
CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY
COUNTY DEPARTMENT
CRIMINAL DIVISION
May, 2003

The People of the State of
Illinois
v.
George Thompson

* INDICTMENT FOR *

FIRST DEGREE MURDER

A TRUE BILL

Ron P. Kaminski
Foreman of the Grand Jury

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WITNESSES

THEZAN

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Filed Op-17, 20 03
Bartholomew, Clerk
Bail \$ RB
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DATE 6/17/03

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2003

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STATE OF ILLINOIS)
) SS.
COUNTY OF COOK)

The MAY, 2003 Grand Jury of the
Circuit Court of Cook County.

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected and sworn, in and for the
County of Cook, in the State of Illinois, in the name and by the
authority of the People of the State of Illinois, upon their oaths
present that on or about MAY 17, 2003 at and within the County of Cook

GEORGE THOMPSON

committed the offense of FIRST DEGREE MURDER

in that HE, WITHOUT LAWFUL JUSTIFICATION, INTENTIONALLY OR KNOWINGLY
INFLECTED BLUNT TRAUMA INJURIES WHICH KILLED JULIE GRACE,
IN VIOLATION OF CHAPTER 720 ACT 5 SECTION 9-1(A)(1)
OF THE ILLINOIS COMPILED STATUTES 1992 AS AMENDED AND

contrary to the Statute and against the peace and dignity of the same
People of the State of Illinois.

CHARGE ID CODE: 735000

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2003

COUNT 2

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected and sworn, in and for the County of Cook, in the State of Illinois, in the name and by the authority of the People of the State of Illinois, upon their oaths present that on or about MAY 17, 2003 at and within the County of Cook

GEORGE THOMPSON

committed the offense of FIRST DEGREE MURDER

in that HE, WITHOUT LAWFUL JUSTIFICATION, INFLICTED BLUNT TRAUMA INJURIES WHICH KILLED JULIE GRACE KNOWING THAT SUCH ACTS CREATED A STRONG PROBABILITY OF DEATH OR GREAT BODILY HARM TO JULIE GRACE, IN VIOLATION OF CHAPTER 720 ACT 5 SECTION 9-1(A)(2) OF THE ILLINOIS COMPILED STATUTES 1992 AS AMENDED AND

contrary to the Statute and against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

CHARGE ID CODE: 735100

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2003

COUNT 3

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected and sworn, in and for the County of Cook, in the State of Illinois, in the name and by the authority of the People of the State of Illinois, upon their oaths present that on or about MAY 17, 2003 at and within the County of Cook

GEORGE THOMPSON

committed the offense of FIRST DEGREE MURDER

in that HE, WITHOUT LAWFUL JUSTIFICATION, INFLICTED BLUNT TRAUMA INJURIES WHICH KILLED JULIE GRACE DURING THE COMMISSION OF A FORCIBLE FELONY, TO WIT: AGGRAVATED BATTERY,
IN VIOLATION OF CHAPTER 720 ACT 5 SECTION 9-1(A) (3)
OF THE ILLINOIS COMPILED STATUTES 1992 AS AMENDED AND

contrary to the Statute and against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

CHARGE ID CODE: 735200

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2003

COUNT 4

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected and sworn, in and for the County of Cook, in the State of Illinois, in the name and by the authority of the People of the State of Illinois, upon their oaths present that on or about MAY 17, 2003 at and within the County of Cook

GEORGE THOMPSON

committed the offense of AGGRAVATED DOMESTIC BATTERY

in that HE, INTENTIONALLY OR KNOWINGLY WITHOUT LEGAL JUSTIFICATION BY ANY MEANS CAUSED GREAT BODILY HARM TO JULIE GRACE, TO WIT: GEORGE THOMPSON BEAT JULIE GRACE ABOUT THE BODY, AND GEORGE THOMPSON WAS A FAMILY OR HOUSEHOLD MEMBER AS DEFINED IN SUBSECTION (3) OF SECTION 112A-3 OF THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE OF 1963, AS AMENDED, TO WIT: GEORGE THOMPSON AND JULIE GRACE HAVE HAD A DATING RELATIONSHIP IN VIOLATION OF CHAPTER 720 ACT 5 SECTION 12-3.3.(a) OF THE ILLINOIS COMPILED STATUTES 1992, AS AMENDED AND,

contrary to the Statute and against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

