

SUPREME COURT OF ARKANSAS

Walters v. State

358 Ark. 439 (Ark. 2004) · No. CR 03-1041 · Decided September 23, 2004

SUMMARY

The Arkansas Supreme Court affirmed Raymond Walters's conviction for rape and life-imprisonment sentence. The court held that the victim's testimony and DNA evidence provided sufficient evidence to support the conviction, and it declined to review Walters's competency-to-stand-trial argument because it was not preserved for appeal. The court also found no other reversible error under Supreme Court Rule 4-3(h).

CASE DETAILS

COURT	Supreme Court of Arkansas
WRITING FOR THE COURT	Betty C. Dickey, Chief Justice
JURISDICTION	Arkansas
DECIDED	September 23, 2004
DOCKET	CR 03-1041
DISPOSITION	affirmed
PROCEDURAL POSTURE	Walters appealed his Garland County Circuit Court conviction for rape and life sentence, challenging the sufficiency of the evidence and the trial court's competency determination.
STANDARD OF REVIEW	On review of the denial of a directed-verdict motion, the court views the evidence in the light most favorable to the State, considers only evidence supporting the verdict, and affirms if substantial evidence supports the jury's conclusion. Unpreserved arguments raised for the first time on appeal are not considered.
PRECEDENTIAL VALUE	Published opinion; precedential decision of the Supreme Court of Arkansas
PARTIES	Raymond Walters v. State of Arkansas

TOPICS

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

PRACTICE AREAS

Criminal law

Criminal procedure

Evidence

Appellate procedure

QUESTIONS PRESENTED

1. Whether substantial evidence supported Walters's rape conviction.
2. Whether the trial court erred in considering the State psychological expert's testimony and examinations concerning Walters's competency to stand trial when the expert allegedly lacked proper credentials and was biased.

HOLDINGS

1. The evidence was sufficient to support Walters's rape conviction because the victim's testimony, together with the DNA evidence, established the statutory elements of rape and forcible compulsion.
2. Walters's challenge to the competency evidence was not preserved because he did not object to the psychological expert's testimony or the consideration of the examinations at trial.

KEY QUOTATIONS

“It is well-established law that the uncorroborated testimony of a rape victim is sufficient to support a conviction if the testimony satisfies the statutory elements of rape.” (259)

“Substantial evidence is that which is forceful enough to compel reasonable minds to reach a conclusion one way or the other and permits the trier of fact to reach a conclusion without having to resort to speculation or conjecture.” (259)

“It is well settled that this court does not consider arguments that are raised for the first time on appeal.” (260)

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The victim testified that Walters entered her apartment, forcibly dragged her into a bedroom, sexually assaulted her, covered her mouth, and threatened her when she tried to scream. She promptly reported the incident, identified Walters in a photo lineup and later in person, and provided clothing containing semen-stained samples. A State forensic expert testified that DNA from the samples matched Walters's DNA, with a reported random-match probability of one in eighteen billion.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

A Garland County jury convicted Walters of rape and sentenced him to life imprisonment. The circuit court denied his motions for directed verdict, and Walters appealed to the Supreme Court of Arkansas. The Supreme Court affirmed, concluding that substantial evidence supported the conviction and that the competency argument was not preserved because Walters did not object at trial.

DISPOSITION

affirmed

CASES CITED

- Benson v. State, 357 Ark. 43, 160 S.W.3d 341 (2004)
- Tester v. State, 342 Ark. 549, 30 S.W.3d 99 (2000)
- Burmingham v. State, 342 Ark. 95, 27 S.W.3d 351 (2000)
- Greene v. State, 335 Ark. 1, 977 S.W.2d 192 (1998)
- Butler v. State, 349 Ark. 252, 82 S.W.3d 152 (2002)
- Williams v. State, 331 Ark. 263, 962 S.W.2d 329 (1998)
- Davis v. State, 330 Ark. 501, 956 S.W.2d 163 (1997)
- Rodgers v. State, 348 Ark. 106, 71 S.W.3d 579 (2002)