

# NEWS RELEASE

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April 1, 2015

## Man sentenced to at least 70 years in prison for brutal sex assault

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Today, Fitzgerald McKinley Rice was sent to prison for at least 70 years for a brutal 2012 sexual assault. The trial, which began on March 23, 2015, was held in courtroom 5150 before The Honorable W. Robert Bell, Superior Court Judge.

The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Persons Team tried Rice, 48, for 1) five counts of second-degree sex offense, 2) two counts of attempted second-degree sex offense, 3) second-degree kidnapping and 4) assault by strangulation. Today, the jury found him *guilty* of four counts of second-degree sex offense, two counts of attempted second-degree sex offense and assault by strangulation. The jury found him *not guilty* of one count of second-degree sex offense, and the jury was unable to reach a unanimous verdict on the kidnapping charge. Judge Bell sentenced Rice to the following prison terms: 146-236 months, 146-236 months, 146-236 months, 146-236 months, 128-214 months and 128-214 months. Those sentences are to run consecutively, totaling a minimum of 70 years in prison.



Fitzgerald Rice

In December 2012, the victim went with Rice to his Charlotte apartment. Rice soon turned violent, forcing her to perform a number of sex acts and repeatedly striking the victim in the face and head and choking her if she did not comply with his demands.

To establish his pattern of violent attacks on women, the State introduced testimony from three other victims who were sexually assaulted by Rice – who made similar threats and demands in each case – in 1995, 1997 and 2001. Rice was convicted of attempted second-degree rape and felony assault in connection with the 2001 attack.

The District Attorney's Office is extremely grateful to the victims, whose willingness to take the stand and recount their attacks was critical in prosecutors' efforts to ensure that Rice will never harm anyone in this community again. Charlotte-Mecklenburg police are also to be commended for their diligent work in investigating these crimes.

*Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com). For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/charmeckda](http://www.facebook.com/charmeckda) and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.*

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