



Judge seals Davis' fate: death

On 06/26/98, Vicki Robinson ran errands with her daughter, Valessa Robinson, her daughter's boyfriend, Adam Davis, and a mutual friend of her daughter and Davis, Jon Whispel.

After dinner that evening, Davis and Whispel left the Robinson home and went to a Denny's restaurant. Later that evening, Valessa Robinson sneaked out of her home and joined Davis and Whispel at the restaurant. The trio left the restaurant in search of drugs, bought and took LSD, and returned to the restaurant.

While at the restaurant, Valessa Robinson stated that the three should kill her mother. Whispel thought Valessa was joking, but Davis and Valessa began to plan how to carry out the murder, agreeing on a lethal heroin overdose of Valessa's mother.

The three went back to Ms. Robinson's house, took her van without her knowledge, and attempted to buy heroin and a syringe. Unable to purchase heroin, Davis purchased a syringe. Davis suggested that they kill Ms. Robinson by filling the syringe with bleach and an air bubble.

In the kitchen, Davis put Ms. Robinson into a "sleeper" hold, trying to render her unconscious. Davis injected Ms. Robinson with the syringe, but after a few minutes, the bleach did not kill Ms. Robinson, so Davis stabbed her with a knife. Shortly thereafter, the three heard moaning from the kitchen, so Davis grabbed the knife and left the room. Davis later told Whispel that he stabbed Ms. Robinson two more times and tried to break her neck.

A few hours later, the three cleaned the kitchen with bleach and towels. Davis put Ms. Robinson's body into a trash can, and loaded the trash can, along with shovels and a hoe into Ms. Robinson's van and drove to a wooded area to bury her. The digging was unsuccessful, so they concealed the trash can with foliage, planning to come back later.

The three later returned to Ms. Robinson's house and obtained her credit cards, cash, and ATM card since Valessa knew Ms. Robinson's personal identification number. The three spent the next few days in Ybor City, using Ms. Robinson's money to get tattoos and stay at motels. They also purchased twenty bags of concrete, a bucket, and a trash can, with the intention of dumping the body in a canal.

While Davis, Valessa, and Whispel were in Ybor City, Florida, Ms. Robinson's boyfriend, Jim Englert, reported her missing. Davis learned from a friend that both Davis and Valessa were on the news, so the three decided to leave town and flee to Phoenix, Arizona. They never returned to complete their plans to dispose of Ms. Robinson's body.

Ms. Robinson's credit union tracked the use of her credit card, and Davis, Valessa, and Whispel were apprehended in Pecos County, Texas, after a high-speed chase.

Codefendant Information:

Valessa Robinson was tried and convicted on charges of Third-Degree Murder and Grand Theft Auto. On 05/30/00, she was sentenced to fifteen and five years, respectively.

Jon Whispel pled guilty to charges of Second-Degree Murder, Third-Degree Grand Theft, and Grand Theft Auto. On 06/29/99, he was sentenced to twenty-five years for the crimes.

Case Information:

Davis filed a Direct Appeal with the Florida Supreme Court on 02/14/00, citing issues such as evidence admitted at trial, finding of aggravating circumstances, and the constitutionality of the death penalty. On 09/11/03, the convictions and sentence were affirmed.

Davis filed a 3.851 Motion with the Circuit Court on 02/01/05. On 02/10/06 and 04/20/06, Evidentiary Hearings were held. On 06/21/06, the CC denied the motion.

Davis filed a 3.851 Motion Appeal with the Florida Supreme Court on 07/18/06 that is pending.

Floridacapitalcases.state.fl.us

The case at a glance

Vicki Robinson, a 49-year-old real estate agent and divorced mother of two teenagers, vanished from her home in the Tampa suburb of Carrollwood on June 27, 1998.

Police soon focused their inquiries on her youngest daughter, Valessa, who had disappeared, too. Mrs. Robinson had been struggling with her rebellious daughter and was concerned about Valessa's new boyfriend, Adam Davis. Davis, 19, had just spent six months in jail for theft and burglary.

Six days after Mrs. Robinson's disappearance, Valessa and Davis, along with 19-year-old Jon Whispel, were arrested after a high-speed chase in Texas. The next day, Mrs. Robinson's body was found in woods a few miles from her home.

