

2018 Louisiana High School Mock Trial Competition Case

# The State of Louisiana

## VS.

# Hendrix Rhodes

A CRIMINAL CASE WRITTEN BY THE MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA-  
MONROE MOCK TRIAL TEAM

JORDEN JOHNSON

ISIAH CHAVIS

OLIVIA SAGE

75<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT FOR THE PARISH OF RIVIERE RAPIDE  
STATE OF LOUISIANA



STATE OF LOUISIANA

NO. 2016-89567

VERSUS

DIVISION "L"

HENDRIX J. RHODES

## **PRETRIAL ORDER**

On this 10<sup>TH</sup> day of March, 2017, the above-captioned matter came before the undersigned judge for pretrial conference. The parties, appearing through their counsel, indicated their agreement to, and approval of, the terms of this Order, and requested that it be made the Order of this Court. The terms of this Order, accordingly, shall not be altered, except upon a showing of good cause.

### **I. Statement of the Case**

Marsden Jones was a 21 year old college student at Northern Atchafalaya University ("NAU"). Marsden played intramural softball and was attending NAU on an academic scholarship. Marsden was living in apartment 3547 in the NAU on campus apartments, also known as River Suites. Marsden's major was marketing and Marsden was set to graduate in May of 2017. Marsden also had been in a two year relationship with Hendrix Rhodes that ended in September of 2016. Reports suggest that Marsden had started seeing Kimber Sullivan in November of 2016.

Kimber Sullivan was a 20 year old college student at NAU. Sullivan lived in the dormitories across the street from River Suites. Kimber was an English major who was set to graduate in May of 2019. Kimber was an active member of several clubs and organizations on campus, including NAU's Advocacy Club.

On December 9th of 2016 Jones and Sullivan were found dead in apartment 3547, Jones's apartment, by fellow student Sparrow Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt claims to have seen a blue mustang, the same car type that Hendrix Rhodes drives, fleeing the scene of the crime being driven by a figure dressed all in black.

The state contends that Hendrix Rhodes, upon discovering that Sullivan and Jones were together, broke into Jones's apartment, and upon the two returning Rhodes fired two clean shots from Jones's .45 caliber pistol, equipped with a silencer, that hit Marsden and Kimber respectively. The State contends that at this point Rhodes discarded the weapon and the gloves used to hold the weapon and then fled the scene in the blue mustang.

By indictment, the State of Louisiana charged the Defendant, Hendrix Rhodes, with two counts of Second Degree Murder in violation of Riviere Rapide Parish Statute 14:30.1 alleging

that on December 9th of 2016, Hendrix Rhodes unlawfully caused the death of Kimber Sullivan and Marsden Jones.

Upon arraignment, Hendrix Rhodes pled not guilty to all charges.

## II. Witnesses

The State will call the following witnesses:

1. Ollie Houston
2. Sparrow Vanderbilt
3. Dr. Harper Emory

The Defense will call the following witnesses:

1. Hendrix Rhodes
2. Dr. Rowan Ivy
3. Sage Tatum

## III. Exhibits

1. .45 Pistol with Silencer
2. NAU Tennis Hoodie
3. Gloves Recovered from Crime Scene
4. Blood Splatters from Crime Scene
5. SAU Vandalism
6. Text Messages Between Kimber and Hendrix
7. Autopsy Report

Objections may be made to an exhibit's admissibility using only the Mock Trial Rules of Evidence found in the Handbook published with this problem. Student-Attorneys will be judged on their ability to make relevant objections and to argue their position. Student- Attorneys will also be judged on their ability to articulate a response to the objection. **However, all exhibits will be admitted into evidence following argument.**

## IV. Stipulation of the Parties

The parties have entered into the following stipulations, which shall not be contradicted or challenged:

1. All exhibits are self-authenticating.
2. The chain of custody for evidence is not in dispute.
3. The signatures on the witnesses' statements and all other documents are authentic.

