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## Killer sentenced to two life terms, plus 30 years



**Michael Darnell Porter (in the orange jumpsuit with chains) is fingerprinted after being sentenced.**

### Story and Photo

**By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 5, 2018 at 5:08 p.m.**

**TRENTON** -- Eighth Judicial Circuit Court Judge Phillip A. Pena late Monday afternoon (Nov. 5) sentenced Michael Darnell Porter to prison for the rest of that murderer's life.

On the charge of first-degree murder, Judge Pena imposed a sentence of life on Porter. On the charge of burglary of an occupied dwelling with the intent to do harm, the judge imposed a sentence of life on Porter. On the charge of sexual battery, with special circumstances, the judge also imposed the maximum sentence – 30 years.

The judge said Porter is also to be designated as a sexual predator. Porter also was ruled to have to pay for all court costs.

Circuit Court Judge Pena gave the prisoner credit for 1,921 days on the life sentence for murder.

Porter and his attorney Michael Ruppert had returned to court minutes after the victim's family had left. The killer and his attorney returned to address the issue of time served.

Porter, in his arrogant manner as was displayed in every instance of him being in

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court, said he served five years, three months and two days since his arrest on Aug. 3, 2013. The judge said that is 1,921 days to be credited only on the life sentence for murder.

Judge Pena imposed sentences on all three counts to be served in a consecutive manner. Consecutive sentencing means that when a criminal defendant is convicted on multiple counts, the sentences for each must be served one after the other.

Therefore, Porter will be in the Florida State Prison System for one life, and then if he has a second life, he would serve it in prison, and then after he is twice removed from life, he will put in another 30 years in the state penal system.

During the victims' impact statements, each of three individuals asked the judge to show no mercy, and for the judge to impose the maximum sentence on each count.

Assistant State Attorney Robert Willis shared with the judge that the State Attorney's Office felt this convicted murderer should never see the light of freedom from prison.

As Judge Pena told Porter about the terms the convicted murder and rapist was going to serve in prison, Judge Pena said Porter had violated the sanctity and security of Joyce Burrow's home, and the sanctity of her body.

People who live in a civilized society, the judge said, can expect to have security in their homes. Every human has a right to the sanctity of life, which Porter violated when he performed these crimes.

The judge said the State of Florida had proved to a 12-member jury through evidence and testimony that Porter broke into Burrow's home. He bound her. He tied an article of her clothing around her neck. He raped her.

When Burrow escaped, Porter tried to kill her as part of his method of hiding what he had done. He ran over her twice with a pickup truck; however, the judge added, even if this killer ran over her just one time, it was still a calculated act that showed a complete disregard for human life.

But Porter failed in that attempt to instantly kill the woman, the judge said. In her dying words, Joyce Burrow was able to say what happened to her.

The judge said evidence showed Porter tried to cover his crime by attempting to clean the bedsheet. However, evidence was found to prove he committed the crimes, despite his attempt to cover all of the evidence.

Investigators from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the Gilchrist County Sheriff's Office worked as one team to show clear proof of the crimes committed by this burglar, and rapist and murderer.

Prosecutors -- Assistant State Attorney Willis and Assistant State Attorney Glenn Bryan -- proved Porter's guilt by presenting evidence to show how this man violated the laws of Florida.

The judge conceded that none of this success in proving guilt can bring back Burrow. However, it does bring justice, he said.

And as Judge Pena said, the memories of Burrow can never be destroyed.

Before he levied the sentence, there were impact statements from some survivors.

Denise Miller, the victim's last surviving sister, and Jason Burrow, the victim's son were among the people giving statements.

A nephew of the victim also shared how this set of horrible acts affected him.

Joyce Burrow was a daughter, a mother, an aunt and a grandmother who was beloved by her family and others. Porter stole decades of her life, and so she will miss aspects of people's lives.

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The success of her son and his grandchildren cannot be seen by the woman Porter killed.

Porter was described as being “a monster.”

Miller said the murder of her sister came just 14 months after the family lost another one of her sisters to cancer. Miller said her mother questioned how God could take two of her three babies like that.

Jason Burrow said he tried last night (Sunday, Oct. 4) to create a written victim’s impact statement. He could not do that.

Instead, he wanted to share with the judge what the last conversation he had with his mother was about. She had told him that she wanted to be a grandmother to his children, and to be able to care for her own parents as they progressed in their age.

Jason Burrow said his mother was the greatest woman he has ever known.

Burrow said he saw the smirks on the face of the accused throughout the trial.

This community cannot be intimidated, he said to Porter.

“We will not back down,” Jason Burrow said.

More than five years after Porter killed Joyce Burrow, he was sentenced to prison for the rest of his life.