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Jurors acquit slaying suspect with IQ of 70

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A Bexar County jury acquitted a 25-year-old man described as mentally retarded and accused of gunning down a naked woman who ran screaming from a botched robbery of a Northwest Side apartment.

W.C. Lewis was found not guilty of capital murder Thursday for the 1993 slaying of Ginger Wesley.

"Even though Ms. Wesley lost her life, I think those jurors just didn't know what happened in that apartment five years ago," defense attorney Pat Hancock said. "I think they were very courageous to come to that verdict."

During the trial before 290th District Court Judge Sharon MacRae, Hancock argued that Lewis, who has an IQ of 70, was being framed by two others - a man and a woman - who also took part in the robbery.

Several witnesses testified that the trio planned to rob a drug dealer living at the Piper's Creek apartments in June 1993.

An apartment resident admitted in court that he was trafficking in drugs "at that time," and testified that when the trio broke in, several shots were fired and he was hit.

He testified that he fell down and did not know what transpired during the robbery.

Vernon Parker, who also was charged with Wesley's slaying, pleaded guilty to aggravated robbery in 1995 and was sentenced to life in prison. He will be eligible for parole 10 years from now.

A third person, a woman whom prosecutors described as the "instigator" of the robbery, was never charged.

Parker testified that he stayed behind to rummage through Wesley's purse when she ran from the apartment.

She was shot twice in the head as she ran through the parking lot.

"I'm extremely disappointed," prosecutor Melissa Barlow- Fischer said. "The jury had more than enough evidence to convict W.C. Lewis."

Lewis spent more than five years in state mental hospitals waiting to be tried, court records show.

"To wait that long is extremely rare," said John Sparks, medical director of Correctional Health Care Services. "We've only had one other case like it."