4. All witnesses who were questioned by law enforcement were properly advised of their Miranda rights.
5. The search of Hendrix Rhodes's apartment was conducted with consent, and was, therefore, proper in accordance with the law.
6. All witnesses were of sound mind when giving their statements.
7. Hendrix Rhodes, Sparrow Vanderbilt, Sage Tatum, Marsden Jones, and Kimber Sullivan were all enrolled at Northern Atchafalaya University during the time of the alleged crime.
8. Exhibit 1 is the alleged murder weapon recovered from the scene.
9. Exhibit 2 is a hoodie that belonged to Marsden Jones.
10. Exhibit 2 is a hoodie given from Hendrix Rhodes.
11. Exhibit 3 are the gloves allegedly used during the murder.
12. Exhibit 4 is the blood splatter that belongs to Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan.
13. Exhibit 5 is the keyed vehicle.
14. Exhibit 5 is the vehicle that belongs to Sage Tatum.
15. Exhibit 6 are the text message conversation between Hendrix Rhodes and Kimber Sullivan.
16. Exhibit 7 are the autopsy reports for Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan.

## **V. Applicable Law and Jury Charges**

Statutes and case law applicable to this case are binding only if they are from the jurisdiction of Riviere Rapide or from the Riviere Rapide Parish Statutes (RRPS). The only statutes and law applicable to this case are set forth below.

In addition, all trials are governed by the National High School Mock Trial Rules of Evidence, as well as Rules of Competition provided in the Handbook.

## **RRPS 14:30.1 SECOND DEGREE MURDER**

- A. The crime of Second Degree Murder includes the killing of a human being when the offender has a specific intent to kill or inflict great bodily harm.
- B. Thus, a jury must convict a defendant of second degree murder if it finds that
- (1) The Defendant killed the victim, and
  - (2) The Defendant acted with a specific intent to kill or inflict great bodily harm.
- C. Whoever commits the crime of second degree murder shall be punished by life imprisonment at hard labor without benefit of parole, probation, or suspension of sentence

## **RRPS 14:101 INTENT DEFINED**

Criminal intent may be specific or general.

**Specific criminal intent** is that state of mind which exists when the circumstances indicate that the defendant actively desired the prescribed criminal consequences to follow his act or failure to act.

**General criminal intent** is present when the circumstances indicate that the defendant must have adverted to the prescribed criminal consequences as reasonably certain to result from his act or failure to act. General criminal intent is always present when there is specific intent.

Whether criminal intent is present must be determined in light of ordinary experience. Intent is a question of fact which may be inferred from the circumstances.

## **RRPS 14:102: RESPONSIVE VERDICTS**

To convict the Defendant of the offense charged, for each count the jury must find beyond a reasonable doubt that the State proved each and every element of second degree murder.

If the jury is not convinced that the Defendant is guilty of the offense charged, the jury may find that Defendant guilty of a lesser offense, if the jury is convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the Defendant is guilty of a lesser offense.

The following offenses are the responsive lesser offenses for an indictment of Second Degree Murder:

## **MANSLAUGHTER NEGLIGENT HOMICIDE**

Thus, if the jury is convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the Defendant is guilty of second degree murder, the jury's verdict should be: "Guilty".

If the jury is not convinced that the defendant is guilty of second degree murder, but the jury is convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty of manslaughter the form of the jury's verdict should be: "Guilty of manslaughter."

If the jury is not convinced that the defendant is guilty of second degree murder, but the jury is convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty of negligent homicide the form of the jury's verdict should be: "Guilty of negligent homicide."

If the State has failed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant is guilty of either the offense charged or of a lesser responsive offense, the form of the jury's verdict should be: "Not Guilty."

## **RRPS 14: 107: REASONABLE DOUBT STANDARD**

While the State must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt, it does not have to prove guilt beyond all possible doubt. Reasonable doubt is doubt based on reason and common sense and is present when, after you have carefully considered all the evidence, you cannot say that you are firmly convinced of the truth of the charge.

## **RRPS 14:31.2 MANSLAUGHTER DEFINED**

Manslaughter is the killing of a human being when the defendant has the specific intent to kill or inflict great bodily harm, but the killing is committed in sudden passion or heat of blood immediately caused by provocation sufficient to deprive an average person of his self-control and cool reflection.

Thus in order to convict the defendant of manslaughter, the jury must find:

1. That the defendant killed the victim; and
2. That the defendant had a specific intent to kill or inflict great bodily harm; and
3. That the killing was committed in sudden passion or heat of blood immediately caused by provocation sufficient to deprive an average person of his self-control and cool reflection.