CHARGE ID CODE: 12300

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2003

COUNT 5

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected and sworn, in and for the County of Cook, in the State of Illinois, in the name and by the authority of the People of the State of Illinois, upon their oaths present that on or about MAY 17, 2003 at and within the County of Cook

GEORGE THOMPSON

committed the offense of DOMESTIC BATTERY

in that HE, INTENTIONALLY OR KNOWINGLY WITHOUT LEGAL JUSTIFICATION BY ANY MEANS CAUSED BODILY HARM TO JULIE GRACE, TO WIT: GEORGE THOMPSON BEAT JULIE GRACE ABOUT THE BODY, AND GEORGE THOMPSON WAS A FAMILY OR HOUSEHOLD MEMBER AS DEFINED IN SUBSECTION (3) OF SECTION 112A-3 OF THE CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE, TO WIT: GEORGE THOMPSON AND JULIE GRACE HAVE HAD A DATING RELATIONSHIP, AND HE HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY CONVICTED OF DOMESTIC BATTERY UNDER CASE NUMBER 03-216154, IN VIOLATION OF CHAPTER 720 ACT 5 SECTION 12-3.2(a)(1) OF THE ILLINOIS COMPILED STATUTES 1992 AS AMENDED AND

contrary to the Statute and against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

CHARGE ID CODE: 10417

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2003

COUNT 6

The Grand Jurors chosen, selected and sworn, in and for the County of Cook, in the State of Illinois, in the name and by the authority of the People of the State of Illinois, upon their oaths present that on or about MAY 17, 2003 at and within the County of Cook

GEORGE THOMPSON

committed the offense of AGGRAVATED BATTERY

in that HE, IN COMMITTING A BATTERY, INTENTIONALLY OR KNOWINGLY WITHOUT LEGAL JUSTIFICATION CAUSED GREAT BODILY HARM TO JULIE GRACE, TO WIT: GEORGE THOMPSON BEAT JULIE GRACE ABOUT THE BODY, IN VIOLATION OF CHAPTER 720 ACT 5 SECTION 12-4(A) OF THE ILLINOIS COMPILED STATUTES 1992 AS AMENDED AND

contrary to the Statute and against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

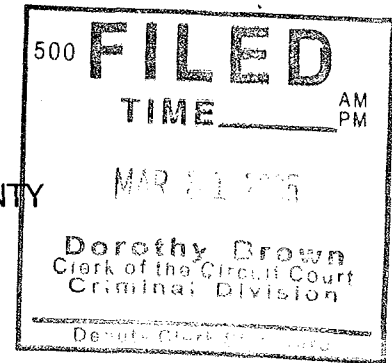
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2003

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
)
COUNTY OF COOK) SS

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY
CRIMINAL DIVISION



PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS)
)
)
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)
GEORGE THOMPSON)

03CR-12100

12615

PEOPLE'S RESPONSE TO DEFENDANT'S MOTION TO DISMISS INDICTMENT

NOW COME THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS by and through their Attorney Richard A. Devine, through his assistant, Dan Groth, and respond to the Defendant's Motion to Dismiss the Indictment as follows:

1. The Defendant seeks to dismiss the indictment in the above captioned case based on a failure to state an offense. In support of this position the defense relies on *People v. Nash*, 173 Ill.2d 423 (1996) and *People v. Davis*, 281 Ill.App.3d 984 (1st Dist. 1996).
2. Reliance on these cases is inapposite. While *Nash* correctly sets forth the principles established by 725 **ILCS** 5/111-3(a)(3) (2005), that a defendant is entitled to an indictment setting forth the nature and elements of the offense charged it has no application to the facts at bar.
3. *Nash* concerned the enforcement of the Mob Action statute that was barred by injunction. *Nash*, 173 Ill.2d, at 425. Further, the Mob Action

statute itself did not set forth the elements, but rather referred to other acts that would necessitate specificity in the body of the charging instrument. *Id.* at 429.