In June 1999, Whispel agreed to testify against his friends. He said that on the night of the murder, he, Valessa and Davis had taken LSD. As they sat in a Denny's talking about what to do, Valessa suddenly suggested they kill her mother. Inside the Robinson home, Davis attacked Mrs. Robinson and stabbed her, Whispel said, adding that at one point Valessa held her mother down.

Whispel pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Davis was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to death.

Davis guilty of killing his girlfriend's mother

The 20-year-old, who injected the real estate agent with bleach and stabbed her, sobs during closing arguments. He could be sentenced to death.

By Sue Carlton - St. Petersburg Times

November 5, 1999

TAMPA -- Adam Davis, a young drifter with a taste for LSD and a string of arrests, deliberately and savagely killed his girlfriend's mother in her suburban kitchen, a jury decided Thursday.

Davis, who shook with sobs during closing arguments, sat stone-faced when the verdict was read after less than two hours of deliberation.

A hushed wave of tears and elation passed through those who loved Vicki Robinson, a 49-year-old real estate agent detectives say was killed by three teens, including her own daughter, Valessa.

"I'm ecstatic that justice has been exhibited before us in this courtroom today," said her friend, Deborah Sartor-Englert. ". . . I'm so thankful. I'm going to sleep so good tonight."

There were also tears for the few who had gathered for Davis.

"I'm scared for what's going to happen to Adam now," said his stepmother, Donna Davis.

The jury of six women and six men returns to the courtroom today to hear evidence on whether he should spend his life in prison or die in the electric chair. Circuit Judge Cynthia Holloway will consider their recommendation when she sentences Davis later.

"No mercy," Sartor-Englert said. "He showed no mercy to Vicki Robinson in her last moments of death, and I believe he should experience the same."

Jurors learned this week of the turmoil building inside the Robinsons' sprawling Carrollwood home before the shocking murder.

There, Mrs. Robinson lived with a defiant teenage daughter who ran away, tried drugs and talked of having a baby with her 19-year-old boyfriend, Davis, according to court records.

Davis later told detectives that Mrs. Robinson was trying to keep them apart. He said that along with their friend, Jon Whispel, they took LSD one night in June 1998 and concocted a plan to kill her so the threesome could stay together.

Whispel, who in a plea deal was sentenced to 25 years in prison, testified that Davis attacked Mrs. Robinson from behind as she walked through her kitchen in her nightgown. He said that Davis injected her in the neck with bleach and that Valessa helped hold her mother down.

Whispel admitted he handed over a knife but said he didn't watch what Davis did next. Davis later walked into the bedroom with the knife in his bloody hands and said he had stabbed her.

"The b---- won't die," Whispel quoted Davis as saying.

Davis gave a similar account after the three were caught driving Mrs. Robinson's minivan in Texas.

Jurors saw a single gruesome photo of her body, badly decomposed after being stuffed head-first into a plastic garbage can and hidden in the woods.

Defense attorney Charles Traina admitted Davis was involved but said it was not premeditated, asking a jury to consider a lesser charge. That would have eliminated the possibility of a death sentence.

But prosecutor Shirley Williams traced deliberate steps that night, from coming up with the plan to buying the syringe to filling it with Mrs. Robinson's laundry bleach.

"It doesn't get any more premeditated than that," Williams said.

Also Thursday, a prison inmate who traveled with Davis as he was being brought home to Florida said Davis boasted he was dangerous, said he cut Mrs. Robinson up and called himself and Valessa the Romeo and Juliet of the '90s.

Davis, now 20, did not testify. Observers weren't sure what triggered his tears Thursday beginning at the end of the prosecutor's closing argument.

Mrs. Robinson's friends clasped hands and whispered prayers before the verdict. Her boyfriend, Jim Englert, touched the blue-topaz ring he had given her when they started dating, a ring she wore to her death.

"Real justice comes when he dies, whether it's in a jail cell or in the electric chair," Englert said.

Valessa Robinson's trial is scheduled for Dec. 13. She cannot face the death penalty because of her age. For Mrs. Robinson's friends and family, that trial may be harder.