## **RRPS 14:31.3 NEGLIGENT HOMICIDE DEFINED**

Negligent homicide is the killing of a human being by criminal negligence.

Criminal negligence exists when there is such disregard of the interest of others that the offender's conduct amounts to a gross deviation below the standard of care expected to be maintained by a reasonably careful person under similar circumstances.

In order to have criminal negligence, it is not sufficient that a person merely fail to act reasonably. The conduct must be so far below that expected of a reasonably careful person that it can be considered a gross deviation.

Thus, in order to convict the defendant of negligent homicide, the jury must find:

1. That the defendant killed the victim; and
2. That the killing was a result of the defendant's criminal negligence.

Ollie Houston

Ollie Houston, duly sworn, under oath, and based upon personal knowledge, attests as follows:

1. My name is Ollie Houston, I am 50 years old, and I am a criminal investigator for the Riviere Rapide Police Department. I earned my degree in Criminal Justice from Southern Atchafalaya University (SAU) and then served in the Navy for ten years. After I retired from the Navy, I joined the local police force. My entire family has attended SAU and have been active alumni. I have refereed for the SAU basketball team for the past two years. My child, Logan, currently attends SAU and plays on the tennis team.
2. The horrors I encounter in my line of work are unimaginable. Atchafalaya is a fairly safe community, but every now and then we have a murder case that reminds the residents and the department that evil lurks everywhere. Winter of 2016 brought RRPD one of those cases.
3. On December 9, 2016 at about 5:00 a.m. I was dispatched to River Suites, the on-campus apartments at NAU. A student at NAU called and stated that they found two individuals dead in apartment 3547. Nothing could have prepared me for the scene I was about to walk into. The lock on the front door had been broken. The living room was in disarray as if someone ran out in a hurry. Tennis shoe prints marked in blood led a trail from the left bedroom. Inside the room, two students were on the floor covered in blood. On the dresser was a pistol with a silencer and some gloves. In a corner behind the bed was a blue NAU tennis hoodie.
4. After calling out the forensics team and identifying the victims as Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan, my partner and I began interviewing students who lived in the apartments. No one recalled hearing any commotion the night before other than a party in one of the apartments on the first floor. When asked if anyone had problems with Jones or Sullivan, one name repeatedly came up: Hendrix Rhodes. Rhodes was a senior tennis player at NAU. Many of the residents were aware that Rhodes had dated Jones for about two years, but the two recently broke up. Jones' next door neighbor informed us that Rhodes and Jones fought frequently, and that it wasn't uncommon for Jones to have to threaten to call campus police to get Rhodes to leave the apartment.

5. Ironically, when I went to Rhodes' apartment for questioning, Rhodes' roommate told me that Rhodes was headed to Boston for Christmas Break and wouldn't be back until 2017. Marsden Jones' family spoke highly of their child's relationship with Hendrix, but the parents of Kimber Sullivan were suspicious. Sullivan's mother claimed that Kimber had been receiving threatening text messages from Rhodes since early November. There was no doubt in my mind that Hendrix Rhodes was responsible for the murders of Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan.
6. The evidence all led back to Hendrix Rhodes. Rhodes was upset that Jones had moved on and was pursuing a relationship with Kimber Sullivan. On December 9th, several witnesses confirm that Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan were seen briefly at the party Rhodes attended. Rhodes' blue mustang was parked outside of Jones' apartment. Jones kept a gun in the apartment for safety measures, and due to the longevity and intimacy of the relationship, it is safe to assume Rhodes knew about the gun. The gloves found on the scene are a perfect match for Rhodes' hands, and the NAU tennis hoodie found at the apartment with specks of blood on it is Hendrix Rhodes' size. Witnesses attest that Rhodes wore the hoodie almost everyday. Furthermore, from the trajectory of the shots, the killer would have been left handed and roughly 145 lbs. The stature fits Hendrix Rhodes.
7. I was familiar with Hendrix Rhodes before this case. Rhodes has played several tennis matches against my child. I must admit that Rhodes won the majority of the matches against my kid. My problem with Rhodes is Rhodes' attitude. Rhodes is narcissistic and cruel. After Rhodes made several rude comments to my child after a tennis match, I almost lost it. Rhodes' demeanor takes away from their talent, however, this has in no way biased my investigation. The evidence speaks for itself.