4. Similarly, *Davis* is distinguishable because the crime it references, Official Misconduct, requires specificity to put the defendant on notice of the charges against him. *Davis*, 281 Ill.App.3d at 988.
5. In this case, the complained of indictment sets forth with sufficient specificity the charge against the defendant. It states that the defendant "intentionally or knowingly inflicted blunt trauma injuries which killed Julie Grace[;]" sets forth the appropriate statute and names the offense. It should be further noted that the case of *People v. Aud*, 52 Ill.2d 368 (1972), cited by the defendant, noted in *dicta* that the validity of a murder indictment does not require specific detail concerning causation. *Id.* at 370-71.
6. The opinion in *Aud* reiterated the law established in *People v. Coleman*, 49 Ill.2d 565 (1971), where the court noted that the exact manner of death was essentially surplusage. *Id.* at 570. The key to satisfying the notice pleading requirements was providing enough information to act as a bar to double jeopardy and to provide the defendant with notice of the charge he was facing. *Id.*
7. The defendant has been adequately informed of the charges against him and the charge is specific enough to act as a bar against double jeopardy.

These are the requisites of 725 **ILCS** 5/111-3(a)(3) (2005). *People v. Tucker*, 15 Ill.App.3d 1003 (1st Dist. 1973). They have been met.

8. It is not, as the defense avers, the appropriate degree of intent for a battery. The phrase "which killed Julie Grace" clearly shows that the underlying charge is murder.
9. Further, the defense reliance on separating the phrases in the indictment is misplaced. This very argument was rejected by the Illinois Appellate Court in *People v. Moore*, 90 Ill.App.2d 466 (5th Dist. 1967). In that case, the court held that the phrase "knowingly or intentionally" applied to the whole indictment. *Id.* at 468. *See also People v. Oaks*, 169 Ill. 2d 409, 444 (1996)(holding that the method of causing the fatal injury is not integral to the offense and may be omitted from the charging instrument); *People v. Graves*, 107 Ill. App. 3d 449, 453-54 (1st Dist. 1982)(holding that the requisite intent can be determined from the act itself).
10. The defense has also sought relief from Count 3 of the indictment charging the defendant with First Degree Murder under the felony murder rule. The triggering felony is Aggravated Battery. The victim of both the murder and the aggravated battery is Julie Grace.
11. In support of its position, the defense relies on *People v. Davis*, 213 Ill.2d 459 (2004) and *People v. Pelt*, 207 Ill.2d 434 (2003).
12. In *Davis*, the court focused its analysis on the potential abuse of the felony murder statute and its applicability to a triggering felony of mob

action. In reaching its decision, the court noted that the murder conviction cannot stand when the fact of the triggering felony is inherent in the murder itself. *Davis*, 213 Ill.2d, at 471-72. The court recounted the facts in *People v. Morgan*, 197 Ill.2d 404 (2001), to further illustrate the point. In *Morgan*, the facts of the triggering felony, aggravated discharge, were inherent in the murder. *Id.* at 447. The court then went on to distinguish the facts in *Davis* from the facts in *Morgan*. A crucial distinction was the number of injuries the victim received in *Davis* when contrasted with those the victims received in *Morgan*. *Davis*, 213 Ill.2d at 474. Similarly, in *Pelt*, the fact that a single act, throwing a child, caused a single injury led the court to find that the felony murder rule was misapplied. *Pelt*, 207 Ill.2d, at 442.

