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## Man found guilty in 2000 Mayfield slaying

### 2 still to be tried in Mayfield case

*From Staff and Wire Dispatches*

CLINTON, Ky. -- Eight years after teenager Jessica Currin's body was found burned and beaten behind Mayfield Middle School, a jury yesterday found the first of three defendants guilty of her murder, kidnapping, rape and sodomy.

The Hickman County jury will return today to decide if Quincy Omar Cross, 31, of Tiptonville, Tenn., should be sentenced to lethal injection or a lesser penalty for his crimes.

Two other defendants, Jeffery Allen Burton and Tamara C. Caldwell, are to be tried later.

After a weeklong trial, the jury deliberated for about four hours yesterday before finding Cross guilty of all charges, including abuse of a corpse and tampering with evidence, for moving the body.

The trial was moved from Graves County because of pretrial publicity.

"You don't know how excited I am," Currin's mother, Jean, told The Paducah Sun. "I'm pleased and happy, happy for Jessica."

"It will always be hard because we don't have her, but this chapter in our life, we can get behind us," she said.

Currin's father, Joe, had led protests critical of local authorities and said the case went unsolved for too long. He petitioned the state attorney general to get involved. The office took over the investigation in 2006.

"I can't celebrate with something like this," he told the newspaper. "Nothing is going to bring her back, but justice needed to be done. It was bad what happened. It shouldn't have happened."

The couple, who are raising Jessica's son, have said they oppose the death penalty but agreed to support the attorney general's office as it decided the appropriate punishment to seek.

Former Attorney General Greg Stumbo, who took over prosecution of the case in 2006 from the Graves County prosecutor, told The Associated Press that justice was served by the verdict.

"If there was ever a case that should have a harsh penalty, this was one," said Stumbo, now a state representative. "It's just a wonderful thing after all the Currin family's been through."

Jessica Currin was 18 when Cross and others who knew her forced her into a car and took her to a house in Mayfield, where she was sexually assaulted and killed.

Murder charges against two previous defendants were dropped in 2003 after a flawed police

