



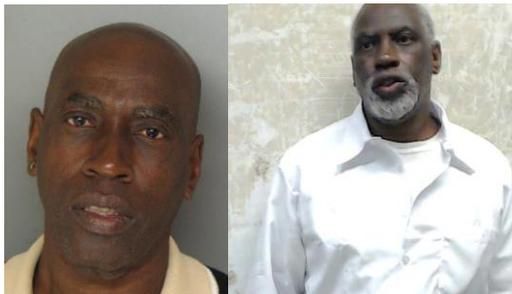
ROBERT JOHNSON
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY
OF BRONX COUNTY

www.bronxda.nyc.gov

198 EAST 161ST STREET
BRONX, N.Y. 10451
(718) 590-2234

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**“YOU STAB ONE, YOU STAB THEM ALL.
YOU KILL ONE, YOU KILL THEM ALL”**

Killer Lucius Crawford Sentenced Following Confession, Guilty Plea

(Bronx, NY – June 12, 2015) – In LUCIUS CRAWFORD’s 62 years, he has murdered two women and has been tried for a third such killing, that one resulting in a hung jury. And during his lifetime, he has also served decades behind bars for dozens of repeated knife attacks on women, including 1973 and 1975 stabbing sprees in South Carolina for which he pled guilty and served substantial time behind bars.

Today, announced Bronx District Attorney Robert Johnson, Supreme Court Justice Michael Gross sentenced CRAWFORD to 25 years to life (which will in all likelihood ensure that he will spend the rest of his life in prison) for the 1993 Bronx murder of NELLA WEST. This followed his guilty plea last month to the charge of Murder in the 2nd Degree for the gruesome crime.

NELLA WEST’s was a case that haunted the original NYPD detective, for whom this was his first homicide investigation. The 37-year-old mother of two was brutally beaten, stabbed and dumped on the side of the road off Liebig Avenue in Riverdale, where she was found by a taxi driver late on a rainy October night. Decades would pass, and despite the best efforts of police, WEST’s killer was never found. That original case detective, Dennis Brown, now retired, never forgot. In 2012 he called his former precinct and asked if DNA evidence could help locate the murderer. He got the attention of Detective Malcolm Reiman of the NYPD Bronx Homicide Task Force, who re-opened and re-investigated the case.

By that time, LUCIUS CRAWFORD’s DNA profile was in the NYS Convicted Offender DNA Databank, which was not in existence when Ms. West was murdered. And his DNA matched the DNA from the semen found inside NELLA WEST. By the early 1990s, CRAWFORD was living in Westchester County, moving from down south to be closer to his mother. And his attacks continued. CRAWFORD had been forced to provide his DNA to the databank following his conviction in 1994 for attacking a woman in Yonkers, knifing her so violently, more than a dozen times, and with such power that the weapon broke from the impact. CRAWFORD



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left her for dead, yet she would survive. He pled guilty to Attempted Murder on the eve of trial, and was sentenced to 10 to 20 years incarceration.

On December 4th, 2012, the NYPD traced LUCIUS CRAWFORD to his home in Mount Vernon. He was on parole for the Yonkers attack, wearing an ankle bracelet, but it had been disabled and he wasn't where he was supposed to be. Parole officers and police went to CRAWFORD's Mt. Vernon home and pounded on the door but no one answered. Finding the door open and unlocked, they entered, expecting to find LUCIUS CRAWFORD feigning sleep. But, when they pulled back his bedsheets, there was the lifeless body of his girlfriend, Tonya Simmons, whom he had stabbed to death earlier in the day. Fanning out on the streets, investigators apprehended him a short while later and a short distance away.

CRAWFORD was tried and convicted for Simmons' murder by a Westchester County jury and sentenced last fall to 25 years to life in prison. That same jury deadlocked on the murder trial of Simmons' friend, Laronda Sheely, whom he had also been accused of stabbing to death shortly before his attack on Simmons. His Bronx sentence will run concurrent to that prison term for the Westchester murder of Tonya Simmons.

During the investigation into NELLA WEST's murder, LUCIUS CRAWFORD displayed the twisted nature of his mind, confessing to stabbing the prostitute with whom he'd just had a liaison – *“She didn't do anything wrong. All hell broke loose. You stab one, you stab them all. You kill one, you kill them all.”*

“There is a demon inside me.”

Speaking at the sentencing, West's daughter, LaToya Townes, spoke about the family's loss – and justice finally served.

“My life was shattered. You not only killed my mother, you killed my childhood,” she said, as she addressed CRAWFORD directly. *“[My mother] was more than a prostitute and drug addict; she was a mother, a friend, the sweetest person I ever knew.”*

“Today, I will get the justice I never thought I would get. Today, I take back my life and the memories I have of my mother.”

District Attorney Johnson wishes to thank not only the NYPD and Detective Malcolm Reiman for his work on the case but also the Mount Vernon and Yonkers Police Departments, and Yonkers Cold Case Unit Detective John Geiss, along with the Westchester County D.A.'s Office, with whom this office coordinated.

The case against LUCIUS CRAWFORD was prosecuted by the Bronx D.A.'s Director of DNA Prosecutions, Adam Oustatcher, and Assistant D.A. Rasheim Donaldson of Trial Bureau 20/50.

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