

# Ex-Death Row inmate found guilty of Lighthouse Point murder again

Conduct of judge and prosecutor prompted second trial for Omar Loureiro



Omar Loureiro was returned from Death Row and granted a new trial because the judge and prosecutor at his first trial communicated hundreds of times via cell phone and text message. (Mike Stocker, Sun Sentinel / June 17, 2010)

By Tonya Alanez, Sun Sentinel

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FORT LAUDERDALE —

Omar Loureiro was removed from Death Row and granted a new trial because of inappropriate communications between the Broward Circuit judge and prosecutor during his first murder trial.

On Thursday, Loureiro was found guilty a second time of the 2001 slaying of a [Lighthouse Point](#) man he accompanied home from a bar.

The state of [Florida](#) gave Loureiro, 47, a new trial after allegations arose that his former judge, Ana Gardiner, and former prosecutor, Howard Scheinberg, dined together and joked about the case three days before a jury convicted him of first-degree murder.

It was later learned that Gardiner and Scheinberg communicated hundreds of times via cell phone and text messages during the trial.

Scheinberg has since moved into private practice. And Gardiner, rather than face a misconduct complaint that arose from the matter, retired from the bench and also moved into private practice.

Meanwhile, Loureiro remained behind bars awaiting a new trial.

This time around, to avoid any appearance of conflict, a [Palm Beach County](#) Circuit judge, Lucy Chernow Brown, was appointed to oversee the case.

In closing arguments Wednesday, Loureiro's defense attorney, Michael Tenzer, did not proclaim his client's innocence. Rather, he argued that James Lentry's slaying was not planned.

Enraged by an unwanted sexual advance from the 57-year-old man, Loureiro went "berserk," Tenzer said.

"He was in a rage, he was mad because he was attacked," Tenzer said, emphasizing that Loureiro had no time for reflection or pre-meditation.

But prosecutor Brian Cavanagh countered that Lentry's injuries were too gruesome and numerous to justify self-defense.

Lentry's throat was slit ear to ear, nearly decapitating him. His neck, face and abdomen were slashed and stabbed numerous times.

"This was overkill," Cavanagh said. "His head was nearly chopped off down to his spine."

The same jurors that deliberated Thursday and found Loureiro guilty of first-degree murder will return in July to decide whether to recommend he be given the death sentence.

Tonya Alanez can be reached at [tealanez@SunSentinel.com](mailto:tealanez@SunSentinel.com) or 954-356-4542.