

Supreme Court affirms death penalty for convicted killer Tiffany Cole

She and three other men robbed a disabled Jacksonville couple in 2005 and buried them alive.

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Times-Union file

Tiffany Cole in the court before she was sentenced for her role in the 2005 kidnapping and murder of James "Reggie" Sumner and Carol Sumner, in 2008.

By [Times-Union and AP](#)

TALLAHASSEE — The only woman on Florida's death row has lost an appeal to the state Supreme Court.

The justices unanimously affirmed Tiffany Cole's murder conviction and death sentence Thursday.

The 28-year-old woman was convicted in the deaths of a disabled Jacksonville couple, James "Reggie" Sumner and wife Carol, both 61. They were buried alive after being robbed in 2005.

Cole's lawyer argued her life should be spared because she didn't know the other defendants — including the mastermind and Cole's boyfriend, Michael J. Jackson — planned to kill the victims by burying them alive.

Jackson and another man, Alan L. Wade, also have been sentenced to death. A third man, Bruce Nixon, testified against the others and is serving a 45-year prison term.

The high court agreed Cole didn't know such a cruel method would be used, but said other factors justified a death sentence.

Florida has executed two women since reinstating the death penalty: serial killer Aileen Wuornos in 2002 and Judy Buenoano, convicted of poisoning her husband, in 1998.