13. Again, the *Morgan* and *Pelt* cases are more properly confined to those facts. In this case, however, the facts show numerous injuries identified as blunt trauma. The autopsy report lists 16 different injuries in 8 different locations on the body. In short, it is not an altercation where a single contact with a dresser led to death. There are numerous distinct injuries to provide both the triggering felony and first degree murder. Consequently, the rationale in *Morgan* and *Pelt* is inapplicable.
14. In fact, the case is more on all fours with *People v. Viser*, 62 Ill.2d 568 (1975). In *Viser*, the prosecution charged the defendant with felony murder based on the aggravated battery of the decedent. The court,

however, rejected the defense argument that the merger doctrine prevented this type of reasoning under the felony murder rule. In short, the court concluded that this type of conduct was exactly what the felony murder rule was designed to deter. The fact that felony murder does not require intent serves to deter would be criminals from committing the underlying felonies. *Id.* at 579-81. The Illinois Supreme Court reaffirmed the continuing validity of *Viser* in *Davis* when it stated, "As here, it was not obvious which of the defendants caused the fatal blow to the victim, who died two weeks later 'of pancreatitis caused by severe abdominal injuries he received' during the beating. Therefore, the individual conduct of each defendant in beating the victim, which formed the basis of the individual forcible felonies of aggravated battery for each defendant, did not arise from nor was inherent in the killing itself." *Davis*, 213 Ill.2d, at 475 (citations omitted).

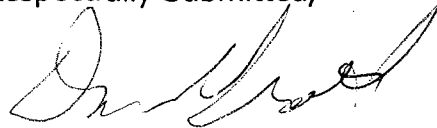
15. The continued validity of *Viser* is especially important in light of the recent decision of *People v. Payton*, 2005 Ill.App.Lexis 278 (1st Dist. March 24, 2005), where Justice Quinn addressed the issue of improper jury instructions in light of a felony murder issue similar to the case at bar. In *Payton*, the defendant and another person punched the decedent at least three times in the head in a short period of time. The victim later died of blunt head trauma. As a result, the defendant faced murder charges based on felony murder as well as knowing and intentional murder and

strong probability of death theories. The appellate court held that the jury instructions improperly mixed the different murder theories and did not adequately explain the lesser offenses. *Id.* at 9-17. The court then discussed the use of aggravated battery as the underlying felony for a felony murder charge. In doing so, the court relied heavily on *Morgan* to conclude that this was an improper theory to proceed on because the injuries were inherent in the murder. *Id.* at 17-20. However, the court failed to address the *Davis* case when concluding that *Viser* was no longer valid.

16. The *Viser* case has not been expressly overruled and therefore remains applicable to this case. In addition, the varied nature of the injuries in this case serve to distinguish it from *Payton*. The facts at bar are more analogous to those in *Viser*. Although there is a single defendant in this case, the number and location of the injuries tracks the reasoning and facts in *Viser*.

WHEREFORE, for these reasons the People respectfully request that this Honorable Court deny the defendant's motion to dismiss the indictment.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Groth', with a stylized, flowing script.

Dan Groth

Assistant State's Attorney

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
COUNTY DEPARTMENT — CRIMINAL DIVISION**

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS,

Plaintiff,

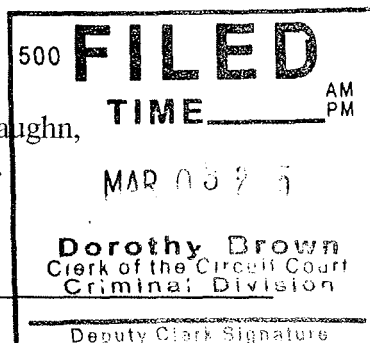
vs.

GEORGE THOMPSON,

Defendant.

03 CR 12615

Hon. Vincent Gaughn,
Presiding Judge.



**DEFENDANT GEORGE THOMPSON'S MOTION TO DISMISS
COUNTS ONE AND THREE OF THE INDICTMENT**

NOW COMES the defendant, GEORGE THOMPSON, by his attorneys, THOMAS M. BREEN & ASSOCIATES, who respectfully moves this Honorable Court to dismiss Counts One and Three. In support of this motion, the following is offered.

I. INTRODUCTION

Defendant George Thompson is charged in a seven count indictment with the offenses of First Degree Murder, Aggravated Domestic Battery, Domestic Battery, and Violation of an Order of Protection. For the reasons stated below, Mr. Thompson moves to dismiss Counts One and Three of the Indictment.

