

TRANSADVOCATE

Gender Nation: Justice coming in two anti-trans murders

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Abstract

Gender Nation is a bi-weekly column by Gwendolyn Ann Smith, the founder of the Transgender Day of Remembrance, reviewing news affecting the trans, intersex, and genderqueer community. Justice coming in two anti-trans murders Vermont and Texas, as a pair of anti-transgender killers, get their day in court. In a grand jury trial in San Antonio, Texas, [...]

Article



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Justice coming in two anti-trans murders

Vermont and Texas, as a pair of anti-transgender killers, get their day in court.

In a grand jury trial in San Antonio, Texas, Mark Daniel Lewis was indicted in the death of Kenne McFadden, an African-American transgender woman whose body was discovered in the San Antonio River on the 9th of April. McFadden, who was 26-years-old at the time of her death, worked along the Riverwalk not far from where she was discovered.

Police had initially ruled out foul play in McFadden's death, due to a lack of obvious trauma on her body, but police revised their findings in June, announcing that they believed McFadden had been pushed into the river. The grand jury has agreed, noting in their indictment that Lewis did "recklessly cause the death" of McFadden. That Lewis also did not attempt to assist McFadden after she fell into the river was also noted, with the indictment citing this negligence as being the cause of McFadden's death.

Lewis has a sexual conduct offense on his record from 2013. Because of this, the grand jury added a repeat offender enhancement to their charges. He faces 20 years in prison for manslaughter, though it is unclear how the enhancement will affect this.

Mc Fadden's mother, Joann, has expressed relief that Lewis has been charged, but added in an interview with K.S.A.T. that she feels there should be more to the case. "For that person to push Kenne in the river and keep going," she said. "You know, personally, I'm thinking it could be a hate crime."

Meanwhile, in Burlington, Vermont, the instigator of the beating of transgender man Amos Beede pled guilty to her crimes.

Myla Barber is one of four people charged in the May 2016 murder that began initially as an argument at a homeless encampment. Barber, as well as four others, were accused of beating Beede, causing multiple fractures and head trauma leading to his death. Barber had instigated the attack, leading the other three to Beede's tent, and participated in the attack.

"I just want to say how truly sorry I am that I let any of this happen," said Barber after entering her plea. Beede's sister, Ina McKinney, instantly rejected the plea.

"There's no apology for something like this," said McKinney.

Barber has been sentenced to a minimum of ten years in state prison. The other defendants will be tried separately.

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