

Jodi arias



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Travis Alexander, a 30-year-old businessman, well-known motivational speaker and devout Mormon. With a single gunshot to the right brow and being stabbed 29 times, Travis was then left for dead in a stand up shower in his bathroom for several days. When Arias was questioned by the police she stated that she had not seen Travis since April of 2008. She then claimed she had seen two men kill him, then eventually saying that she killed him out of self-defense (Warren, 2013).

According to Arias, the dysfunction of their relationship reached its climax when she killed Alexander in self-defense after he became enraged following a day of sex and a gun accident, forcing her to fight for her life. This was the third different account of how Alexander's death had occurred that Arias had offered police, which both prosecutors and observers felt severely damaged Arias' credibility as a witness, a sentiment later echoed by Jurors upon the completion of the guilt phase. Arias also mention they had split up, but Alexander would still invite Arias to his house for sex.

Investigators found a camera at the crime scene which had damaging evidence time stamped on photos left on the cameras hard drive, detectives found Alexander's clothes, sheets, and pillow case in the washer. Also, found the washing machine was the cameras memory card. With positive DNA samples and hair matching Jodi Arias at the crime scene Arias was arrested for the murder of Travis Alexander. In September 2008, Arias was given a public defender and she then pleaded not guilty at her arraignment. In October 2008 the Maricopa County Attorneys office filed a notice of intent to seek the death penalty against Arias.

The Maricopa County Superior court then accused Jodi Arias of First-degree murder " in an especially cruel, heinous or depraved manner. " This began one of the biggest criminal proceedings since Casey Anthony. Arias told Judge Sherry Stephens she wanted to represent herself. The request was granted but Arias Public defenders Kirk Nurmi and Victoria Washington stayed on the case. Defense attorney Kirk Nurmi argued Jodi Arias acted in self- defense after their relationship became sexual and physically abusive (Arizona Central, 2013).

Arias defense attorneys requested that the death penalty be aken off as a punishment due to the defense she did not plan to kill Travis Alexander it was an act of self-defense. This motion was denied. Nurmi tried to enter in electronic letters into evidence to back his case, these letters supposedly nad proot ot Travis Alexander allegedly admitting being a pedophile. This evidence was dismissed due to it being forged. This delayed the trial for three weeks. In January 2011 Victoria Washington filed a motion to withdraw from the Arias' case. With the motion being granted, Jennifer Willmott was then assigned to the case.

Willmott questioned Arias n the stand for 19 days and handled the witnesses for the defense which ended up with Willmott discrediting Janeen DeMarte a clinical psychologist a state witness (Arizona Central, 2013). In January 2013, opening arguments began. Deputy County Attorney Juan Martinez, a prosecutor known for his gamesmanship, asked the Jury to sentence Jodi Arias to death. In his opening statements Jan. 2, 2013, he told the Jury that Arias first stabbed Travis Alexander, then slit his throat and put a bullet in his head after he was already dead.

Martinez painted a picture of an attractive but ealous woman who murdered a successful man who was trying to break ties with her. His conduct during the trial came under scrutiny of defense attorneys when he was shown in the media posing for pictures with trial spectators outside the courthouse (Arizona Central, 2013). During the trial Juan Martinez tries to get a jurisdictional rule passed against Arias' use of text messages during the case. The rule was not passed due to lack of evidence and Freedom of speech.

Ryan Burns a former love interest of Jodi Arias testified on June 5, 2008 Arias was several hours late arriving home, she told him that she got lost and stopped to rest. Arias had dyed her hair and had cuts on her hands. Arias mentioned she had cut them while working at Margaritaville Resturant, she had broken a glass and cut her finger. They settled down to watch a film together - and soon got physical, he told the court at some point we were talking and we kissed,' he said. 'Every time we started kissing it got a little more escalated (Warren, 2013).

At some point she was kissing my neck, I was kissing hers, but our clothes never came off. Burns said they resumed their kissing later that night when she climbed on top of him, but they stopped as he did not want her to egret the visit due to her Mormon beliefs about sex. Burns, who is also a Mormon, was unaware that just 24 hours earlier, she had been posing provocatively for photographs later found on her murdered ex-boyfriend's camera. On the stand the prosecutor asked about Arias strength, Burns replied, 'she is a lot strong than she looks" (Warren, 2013).

Penalty phase began on May 16, 2013, when prosecutors called Alexander's family members to offer victim impact statements, in an effort to convince the jury that Arias' crime merited a death sentence. On May 21, 2013, Arias offered an allocution, during which she pleaded for a life sentence. Arias acknowledged that her plea for life was a reversal of remarks she made to a TV reporter shortly after her conviction, when she said she preferred the death penalty. " Each time I said that, I meant it, but I lacked perspective," the former Arias said. " Until very recently, I could not imagine standing before you and asking you to give me life. She said she changed her mind to avoid bringing more pain to members of her family, who were in the courtroom.

At one point, she held up a white T-shirt with the word " survivor" written across it, telling the jurors that she would sell the clothing and donate all proceeds to victims of domestic abuse. She also said she would donate her hair to Locks of Love while in prison, and had already done so three times while in jail. That evening, in a joint jailhouse interview with The Arizona Republic, Arias said she didn't know whether the jury would come back with life or death. Whatever they come back with I will have to deal with it, I have no other choice. " Regarding the verdict she said " It felt like a huge sense of unreality, I felt betrayed, actually, by the jury. I was hoping they would see things for what they are. I felt really awful for my family and what they were thinking. (Warren, 2013) On May 23, 2013, the sentencing phase of Arias' trial resulted in a hung jury, prompting the judge to declare a mistrial for that phase. CNN reported the vote was 8 to 4 in favor of death (Shoichet, 2013).

After the mistrial was declared and the Jury discharged, the jury foreman stated that he believed Arias was mentally abused, but that had not been enough to excuse her crime. He also said, " I think 18 days hurt her, I think she was not a good witness. We're charged with presuming innocence, right? But she was on the stand for so long, there were so many contradicting stories. " He said the Jury ound theresponsibilityof weighing the death sentence overwhelming, but were horrified when their efforts ended in a mistrial. " By the end of it, we were mentally and emotionally exhausted," he said. I think we were horrified when we found out that they had actually called a mistrial, and we felt like we had failed. "