

Jury hands killer prison term

- He was convicted of manslaughter in a shooting he said was self-defense.

FACES 17-YEAR SENTENCE

John Wesley Larkin: He shot the boyfriend of his estranged wife in the back, the prosecutor said, citing testimony from the woman that the victim was running from him. He said the victim fired at him first and that he shot twice in self-defense. His attorney argued that the prosecution did not disprove his testimony.

BY BILL BRAUN
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A Tulsa man faces a 17-year, six-month prison term for the fatal shooting of his estranged wife's boyfriend.

John Wesley Larkin stood trial on a first-degree murder charge in the June 2008 killing of Jessie Lynn Hurt.

Tulsa County District Judge William Kellough also gave jurors the option of reaching a verdict on either of two lesser offenses—second degree murder or first degree manslaughter.

On Tuesday night, jurors found Larkin guilty of manslaughter and of possessing a firearm as a felon. The jury returned to court Wednesday for a sentencing stage and decided on a 17-year, six-month term for manslaughter.

Larkin, 40, also received a four-year sentence on the firearm conviction.

A prosecutor maintained that Larkin shot Hurt, 26, in the back while Hurt was in the street near an apartment

where Larkin was living in the 600 block of East Oklahoma Street.

Larkin asserted that he fired a revolver twice in self-defense. One shot struck Hurt, evidence showed.

Larkin contended that Hurt shot at him first, but other than the defendant's testimony, there was no evidence that Hurt had a gun, said Assistant District Attorney Jack Thorp.

Larkin's ex-wife, Valerie Towry, indicated that Hurt was shot as he was running from Larkin, Thorp said.

Assistant Public Defender Jill Webb said Towry and Larkin had a "terrible relationship" as they were going through a divorce.

The prosecution did not establish that Larkin was not acting in self-defense, Webb maintained during her closing argument.

In an unrelated case, Larkin was sentenced in October to four years in prison for possessing a firearm as a felon in April 2008. He originally had received a suspended sentence when he pleaded guilty to that offense, but his probation was revoked in October.

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