

September 24, 2009

## **SUPREME COURT NOT SWAYED BY KILLER'S APPEAL**

By JIM SAUNDERS  
TALLAHASSEE BUREAU CHIEF

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Supreme Court today upheld the death sentence of a man convicted of kidnapping and killing a Daytona Beach woman after she stole drugs and money from him.

Ray Jackson, 34, sought to overturn his conviction and sentence in the 2004 slaying of Pallis Paulk, 23, whose body was found in a shallow grave near Williamson Boulevard in April 2005.

Jackson argued, in part, that he should have been acquitted because evidence was circumstantial and did not prove Paulk had been murdered. A medical examiner could not determine an exact cause of death because the body was badly decomposed.

But justices, in a unanimous ruling, said evidence in the case was consistent with Jackson's guilt and "inconsistent with any reasonable hypothesis of innocence."

"The state does not need to present evidence proving the exact manner of the victim's death or the location of the murder," the ruling said.

Paulk was last seen Nov. 9, 2004, after she stole cocaine, marijuana and about \$800 from Jackson as he slept in a Daytona Beach apartment. The theft came after Jackson and Paulk spent the previous night together, prosecutors said.

Jackson later found Paulk, took her to an apartment, bound her and put her in the trunk of a car, according to witnesses. Jackson also reportedly later said he wasn't worried about getting implicated in the death because "they ain't got no body, they ain't got no case."

A co-defendant in the case, Michael Wooten, 35, also was convicted of murder and kidnapping and is serving a life sentence. Jackson is being held at Florida State Prison.