

GOOD MORNING
Friday
September 15, 1995

SPRINGFIELD
NEWS-LEADER

Springfield,
Missouri
35¢

"Tis a privilege to live in the Ozarks"

'I think you're leaving me out to dry'

Rape defendant Garrison berates his attorney; the alleged victim describes six hours of terror.

By Ron Davis
News-Leader

With his defense in shambles and a lifetime in prison looming, Steven Eugene Garrison's anger exploded in court late Thursday.

Garrison, 37, wanted his lawyer to conduct a courtroom demonstration that Garrison said would prove he couldn't have put his hands in his leather jacket, pretending to point a gun, as Garrison's alleged rape victim contends.

Outside the jury's presence, an exasperated Dean Price poked his hands in the jacket's pockets to prove that it could be done. "You want me to make an—out of you and me with a courtroom demonstration that doesn't work?" Price asked. He threw the jacket onto the defense table.

Garrison got in Price's face. "I take pride in that jacket, man. It's my skin. You throw it around, we've got problems."

Price looked narrowly at Garrison for a long moment before turning his back on the defendant.

Garrison had more gripes: "You ain't doing nothing, man," he told Price. "I've tried to work with you, man. I think you're leaving me out to dry."

Today, a jury will likely decide if Garrison is, indeed, to be hung out to dry on charges of rape, sodomy and robbery. Deliberations are expected to begin by midmorning, after closing arguments.

After threats disrupted Wednesday's proceedings, the trial got back on track Thursday with a spate of state witnesses, including the alleged victim, a 23-year-old Dade County woman.

She sobbed, at times uncontrollably, as she recalled Aug. 8, 1993, when she says Garrison raped and sodomized her for six hours.

Her 87 minutes of testimony were so explicit and excruciating that at least one courtroom spectator fled, aghast. She described her attacker as a cruel man who taunted her with a knife held to her pelvis and throat.

"I didn't think I was going to live," she said in halting tones. "I just wanted to live through it."

Dressed in black with a gold crucifix around her neck, the woman never made eye contact with Garrison. He appeared bored, writing on a legal pad.

Garrison contends the woman let him into her mid-Springfield apartment voluntarily and that she lent him \$532.

He denies having sex with her and says she's just mad because he never paid her back.

Garrison's problem: If he takes the stand today and presents that defense, he opens himself up to blistering cross-examination about his criminal record, which includes several prior felony convictions.

More likely, Garrison won't testify. A taped statement he gave to police in February 1994 outlining his defense was played to jurors late Thursday.

Jurors seemed unimpressed; two of them locked gazes and rolled their eyes as Garrison insisted on tape that it was the woman's idea to give him money.



Bob Linder / News-Leader

"I'm Steve Garrison, outlaw," the defendant says Thursday in an outburst before Judge Sweeney.

Steven Garrison - Berates Attorney for Disrespecting His Gang Jacket

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Sat, Feb 16, 2019