II. COUNT ONE MUST BE DISMISSED FOR FAILURE TO STATE AN OFFENSE

Section 111-3 of the Code of Criminal Procedure requires that an indictment "be in writing and allege the commission of an offense by Setting forth the nature and elements of the offense charged." 725 ILCS 5/111-3(a)(3). This section satisfies the constitutional due process right that an accused be informed of "the nature and cause" of criminal accusations made against him. *People v. Nash*, 173 Ill. 2d 423, 428-9, 672 N.E.2d 1166, 1169 (1996).

Where the indictment does not sufficiently describe the alleged crime, a defendant may move under section 114-1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure to dismiss the indictment for failure to state an offense. 725 ILCS 5/114-1(8). “When the sufficiency of the charging instrument is attacked in a pre-trial motion . . . the standard of review is to determine whether the instrument *strictly complies* with the requirements of section 111-3.” *People v. Davis*, 281 Ill. App. 3d 984, 987, 668 N.E.2d 119, 122 (1st Dist. 1996). The only appropriate remedy to an insufficient indictment is dismissal. *People v. Aud*, 52 Ill. 2d 368, 370, 288 N.E.2d 435, 454 (1972).

Count One of the Indictment charges Mr. Thompson with murder in violation of 720 ILCS § 5/9-1(a)(1). This section describes murder as:

A person who kills an individual without lawful justification commits first degree murder if, in performing the acts which cause the death:

(1) he either intends to kill or do great bodily harm to that individual or another, or knows that such acts will cause death to that individual or another.

720 ILCS § 5/9-1(a)(1). In contrast, Count One of the indictment charges:

George Thompson committed the offense of first degree murder in that he, without lawful justification, intentionally or knowingly inflicted blunt trauma injuries which killed Julie Grace, in violation of Chapter 720 Act 5 Section 9-1(a)(1) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes 1992 as amended and contrary to the Statute against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

Count One fails to state an offense because it does not allege the necessary *mens rea* for the offense of first degree murder under section 9-1(a)(1) which is either (a) intent to kill, (b) intent to do great bodily harm, or (3) knowing that the act which causes the death will cause death. Count One of the indictment merely states that Mr. Thompson “intentionally or knowingly inflicted blunt trauma,” a degree of intent possibly appropriate for a battery-type charge, but certainly not a murder charge.

Accordingly, because Count One does not strictly comply with Section 111-3 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and fails to state an offense, the only appropriate remedy is dismissal.

III. THE FELONY MURDER COUNT MUST BE DISMISSED BECAUSE THE ALLEGED ACT CONSTITUTING THE PREDICATE FELONY IS THE SAME ACT UNDERLYING THE KILLING

In addition to two other murder counts, the state has charged Mr. Thompson with felony-murder, by way of Count Three which states:

George Thompson committed the offense of first degree murder in that he, without lawful justification, inflicted blunt trauma injuries which killed Julie Grace during the commission of a forcible felony, to wit: aggravated battery, in violation of Chapter 720 Act 5 Section 9-1(a)(3) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes 1992 as amended and contrary to the Statute against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

The lack of an intent to kill for felony murder distinguishes it from the other forms of first degree murder, which require the state to prove either an intentional killing or a knowing killing under 720 ILCS § 5/9-1(a)(1) or (a)(2). *People v. Davis*, 2004 WL 2901598, *6 (Ill. Dec. 16, 2004). The Illinois Supreme Court has crafted a rule to prevent the state from using the felony murder statute as an inappropriate means to avoid the burden of proving intentional or knowing murders. *Id.* Abuse of the felony murder rule occurs when “the same evidence is used to prove the underlying felony as to prove the killing.” *Id.* Accordingly, the Illinois Supreme Court holds that where “the acts constituting forcible felonies arise from and are inherent in the act of murder itself, those acts cannot serve as predicate felonies for a charge of felony murder.” *Id.* This rule ensures that the prosecution must prove an intentional and knowing killing in order to seek to punish a defendant like a murderer. *Id.*

People v. Pelt illustrates this rule. 207 Ill. 2d 434, 800 N.E.2d 1193 (2003). The *Pelt* defendant was charged with and found guilty of aggravated battery of a child, his infant son, and first degree felony murder predicated on aggravated battery of a child. 207 Ill. 2d at 437, 800 N.E.2d at 1194. In committing aggravated battery, the defendant allegedly threw the infant toward the bed. *Id.* at 442, 800 N.E.2d 1197. The infant hit the dresser and died out of that injury. *Id.* The appellate court recognized that the act of throwing the infant formed the basis of the defendant's aggravated battery conviction and was also the act underlying the killing.

