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Jury finds a quiet Garrison guilty



Steven Eugene Garrison leaves the courtroom Friday with no expression after a jury found him guilty of rape, sodomy, robbery and burglary.

The courtroom is stunned by his composure after his conviction on rape and other charges.

By Ron Davis
News-Leader

For all of his bluster — for all the loud talk in court about being an outlaw unafraid of anyone or anything — Steven Eugene Garrison was oddly quiet when the jury found him guilty of being a rapist, sodomite, robber and burglar.

He just stood there Friday, with a blank expression, while Circuit Judge J. Miles Sweeney announced the verdicts. Surrounded by a sea of police officers, Garrison then clanked off to jail in hand and leg cuffs, where he'll wait until he's sentenced on Oct. 20.

Garrison will almost certainly die in prison. He faces three consecutive life terms. He is a repeat offender — "Class X," the law calls it, which means he must serve at least 80 percent of his time.

The state calculates life as 30 years in prison. Eighty percent of 30 years is 24, times three: 72 years behind bars for the 37-year-old Garrison.

All of which made Garrison's silence a surprise; from the judge down, everyone expected the convict to disrupt the end of the trial. The last words he spoke before hearing from the jury were outside the courtroom, as a reporter shouted a question.

"Steve, what do you make of the quick verdicts?" The jury had been out only 90 minutes.

"Don't know what to think," he muttered.

An anticlimax, to be sure. In a case so bizarre it led Prosecutor Cynthia Rushefsky to exclaim, "In the 10



Price Rushefsky

years I've been here, I've never seen anything like it."

'Stark-naked terror'

Wednesday brought threats and the sequestering of the jury. It was also the day the newspaper printed a story about Garrison's possible link to Springfield's three missing women. Thursday saw Garrison get nose to nose with his lawyer, Dean Price, and gripe he was being hung out to dry.

Friday, the attorneys argued to the jury.

"The Steve Garrison you see sitting over there looking like an accountant is not the Steve Garrison (the victim) saw on Aug. 8, 1993," Rushefsky began. She held up a photo of Garrison then: long hair, long beard, scary look. Garrison smiled, then yawned.

The prosecutor, clad in a black dress always worn for verdict day, revisited the victim's testimony. Rushefsky talked about Garrison putting a knife with a 6-inch blade between the woman's legs. About Garrison raping and sodomizing and

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Steven Garrison - Guilty - Part 1

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