



PRESS RELEASE

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On August 6, 2014, Jacob Lane Rowan, 28, of Denison, was sentenced to a total of 50 years in prison after a Grayson County jury convicted him of 6 counts of Possession of Child Pornography following a two day trial in the 397th District Court. After the jury found him guilty on all 6 charges, Rowan chose to be sentenced by 397th District Judge Brian Gary. Rowan faced a maximum of 10 years in prison on each charge. Judge Gary sentenced Rowan to the maximum 10 year sentence on each charge. At the request of prosecutors, Gary ordered 5 of the 6 sentences to be served consecutively, and ordered the final 10 year term to be served concurrently with the other sentences .

In November of 2013, a Denison man came to the Denison Police Department to report that his 14 year old daughter had been receiving threatening and pornographic text messages from an adult male that the girl knew only as “Jacob”, whom she had met through friends. Police obtained phone records and eventually linked the phone to Jacob Rowan, age 27. Upon checking Rowan’s name against police records, Denison Detective Chris Nordoff discovered that another teenage girl had recently reported to the Grayson County Sheriff’s Office that she had received similar threatening messages from Rowan. Eventually, Detective Nordoff discovered six different young girls, between the ages of 12 and 16 who had similar experiences. All six girls testified at trial that Rowan had obtained their phone numbers by creating a fake Facebook account and sending them “friend requests” pretending to be a 17 year old boy. Each of the girls testified that Rowan would then text them on their phone in an attempt to convince them to send him naked photographs of themselves. When the girls declined or resisted, Rowan would begin sending them messages threatening violence or threatening to establish fake Facebook accounts in their names with sexually embarrassing information.

Detective Nordoff obtained a search warrant for Rowan’s cell phone. Over 400 images were recovered from the phone, many of a pornographic nature. Assistant District Attorney Brett Smith called a registered nurse trained as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner to identify six of the images as being images of minor children. Jurors also heard that while most of the young girls had cut off contact with Rowan soon after initial contact, one of the girls testified that she had engaged in sexual intercourse with Rowan when she was 14 years old.

Rowan’s attorney, Robert Earl Richardson, Jr., called Rowan’s step mother as a witness for the defense. She testified that she had purchased the phone in question on Ebay in April of 2013, and that the images could have been on the phone when they purchased it. Jacob Rowan also took the stand in his own defense, telling jurors that the girls had lied in their identification of him, and that he had let other persons use his phone and that they must have put the pornographic images on the phone. Jurors returned guilty verdicts on all counts after less than thirty minutes of deliberation.

After being excused from service, jurors chose to remain in the courtroom to hear evidence presented to Judge Brian Gary in regards to the punishment to be received by Rowan. Smith presented evidence that Rowan had been found delinquent as a juvenile based on charges of Assault, Resisting Arrest, and Burglary of a Motor Vehicle. Judge Gary heard evidence that, after becoming an adult,

Rowan had been convicted of Theft, multiple drug charges, Burglary of a Habitation, Retaliation, Harassment, and several other misdemeanors.

“This young man was never going to change,” said Assistant District Attorney Brett Smith. “He had been given multiple chances to change his behavior, and was becoming increasingly scary. He had a pattern of abusive behavior toward young girls, and had victimized at least one already. The images and statements he had made on his phone were extremely troubling, and I have no doubt the judge recognized him a serious threat to society.”

“This is a real lesson to parents about what their kids are doing on-line,” said Grayson County District Attorney Joe Brown. “There are some very disturbed people out there, and if you do not personally know the people who your children are talking to, and monitor their on-line activity, you are taking a very big risk.”