"We knew Valessa, we loved Valessa," said Mrs. Robinson's friend, Bonnie Smith. "We still love her."

Judge seals Davis' fate: death

The man who killed his girlfriend's mother ""knew it was coming."

By Sue Carlton - St. Petersburg Times

December 18, 1999

TAMPA -- They never knew Vicki Robinson. Still, they went to court Friday, drawn by the tragedy of this mother murdered in her struggle to deal with her defiant teenage daughter, Valessa.

They sat on hard benches awaiting the sentencing of Valessa's boyfriend, 21-year-old Adam Davis, who had confessed to plunging a bleach-filled needle into Mrs. Robinson's neck and then stabbing her with a knife until she was still.

Hillsborough Circuit Judge's Cynthia Holloway's voice was steady, catching only once as she gave details of Mrs. Robinson's last moments.

"Imagine the fear and anxiety the victim consciously endured -- choking, injection of bleach, eventual multiple stabbing and then being left to bleed to death," the judge said.

Davis' sentence: death.

"Yes," murmured Jeffrey Luddeke, a warehouse manager who heard about Mrs. Robinson on the news and took the morning off to go to court, joining a handful of other spectators there.

Standing before the judge, shackled and pale, Davis hung his head but said nothing.

"He knew it was coming," said his court-appointed attorney, Rick Terrana. "His focus now is on trying to arrange some funding for a private lawyer to do his appeal."

"To think that kids would want to kill a mother, to plan it out," said Anne Gambrell, a juror who convicted Davis last month and returned Friday to see him sentenced. "I wonder what Valessa is thinking right now."

Though Davis' mother and aunt attended his trial, they were not there to see him sentenced to death. Nor were the legion of friends, family, co-workers and fellow churchgoers of Mrs. Robinson, who had filled the courtroom for the trial.

Only Jim Englert, Mrs. Robinson's boyfriend, sat listening, his eyes wet.

"Vicki, of all people, the most loving, caring, giving Christian lady," he said. "I looked up to her. I adored her. I'll miss her forever."

Mrs. Robinson was a 49-year-old real estate agent fighting to control her daughter. Then 15, Valessa was a sometime runaway who took drugs and began an obsessive relationship with Davis, an older boy who already had a string of arrests.

Mrs. Robinson was quietly making plans to put Valessa in a boarding school for troubled girls. But the day Valessa was to arrive at Steppin' Stone Farms instead was the day of Mrs. Robinson's funeral.

Jon Whispel, who hung out with Valessa and Davis, told detectives the three had been in a booth at a Carrollwood Denny's that night in June 1998 and getting high on LSD. Then Valessa suddenly suggested they kill her mother, he said.

Whispel said Davis had taken up the idea, first plotting to overdose Mrs. Robinson with heroin, and then switching to the idea of injecting her with bleach and an air bubble.

Whispel, who testified in exchange for a 25-year prison sentence on a reduced charge of second-degree murder, said Davis had attacked her from behind, choked her and injected her. Whispel said Valessa sat on her mother to hold her down. Whispel admitted handing over the knife that was used to stab Mrs. Robinson to death.

Davis told police he had been "raging" when he "just sliced."

"The facts of this case clearly establish that this murder was the result of a calm reflection, certainly not an emotional frenzy," the judge said Friday.

Whispel said they had put Mrs. Robinson's body in a trash can from her garage and dumped it in woods, then used her ATM cards for drugs and tattoos. They took off in her minivan and made it as far as Texas before they were arrested.

Holloway, delivering her first death sentence Friday, said she considered defense arguments that Davis was on LSD, that he had no previous convictions for assault, and that he suffered hardships in his youth including the death of his father. She followed the recommendation of the jury, which voted 7-5 for death in November.

Davis will spend his time in a 6- by 9-foot death row cell, eating his meals with a spoon and showering every other day while he awaits his appeal.

Davis told detectives they had murdered Mrs. Robinson because they didn't want to be separated. Friday, Englert sounded weary as he tried to figure the logic.

"Of all the things in the world these children could have done, this is the only thing they could have done to prevent being together," he said.

Source:

<https://murderpedia.org/male.D/d/davis-adam.htm>