Accordingly, the appellate court reversed the defendant's murder conviction finding that the acts alleged for the felony murder charge could not also serve as the predicate felony. *Id.* at 442-3, 800 N.E.2d 1197.

Count Three of the instant indictment charges Mr. Thompson with felony-murder with the predicate offense of aggravated battery as follows:

George Thompson committed the offense of first degree murder in that he, without lawful justification, inflicted blunt trauma injuries which killed Julie Grace during the commission of a forcible felony, to wit: aggravated battery, in violation of Chapter 720 Act 5 Section 9-1(a)(3) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes 1992 as amended and contrary to the Statute against the peace and dignity of the same People of the State of Illinois.

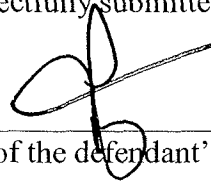
Akin to *Pelt*, the indictment and discovery in this case indicate that the state intends to prove the defendant's commission of a battery-type offense, and then use that offense as a predicate to establish felony murder. The discovery in this case indicates that Mr. Thompson and Julie had an altercation on May 17, 2003 wherein he pushed her and she hit her head on a dresser. A few days later, she died. The Medical Examiner's Office has declared the cause of death as bronchopneumonia due to cerebral injuries due to blunt trauma, with a contributing factor of fatty

liver due to chronic alcoholism. By charging Mr. Thompson in this fashion, the state has made an end run around proving this case as an intentional or knowing killing. By charging Mr. Thompson in this fashion, the state seeks to punish him as a murderer but only prove up a battery charge. This violates the Illinois Supreme Court rule as described in *Davis* and *Pelt*. Accordingly, Count Three must be dismissed.

IV. CONCLUSION

For the reasons argued above, Defendant George Thompson requests that this Honorable Court enter an Order dismissing Counts One and Three of the Indictment.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal stroke and a small circle at the end.

One of the defendant's attorneys

Thomas M. Breen
Todd S. Pugh
Gina T. Marotta
THOMAS M. BREEN & ASSOCIATES
53 West Jackson Boulevard, Ste. 1460
Chicago, Illinois 60604
(312) 360-1001
fax: (312) 362-9907

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
CRIMINAL DIVISION/MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT-DISTRICT

LINE No.

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS		NO: 03CR1261501
VS		SID
GEORGE THOMPSON		IR 1530690

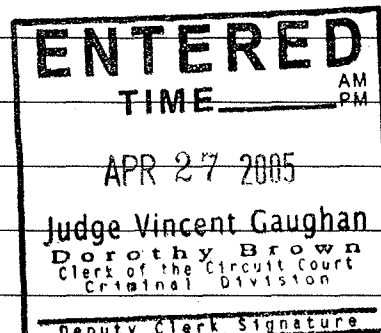
ADDENDUM TO PREVIOUS ORDER SETTING BAIL AND COMMITTING THE DEFENDANT TO THE COOK
COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FOR FAILURE TO DEPOSIT BAIL.

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ORDER

THIS MATTER COMING BEFORE THE COURT AND THE COURT BEING FULLY ADVISED IN THE PREMISES, IT
IS HEREBY ORDERED:

B/A
6-1-05



DISPOSITION(S) MUST REFLECT WHICH COUNT(S) THE ORDERS(S) IS/ARE APPLICABLE

ENTERED APRIL 27, 2005

DEPUTY CLERK

L. Wolter
L. WOLTER

JUDGE

GAUGHAN, VINCENT

1553

ROOM 500

ROOM/BRANCH

AT 0930 AM

DOROTHY BROWN
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY