

State of South Carolina

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SCARLETT A. WILSON
Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit

For Immediate Release
March, 15, 2018

Sex Offender Sentenced to Life Without Parole for Murder

Charleston, SC– March 16, 2018. Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson announced that on March 15th, 2018, Henry James Fickling, Jr., was convicted of Murder. Because of the Defendant’s prior record, the Solicitor’s Office invoked the “two strikes” mandatory life imprisonment option and the Honorable Judge J. C. Nicholson sentenced the defendant to life without the possibility of parole.

Before victim Jeff Shiver’s murder on September 13th, 2016, the defendant Henry James Fickling, Jr. had been withdrawing money from Shiver’s bank account using his debit card. Shiver, a troubled man suffering from debilitating addiction, was a tenant living in the same trailer as the defendant. The defendant directed his wife Allura Boyd to change the wifi password in home so that Shiver could not check his bank account and see that the defendant was stealing from him. Later, Shiver began to ask questions when he could not access the internet. When the defendant realized Shiver was going to discover the theft, he told his wife he would “take care of it,” picked up a crowbar and a stun gun and went into Shiver’s room and brutally beat him to death. Fickling concocted an alibi with Boyd and they tried to clean up the scene.

The defendant waited 12 hours before calling 911. The North Charleston Police Department discovered that during those twelve hours, the defendant smoked crack and traded Shiver’s SUV for crack. On the 911 call, the defendant provided a fake story and when police arrived, he again provided a fake story.

DNA analysts from SLED and a blood stain analyst provided crucial testimony about the evidence in this case that effectively disproved the Defendant’s story. The defendant testified and claimed self-defense, in contradiction of his earlier statements to police. During his testimony, the defendant shadow-boxed on the witness stand to show that he was a boxer, bragged that nobody hits him, and claimed he’s not to be “messed with.”

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State vs Henry Fickling cont.

In 1993, the defendant had been convicted of criminal sexual conduct with a minor 2nd degree and had received a 20 year prison sentence although he only served 11 years. That crime constituted a “most serious” strike and was the basis for the mandatory life sentence.

Assistant Solicitor Richard Waring, who prosecuted the case, stated “The defendant preyed on this victim, stole his money, and killed him because the victim was going to find out the defendant had almost drained the victim’s bank account. There are consequences for such cruelty.” Assisting Waring were Assistant Solicitor David Osborne, Investigator Amanda Hiouel and North Charleston Police Department.

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