Signature: Ollie Houston

## Sparrow Vanderbilt

Sparrow Vanderbilt, duly sworn, under oath, and based upon personal knowledge, attests as follows:

1. My name is Sparrow Vanderbilt, I am 20 years old, and I will be a junior and a transfer student at SAU. During my time in high school, I noticed that athletes run the world. They could influence and bully anyone they wanted, with little to no consequence. I thought things would be different at NAU. I was completely wrong.
2. My first year at NAU consisted of football players cheating off of me during exams, and track runners making a ruckus in the hallways. This past year was the same thing, except someone was killed.
3. Most of the athletes at NAU aren't smart enough to make their own decisions so they flock to someone they consider powerful. The ring leader at NAU is Hendrix Rhodes. Hendrix is one of those athletes that craves control and attention. Hendrix is famous for their tennis success, but what really sticks out about Hendrix is their serious anger issues.
4. Hendrix is a ticking time-bomb, especially when it came to Marsden Jones. I remember one time when Hendrix and Marsden were arguing in the Student Union, Hendrix screamed, "If you ever accuse me of cheating again, you'll be very sorry!" NAU sure knows how to pick them.
5. As Hendrix and the other athletes got crazier, I knew it was time for me to leave. I did more and more research about other colleges, and SAU seemed to be the best place for me. SAU is where all the scholarly students go. The campus is beautiful, the people are nicer, and best of all, the athletes are kept in check.
6. On December 9th, 2016, there was this massive party on the first floor of the River Suites on-campus apartments. It was about the loudest thing I've ever heard. You can guess who was behind all of it. It was so loud that I couldn't hear my TV, and I lived in 3458, which is on the 3rd floor! It was around 2:00 a.m. and I had about enough. I decided to call campus police to shut it down.
7. The police never came. I kept checking the window to see if anyone would pull up, but nothing happened. That's when I heard gunshots from down the hallway. I didn't know where they came from, at the time. What could I do? I called the

cops already, and the party was so loud that I know no one else heard it. I ran out of my room and across the hall to room 3457. The door was unlocked, and I was so panicked that I didn't think much of it. I frantically ran in. I wish I hadn't.

8. There was blood everywhere. I saw it on the walls, the roof, and the carpet. I also saw Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan lying in a pool of their own blood. They were dead... I saw a NAU Tennis hoodie on the floor, and at the time, I didn't think much of it. I just found two dead people, you know? I just bolted back to my room and barricaded the door.
9. I looked back outside the window and that's when I saw Hendrix. Hendrix was wearing all black and was running to their mustang. I know it was Hendrix because Hendrix has that distinctive tennis player-like run. It was dark, though. So I couldn't get the license plate number, or Hendrix's face. I know for a fact Hendrix killed Marsden and Kimber. I saw a hoodie in Marsden's apartment when I walked in. I know for a fact that it was Hendrix's hoodie.
10. I kept calling the police until someone arrived at around 5:00 a.m. I told the policeman what happened, and that was it. I know for a fact that Hendrix was the killer. No one else could have done it.
11. After this incident, I made sure that I transferred to SAU. SAU recruiters called me specifically after the incident to tell me about their scholarships. SAU offered a scholarship for NAU transfers, and they even offered a scholarship for students who have experienced trauma. In the Fall of 2017, I will be collecting both of those scholarships.

Dr. Harper Emory

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF RIVIERE RAPIDE

Dr. Harper Emory, duly sworn, under oath, and based upon personal knowledge, attests as follows:

