

SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

The People of the State of Illinois v. Daniel Ramsey

People v. Ramsey · No. 105942 · Decided October 7, 2010

SUMMARY

The Illinois Supreme Court reviews Daniel Ramsey’s convictions and death sentence following guilty pleas to two murders and related offenses. The court recounts the underlying crimes, the prior reversal of his convictions, the guilty-plea proceedings, and the capital sentencing hearing, including the jury’s findings of death-penalty eligibility and aggravating factors. The court affirms the convictions and sentence.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Illinois
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Justice Garman; Chief Justice Fitzgerald; Justice Freeman; Justice Thomas; Justice Kilbride; Justice Karmeier; Justice Burke
JURISDICTION	Illinois
DECIDED	October 7, 2010
DOCKET	105942
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Direct appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court following defendant's guilty pleas, capital sentencing hearing, death sentence, and denial of posttrial motions after remand for a new trial.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	The court reviewed the interpretation and applicability of Supreme Court Rule 701 de novo and reviewed the constitutional claims under applicable constitutional standards. The opinion also considered forfeiture and plain-error principles for an issue not preserved below.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Illinois Supreme Court opinion; precedential.
PARTIES	Daniel Ramsey v. The People of the State of Illinois

TOPICS

- criminal procedure
- sentencing
- due process
- equal protection
- appellate procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Ramsey was entitled to a new capital sentencing hearing because his appointed attorneys were not members of the Capital Litigation Trial Bar under amended Illinois Supreme Court Rule 701.
2. Whether application of Rule 701 to Ramsey's case violated equal protection or due process.
3. Whether imposing the death penalty was fundamentally unjust because Ramsey was represented by attorneys who were not members of the Capital Litigation Trial Bar.
4. Whether the State's decision to seek the death penalty after remand and after Ramsey's guilty plea was arbitrary or otherwise invalid.

HOLDINGS

1. The amended Capital Litigation Trial Bar requirements of Rule 701 did not apply to Ramsey's case because the case was filed before the rule's effective-date cutoff.
2. Applying Rule 701 as written did not violate Ramsey's equal protection or due process rights.
3. The death sentence was not fundamentally unjust under section 9-1(i) of the Illinois Criminal Code.

KEY QUOTATIONS

"We therefore reject defendant's contention that he is entitled to a new sentencing hearing because his attorneys were not CLTB members." (51)

"Defendant was not denied any equal protection or due process rights." (51)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

In July 1996, Ramsey killed two young women, shot three other victims in the Sloop residence, sexually assaulted and killed one victim, and committed related offenses. His initial convictions and death sentence were reversed by the Illinois Supreme Court. On remand, he pleaded guilty to the murders, attempted murders, aggravated criminal sexual assault, and home invasion; a jury found three statutory death-eligibility factors and determined that death was appropriate.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

After Ramsey's convictions and death sentence following his first trial, the Illinois Supreme Court reversed the convictions and remanded for a new trial. On remand, Ramsey pleaded guilty to multiple offenses, a jury found him eligible for the death penalty and selected death, and the trial court imposed a death sentence plus prison terms for the remaining convictions. Ramsey appealed directly under Illinois Supreme Court Rule 603, challenging, among other things, the qualifications of his capital-defense counsel and the State's pursuit of the death penalty.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- People v. Ramsey, 192 Ill. 2d 154 (2000)
- People v. Warren, 173 Ill. 2d 348, 361 (1996)
- People v. Simpson, 204 Ill. 2d 536, 570-72 (2001)

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