

COURT OF APPEALS OF TEXAS, SEVENTH DISTRICT AT AMARILLO

George Allen Dennis v. The State of Texas

No. 07-25-00047-CR · No. 07-25-00047-CR · Decided May 18, 2026

SUMMARY

The Seventh Court of Appeals of Texas at Amarillo reviews George Allen Dennis’s convictions for eight sex offenses against a child under 17. The court holds that the jury charge erroneously failed to require unanimity on a single discrete incident for each count, but concludes that the error did not cause egregious harm. The court affirms the trial court’s judgment.

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Court of Appeals of Texas, Seventh District at Amarillo
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Lawrence M. Doss; Parker, C.J.; Doss, J.; Yarbrough, J.
JURISDICTION	Court of Appeals of Texas, Seventh District at Amarillo
DECIDED	May 18, 2026
DOCKET	07-25-00047-CR
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Dennis appealed his conviction on eight counts of sex offenses against a child, arguing that the jury charge improperly permitted a non-unanimous verdict.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	Jury-charge error is reviewed in two steps: the court first determines whether error occurred and then assesses harm. When the defendant failed to object, reversal requires egregious harm.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Unpublished memorandum opinion; not designated for publication and nonprecedential under the source text.
PARTIES	George Allen Dennis v. The State of Texas

TOPICS

- jury instructions
- criminal procedure
- appellate procedure
- harmless error
- standard of review

PRACTICE AREAS

- Texas criminal procedure
- criminal appeals
- jury instructions
- jury unanimity
- child sexual offenses

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether the jury charge was erroneous because it failed to require unanimity as to one discrete criminal incident for each count when the evidence showed multiple similar offenses within the State's elected timeframes and locations.
2. Whether the jury-charge error caused egregious harm requiring reversal when Dennis did not object to the charge.

HOLDINGS

1. The jury charge was erroneous because, although it included a general unanimity instruction and incorporated the State's elections, it did not direct the jurors to agree unanimously on one particular discrete incident supporting conviction on each count.
2. The jury-charge error did not cause egregious harm, so reversal was not warranted.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“The charge therefore created a theoretical risk of a non-unanimous verdict.” (at 4)

“On this record, it is logical to conclude that the jury unanimously agreed Appellant committed each of the separate instances of criminal conduct A.Z. described.” (at 7)

“Weighing these factors together, we hold the jury charge error did not affect the very basis of the case or vitally undermine Appellant’s defensive theory of categorical denial.” (at 7)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Dennis, a tennis coach and photographer, developed a relationship with A.Z., who was fourteen when he began taking lessons from Dennis. The relationship progressed to repeated sexual contact and travel together, including hotel stays and photography sessions involving nude or inappropriate images. After A.Z. disclosed the conduct to his family, police investigated, found photographs and messages, and Dennis admitted having a sexual relationship with A.Z. after waiving his rights. At trial, Dennis categorically denied that any sexual contact occurred.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

Dennis was convicted in the 371st District Court of Tarrant County on eight counts and acquitted on two counts. The case was originally appealed to the Second Court of Appeals but was transferred to the Seventh Court of Appeals by the Supreme Court of Texas. Because Dennis did not object to the jury charge on unanimity grounds, the appellate court reviewed the alleged error for egregious harm and affirmed.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Almanza v. State, 686 S.W.2d 157, 171 (Tex. Crim. App. 1985)
- Nava v. State, 415 S.W.3d 289, 298 (Tex. Crim. App. 2013)
- Cosio v. State, 353 S.W.3d 766, 771-78 & n.76 (Tex. Crim. App. 2011)
- Arrington v. State, 451 S.W.3d 834, 840-41 (Tex. Crim. App. 2015)
- Pizzo v. State, 235 S.W.3d 711, 719 (Tex. Crim. App. 2007)
- Tyson v. State, 172 S.W.3d 172, 178 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth 2005, pet. ref'd)
- Villarreal v. State, 453 S.W.3d 429, 433 (Tex. Crim. App. 2015)
- Owings v. State, 541 S.W.3d 144, 152 (Tex. Crim. App. 2017)
- Taylor v. State, 332 S.W.3d 483, 493 (Tex. Crim. App. 2011)
- Higgins v. State, No. 02-24-00055-CR, 2025 Tex. App. LEXIS 4500, at *14-16 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth June 26, 2025) (mem. op., not designated for publication)
- Brown v. State, No. 02-22-00190-CR, 2023 Tex. App. LEXIS, at *16-17 (Tex. App.—Fort Worth July 27, 2023) (mem. op., not designated for publication)