1. I am currently 34 years old. I have been serving as a forensic scientist in Riviere Rapide Parish in Louisiana for almost 5 years now. I received my undergraduate degree in biology from Duke University, and then went on to graduate from the University of North Carolina School of Medicine.
2. I am also a board certified forensic pathologist, and an expert in blood splatter . I've written many articles in the fields of forensic pathology and blood splatter. I am a specially trained scientist who examines the patterns of blood splatter as well as bodies in order to determine cause of death. I have never testified in court before.
3. After I graduated from medical school, I moved to Louisiana for work because I wanted to start somewhere that had just enough of a crime rate to get me experience, but did not overwhelm me with gore. I was not prepared for the gore that was present at the crime scene on December 9th, 2016.
4. On December 9th, 2016, I was called out to investigate the death of Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan, whose bodies were found on the floor of Marsden's apartment at NAU. This capped off an unusual week of homicides in Riviere Rapide Parish. I actually had to be in several places for investigative purposes.
5. When I arrived at Marsden's apartment, I surveyed the scene, observed Marsden and Kimber's bodies, and conducted a routine investigation. I did not see any evidence that would expand crime scene any further than the bedroom in the apartment. So, instead of wasting caution tape, I just put a sticky note on the door.
6. I observed Marsden's body face up on the floor and dressed in a St. Jude's T-shirt and black pants. Kimber's body was face down across Marsden's body, as if Kimber was trying to save Marsden. Kimber had multiple gunshot wounds in Kimber's chest, stomach, and shoulder. A significant amount of blood was coming from Marsden's head, chest, and throat. There was a pool of blood on

the floor, surrounding both of the bodies. A clean SAU t-shirt and athletic shorts were folded on the counter in the bathroom.

7. Once I autopsied the bodies of Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan, I concluded that the cause of death was multiple gunshot wounds to the bodies and heads that was likely inflicted by a pistol. The pistol was around a .45 caliber. Since the bullets did not go as deep as they should have from point-blank range, I determined that there must have been a silencer equipped with the gun. The team later recovered a weapon fitting that description at the crime scene. Even though there were no fingerprints found on the weapon, it clearly was the murder weapon.
8. After my examination, I went to my car and realized that I forgot some of my equipment. When I went back, the bodies were not the same way that I first saw them. To my knowledge, nothing else was out of place at the crime scene.
9. In my professional opinion, Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan's deaths were clearly a brutal homicide.

Signature: Harper EmoryM.D.

NOTARY: /s/ James Dowling

My Commission Expires: August 27, 2018

## Sage Tatum

Sage Tatum, duly sworn, under oath, and based upon personal knowledge, attests as follows:

1. My name is Sage Tatum, I am 18 years old, and I am a freshman at NAU. I grew up in Brighton, Michigan. In high school, I was an all-around athlete. I played soccer, tennis, and even ran track. I was not good enough to get a scholarship at any University, so I decided to walk-on at NAU for the track team. NAU is known for its incredibly talented athletes, namely Hendrix Rhodes.
2. I met Hendrix during my first track tryout session in early August of 2016. I was stretching by the fence, and I saw Hendrix walking with Marsden Jones. They seemed to be having a pretty heated discussion. Hendrix looked at me and I immediately turned away. After tryouts, I ran into Hendrix outside the Activity Center. Hendrix asked me if I heard anything that was said during the argument. I said, "No. It wasn't any of my business." Hendrix patted me on the shoulder and smiled. Hendrix said "I like you, kid. What's your name?" I told Hendrix my name, and we went out to grab food.
3. After that day, we were inseparable. Anywhere you saw Hendrix, you saw me. We talked about any and everything. Hendrix's relationship with Marsden was always a hot topic. I felt like Marsden was a bit too mean to Hendrix. Hendrix felt like Marsden did not care about the relationship at all. I suggested that they go on a break to clear their heads for awhile. Hendrix did not like the idea at first, but on September 1st, 2016, Hendrix and Marsden got into a really bad fight. Hendrix agreed to the idea of a break, and Hendrix said, "If Marsden sees someone else, we're done. I'm done. They're done." I shrugged. Hendrix always said crazy things about Marsden.
4. After their breakup, Hendrix didn't try to date anyone else. Hendrix kept talking about how Marsden would come back. I tried to get Hendrix to move on. I even set Hendrix up on a few blind dates, but none of them really panned out. I know for a fact Marsden even went out with Sparrow Vanderbilt's sibling, but that didn't go anywhere. It's such a shame, because Hendrix is a real catch.
5. There were a series of break-ins on campus in late November, my car even got broken into a keyed; who ever did it keyed "SAU RULZ" into the side of my jeep. I was devastated, but also worried. SAU and NAU are rivals in everything, this is a small town for two universities. A Lot of vandalism and violence takes place,

especially around finals. I started carrying a box cutter with me for protection, because SAU students dressed in black started hanging out around the dorms at night, harassing us.

