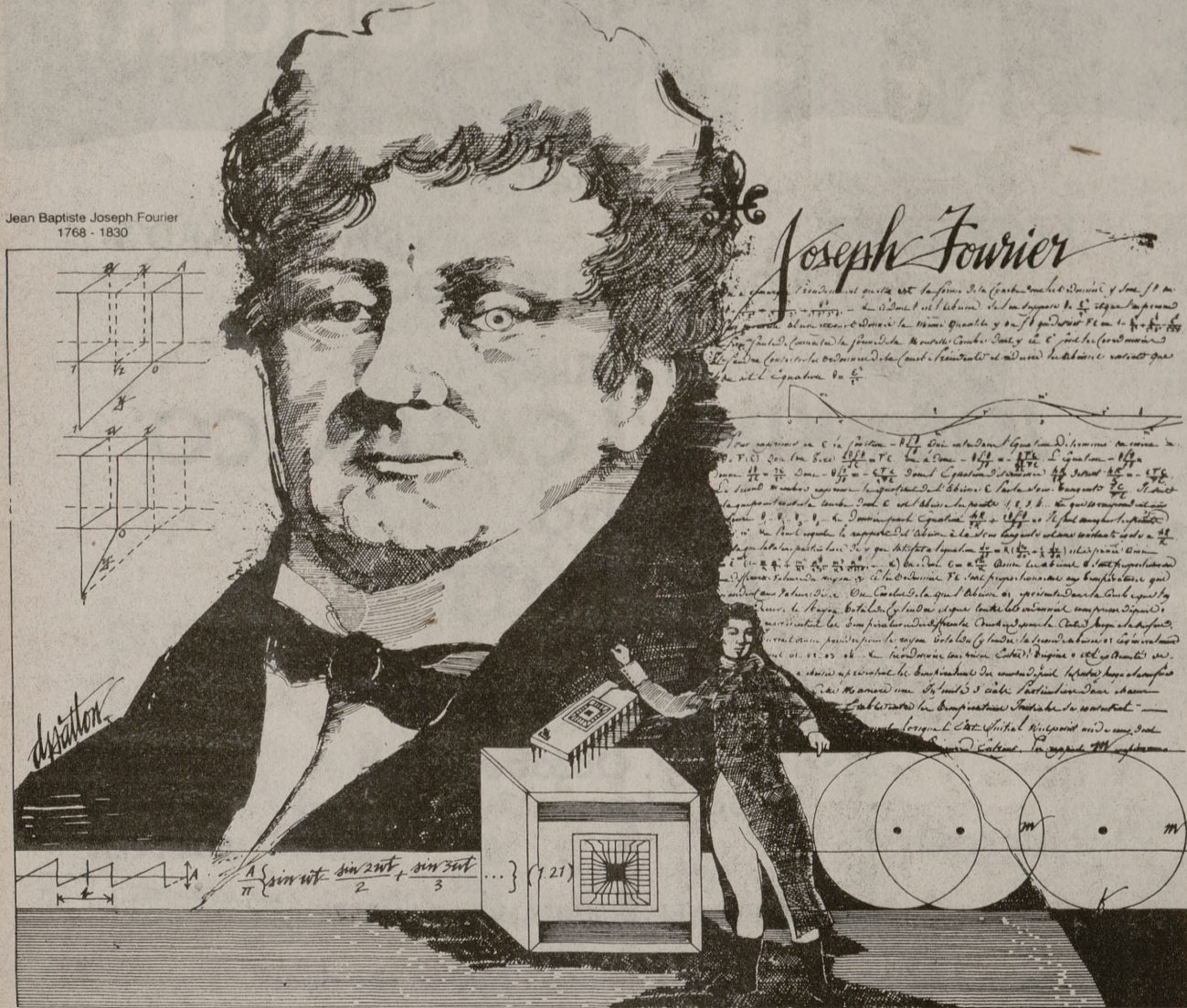
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