

OHIO COURT OF APPEALS, SIXTH APPELLATE DISTRICT, WOOD COUNTY

State v. Sims

2025-Ohio-5827 (Ohio Ct. App. 6th Dist. 2025) · No. WD-24-075 · Decided December 30, 2025

SUMMARY

The Ohio Sixth District Court of Appeals affirmed Jeremy M. Sims's convictions for offenses involving a twelve-year-old victim, including rape, kidnapping, importuning, pandering obscenity involving a minor, compelling prostitution, and gross sexual imposition. The court rejected Sims's manifest-weight-of-the-evidence challenge, concluding that the jury did not clearly lose its way and that the evidence supported the convictions and related specifications.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Ohio Court of Appeals, Sixth Appellate District, Wood County
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Myron C. Duhart, J.; Thomas J. Osowik, J.; Gene A. Zmuda, J.
JURISDICTION	Ohio Court of Appeals, Sixth Appellate District, Wood County
DECIDED	December 30, 2025
DOCKET	WD-24-075
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Criminal defendant appealed his convictions and specifications from the Wood County Court of Common Pleas, arguing that the convictions were against the manifest weight of the evidence.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	For a manifest-weight challenge, the appellate court weighs the evidence and reasonable inferences, considers witness credibility, and determines whether the factfinder clearly lost its way, creating a manifest miscarriage of justice. The appellate court sits as a thirteenth juror but reverses only in the exceptional case in which the evidence weighs heavily against conviction.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published Ohio Court of Appeals opinion
PARTIES	Jeremy M. Sims v. State of Ohio

TOPICS

- evidence
- standard of review
- appellate procedure
- criminal procedure

PRACTICE AREAS

Criminal law

Criminal procedure

Appellate practice

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether Sims's convictions for rape, kidnapping, importuning, pandering obscenity involving a minor, compelling prostitution, and gross sexual imposition were against the manifest weight of the evidence.
2. Whether the repeat violent offender, sexually violent predator, sexual motivation, and school safety zone specifications were against the manifest weight of the evidence despite Sims's failure to present specific appellate arguments addressing those specifications.

HOLDINGS

1. The convictions were not against the manifest weight of the evidence. The jury did not clearly lose its way in crediting the victim's testimony and considering the corroborating messages, videos, phone data, surveillance evidence, and other evidence.
2. Sims failed to demonstrate error concerning the repeat violent offender, sexually violent predator, sexual motivation, and school safety zone specifications because he did not develop arguments specifically challenging those findings.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“When reviewing a claim that a verdict is against the manifest weight of the evidence, the appellate court must weigh the evidence and all reasonable inferences, consider the credibility of witnesses, and determine whether the jury clearly lost its way in resolving evidentiary conflicts so as to create such a manifest miscarriage of justice that the conviction must be reversed and a new trial ordered.” (¶ 27)

“We reverse on manifest weight grounds only in the exceptional case where the evidence weighs heavily against conviction.” (¶ 27)

“The judgment of the Wood County Court of Common Pleas is affirmed. Sims is ordered to pay the costs of this appeal, pursuant to App.R. 24.” (¶ 64)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Sims, age forty-three, communicated with A.K., age twelve, through Grindr and iMessage and agreed to exchange sexual acts for money. Sims picked A.K. up at a high school parking lot, drove him to a hotel parking lot, and engaged in sexual conduct with him after A.K. disclosed his age. Digital messages, photographs, videos, phone extractions, surveillance footage, location data, and Sims's statements were introduced at trial, and the jury convicted Sims on all seven counts.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Sims was indicted on seven offenses involving a twelve-year-old victim. Following a jury trial, he was convicted of rape, kidnapping, importuning, pandering obscenity involving a minor, compelling prostitution, and gross sexual imposition; the jury also found certain kidnapping specifications, and the trial court found repeat violent

offender and sexually violent predator specifications. The trial court imposed an aggregate indefinite sentence of thirty years to life. The Sixth District affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- State v. Jenks, 61 Ohio St. 3d 259 (1991)
- State v. Nicely, 39 Ohio St. 3d 147, 151 (1988)
- Toledo v. Digby, 1983 WL 6977, *4 (6th Dist. Oct. 28, 1983)
- State v. Thomas, 70 Ohio St. 2d 79 (1982)
- State v. Haas, 2025-Ohio-683, ¶ 39 (6th Dist.)
- State v. Thompkins, 78 Ohio St. 3d 380, 387-388 (1997)
- State v. Robinson, 2012-Ohio-6068, ¶ 15 (6th Dist.)
- State v. Ide, 2024-Ohio-5527, ¶ 14 (6th Dist.)
- State v. Watson, 2009-Ohio-330, ¶ 5 (9th Dist.)
- State v. Fenderson, 2022-Ohio-1973, ¶ 70 (6th Dist.)
- State v. Franks, 2017-Ohio-7045, ¶ 16 (9th Dist.)
- Cardone v. Cardone, 1998 WL 224934, *8 (9th Dist. May 6, 1998)
- Bias v. Boyd, 2025-Ohio-5080, ¶ 9 (6th Dist.)
- State v. Thomas, 2019-Ohio-1916, ¶ 49 (6th Dist.)
- State v. Ritter, 2005-Ohio-6526, ¶ 79 (6th Dist.)

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