6. I remember on November 12th, 2016, Hendrix and I were coming back from the Chemistry Building, and we saw Marsden and this other person. Hendrix immediately tensed, and I told Hendrix not to blow it out of proportion. Of course, Hendrix did not listen to me. Hendrix kept screaming about how Marsden never cared about their relationship, and that Marsden just found someone else just as fast as they broke up. I told Hendrix that the person Marsden was with was Kimber Sullivan. Kimber was a well-known student across NAU campus. Kimber was one of those academic types in the Advocacy Club. I told Hendrix that there was no way Kimber was Marsden's type. Hendrix relaxed a little. Hendrix just wanted things to be good again with Marsden, although I didn't think Marsden was very good for Hendrix considering how much effort Hendrix put into their relationship and how little Marsden tried.
7. On December 9th, 2016, at around 8:30 PM, Hendrix and I went to a party on campus to celebrate a birthday for one of the football players. A lot of people were there, although the party was kind of wild and that made me uncomfortable. I told Hendrix I wanted to go back to my room, but Hendrix wanted to stay. As the night went on, I felt more and more uncomfortable. Hendrix still wanted to stay, even though neither of us were having any fun.
8. The party was in River Suites apartment number 1458. It's good we were on the lower floor because it got pretty loud in there. Hendrix was with me for almost the entire party. There was one point that Hendrix walked away from me, which was only about fifteen minutes. I figured Hendrix had to use the bathroom or something. Hendrix came right back, anyway. Hendrix didn't look or act any different, so there is no way Hendrix could have gone anywhere or could have done anything crazy.
9. It was about 2:45 AM when Hendrix was ready to leave. We got in my car and left. We drove down the road where Marsden lived, and where Hendrix parked Hendrix's car. I dropped Hendrix at the car and left. A few minutes later, Hendrix tailed behind me.
10. I know Hendrix. We are about as close as anyone can get. What happened was awful, and whoever did this should rot in prison. It wasn't Hendrix, though.

Hendrix is an animated person, not a murderer. Hendrix really obviously cared and still cares for Marsden. There is no way Hendrix would do this.

Signature: Sage Tatum

NOTARY: /s/ Hayden Pain

My Commission Expires: November 17, 2018

## Hendrix Rhodes

Hendrix Rhodes, duly sworn, under oath, and based upon personal knowledge, attests as follows:

1. My name is Hendrix Rhodes, I am 21 years old, and I am a senior at NAU. I was born and raised in Boston, Massachusetts, and I basically grew up with a tennis racquet in my hand. My dad played for the Boston Lobsters, so it's no surprise that I spent most of my time growing up on the tennis court. I led my high school to the state championship three years in a row. My goal is to ultimately play in the French Open and be as great as Rafael Nadal or Serena Williams, but NAU offered me a full scholarship to bring some juice to their tennis team, so I'm stuck in Louisiana as a General Studies Major until I get my big break.
2. I met Marsden Jones my freshman year in English. Our first assignment was to write a paper on how clubs or sports influenced our college experience, and since we are both avid sports fans we instantly clicked. Marsden came to all of my tennis matches, and I went to all of Marsden's softball tournaments. Marsden even gave me my nickname, "killa", because I slay on the tennis court. After that, I gave Marsden one of my tennis hoodies. I wanted everyone on campus to know who Marsden belonged to. We began dating October of 2014. It was a whirlwind romance. Marsden was talented, funny, and an overall energetic person. I enjoyed Marsden's company.
3. However, Marsden could be very overprotective and controlling. Marsden had to know where I was and who I was with all the time. If I went out with my teammates after practice and didn't let Marsden know, Marsden would randomly show up at my apartment and cause a scene. In Marsden's defense, I wasn't much better. I have anger issues, and if I suspected someone was trying to flirt with Marsden it almost always ended in a fight. One fight escalated so quickly that I punched a hole in Marsden's wall to avoid punching Marsden.
4. By 2016 I was fed up with the constant fights. Our little bickering here and there had become threats of physical violence. I asked one of my closest friends, Sage, what I should do. Sage suggested that Marsden and I spend some time apart. At first I was reluctant. Although we fought frequently, Marsden was my best friend. I couldn't handle seeing Marsden with anyone else. In September of 2016 though, after Marsden publicly accused me of cheating on them, I knew it was time for a break. It wasn't a week before I saw Marsden hanging out with other people. I initially was upset, but it didn't take me long to get over it. The

fighting with Marsden brought my GPA down and took my focus away from the court. I spent our “break” focusing on my grades and my performance. NAU had a shot of making it to nationals, and that was the notoriety I needed to advance my tennis career.

5. 2016 was also the year the SAU rivalry reach a new level. NAU and SAU have gone head to head in the Tennis State Championship for the past eight years. SAU was notorious for terrorizing team members by vandalizing cars. There was one occasion where a teammate’s partner was attacked by a SAU team member dressed in all black. I always warned Marsden to be weary of traveling alone at night when we were a couple.
6. By November of 2016 I couldn’t handle life without Marsden. I begged Marsden to give our relationship another chance and go on a date with me, and Marsden agreed. Marsden and I had begun hanging out and I was hoping to make things official again with Marsden, but things didn’t go as planned. On November 12, 2016 I saw Marsden holding hands with someone named Kimber Sullivan. I was furious. I had the urge to go over and knock both of them out. I felt like Marsden had completely given up on our relationship. No relationship is perfect, but I felt like our relationship was worth fighting for. It was hard seeing Marsden with someone else, but I took all of my aggression out on the tennis court. Kimber wasn’t Marsden’s type, and I knew before long Marsden would come crawling back to me.
7. After finals and all the drama with Marsden, I decided to attend one of my friend’s parties in the on-campus apartments on December 9th. I took Sage with me as my wingman. We had a great time catching up with everyone before Christmas break. I even got some phone numbers just in case it took Marsden longer to come to their senses than expected. I left the party around 2:40 a.m. because I had a plane to catch in three hours. I never saw Marsden or Kimber that night.
8. I knew Investigator Houston before this trial. Houston attended SAU, has a child that attends SAU, and even referees for SAU’s terrible basketball team. Houston’s child plays tennis, and after I crushed them in a doubles match last year, Investigator Houston was so angry that they had to be escorted off of campus for their behavior. I knew whenever I was questioned by Houston at the police station that this was one big set up. I did not kill Marsden or Kimber. I loved Marsden and would never do anything to harm them. I kept in contact with Marsden even after the break up, and I was convinced we would be back

together by New Year's Eve. I personally believe the cops should spend less time planting evidence and more time finding the real killer.

Signature: Hendrix Rhodes

Dr. Rowan Ivy

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF RIVIERE RAPIDE

1. I am Dr. Rowan Ivy, lead forensic investigator for Riviere Rapide Parish. I graduated from Florida University with a B.A. in Criminal Justice in 1989. I intended to become a police officer, but I couldn't pass the physical training. So I went back to Sam Houston State University and got my Ph.D. in Forensic Science in 1993. I worked as a Crime Scene Investigator for 5 years after I graduated, and then I became a Forensic Science Technician for 12 years. I moved to Riviere Rapide Parish in 2010, and I've been a Forensic Science Technician ever since.
2. DNA and fingerprints are about as specific as you can get when examining a crime scene. The chances of someone having the same fingerprint or DNA as someone else are close to impossible. There are some setbacks when gathering DNA and fingerprints. The trick is getting enough to replicate. Once you have enough, it is fairly easy to pinpoint who the DNA or fingerprints belong to.
3. I was on vacation on December 9th, 2016 when I got a call about an apparent murder on NAU campus. My good friend, Detective Ollie Houston, told me about it. Ollie was certain it was Hendrix Rhodes, and told me to find any and all evidence linking Hendrix to the murder. That was easier said than done.
4. I managed to gather enough information to make a few conclusions, but not the conclusion that Ollie would have liked.
5. I was called to testify about the evidence I examined from Marsden Jones' apartment on December 9th, 2016. There were two dead bodies at the scene, and those were of Marsden Jones and Kimber Sullivan. There were also gloves found on the floor, along with a 45 Caliber Pistol with a silencer. There was also a NAU Tennis Hoodie found in the same room as where the alleged shooting took place. There were blood splatters in the corner of the room where the bodies were found. I examined all of these for fingerprints and other DNA evidence.

6. The pistol had fingerprints on the handle, barrel, and the clip. These fingerprints belonged to Marsden Jones. To my understanding. There were also fingerprints on the outside of the gloves. Both the gloves and the fingerprints on the outside were Marsden's. To my knowledge, all the blood at the scene belonged to Marsden and Kimber. I was only able to find one other person's DNA and fingerprints during my examination.
7. Inside the gloves were a combination of Marsden, Kimber, and Hendrix Jones's fingerprints and DNA. This means that one of the three owned the gloves, and the other two wore them. Of the other two, one of them would have worn them during the shooting. However, since there are several different types of DNA and fingerprints in these gloves, it's hard to say who fired the weapon.
8. The hoodie, however, belonged to Hendrix Rhodes. There was an undeniable amount of hair and other DNA samples in and out of the hoodie. There was also a large amount of DNA from Marsden Jones in the hoodie. There was also blood on the hoodie. That blood sample was too small to indicate who it belonged to. In a sense, it could have been in the radius of where blood would fly during the shooting. There's just not enough to work with.
9. There were other fingerprints found all over the apartment. There were around four different fingerprints found on the door, table, countertops, and clothes of Marsden and Kimber. All four fingerprints belonged to Marsden, Kimber, Hendrix, and Sparrow Vanderbilt.
10. When examining fingerprints, it is imperative that they are completely intact. With that said, I also found segments of fingerprints on the weapon that could possibly belong to Hendrix Rhodes. However, these are not enough to make a conclusion.
11. After my examination, I determined that there is simply not enough evidence to determine whether it was Hendrix Rhodes that was the murderer. There were too many different fingerprints and DNA found at the scene, and none of them were unusual.

Exhibit 1



Exhibit 2



Exhibit 3



# Exhibit 4



## Exhibit 5



## Exhibit 6



# Exhibit 7 (a)

## REPORT OF AUTOPSY

**A-#2234676**

STATE OF LOUISIANA  
RIVIERE RAPIDE PARISH

(Jones, Marsden)

21 yrs

ADMITTED: 12/09/16: 8:20 a.m.  
DIED: 12/09/16: 3:00 a.m.  
AUTOPSY: 12/12/16: 10:43 a.m.  
Harper Emory, M.D.  
Kyle Noel, M.D.

CASE SUMMARY: The deceased was a 21 year old college student with no outstanding medical history. Suffered 1 gunshot wound to the forehead, 1 gunshot wound in the trachea, and 1 gunshot wound to the clavicle bone. Severe bleeding from the throat, head and chest led to massive heart failure. She expired on 12/9/16 at 0300 hours.

Autopsy was performed on 12/12/16 at 1043 hours (approximately 72 hours postmortem). The immediate cause of death was massive heart failure due to a loss of blood.

Harper Emory, M.D.  
Harper Emory, M.D.

Kyle Noel, M.D.  
Kyle Noel, M.D.

# Exhibit 7 (b)

## REPORT OF AUTOPSY

**A-2234677**

STATE OF LOUISIANA  
RIVIERE RAPIDE PARISH

(Sullivan, Kimber)

20 yrs

ADMITTED: 12/09/16: 8:30 a.m.

DIED: 12/09/16: 3:00 a.m.

AUTOPSY: 12/12/16: 11:45 a.m.

Harper Emory, M.D.

Bob Moore, M.D.

CASE SUMMARY: The patient was a 20-year-old college student with no outstanding medical history. The victim suffered 2 gunshot wounds to the chest, and 1 gunshot wound to the shoulder. One bullet entered the heart, causing fatal bleeding instantly. The victim expired on 12/9/16 at 0300 hours.

Autopsy was performed on 12/12/16 at 1145 hours (approximately 72 hours postmortem). The immediate cause of death was a gunshot wound to the heart.

Harper Emory, M.D.

Harper Emory, M.D.

Bob Moore M.D.

Bob Moore, M.D.