

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEALS OF TEXAS

Guzman v. State

281 S.W. 865 (Tex. Crim. App. 1926) · Decided February 10, 1926

SUMMARY

The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed Guzman's murder conviction and fifty-year sentence. The court held that the evidence was sufficient to support the conviction and that the trial court did not abuse its discretion in denying a new trial based on alleged jury discussion of other homicides.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Baker; Morrow
JURISDICTION	Texas
DECIDED	February 10, 1926
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Guzman appealed his conviction for murder and fifty-year penitentiary sentence, challenging the sufficiency of the evidence and the denial of his motion for new trial based on alleged jury misconduct.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The appellate court reviewed the sufficiency of the evidence to determine whether it warranted a murder conviction and reviewed the trial court's ruling on alleged jury misconduct for abuse of discretion.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	published
PARTIES	Guzman v. State

TOPICS

- criminal procedure
- evidence
- self defense

PRACTICE AREAS

- criminal law
- criminal procedure
- evidence

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the evidence was sufficient to sustain Guzman's murder conviction.

2. Whether the trial court abused its discretion by overruling the motion for new trial based on alleged jury discussion of other homicides and community concerns about killings.

HOLDINGS

1. The evidence was sufficient to warrant Guzman's conviction for murder.
2. The trial court did not abuse its discretion in overruling the motion for new trial because the evidence regarding the alleged jury remarks was conflicting and, if the remarks were made in the jury room, they were casual and involved no discussion of particulars.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“This court has frequently held that such matters as herein complained of, necessarily have to be left largely to the discretion of the trial court, and in the absence of a showing of an abuse of such discretion, this court would be unauthorized to interfere with his ruling.” (281 S.W. at 865)

“After a careful examination of the entire record, we are of the opinion that the judgment of the trial court should be affirmed, and it is accordingly so ordered.” (281 S.W. at 865)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

At a dance or Mexican gathering, the deceased, Manuel Granado, put his hand on Guzman or caught him by the arm and asked him for a drink. Guzman jerked free and shot and killed Granado. The State relied on malice and lack of provocation, while Guzman claimed self-defense and relied on alleged insulting remarks by Granado concerning his daughter. Guzman's confession stated that he did not see Granado holding a knife, gun, or other weapon at the time of the shooting.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

A district court in Atascosa County convicted appellant of murder and assessed punishment at fifty years in the penitentiary. The trial court denied his motion for new trial, including the jury-misconduct claim, and the Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed