

GREG THOMPSON SCHEDULED TO DIE: FEBRUARY 7TH

Targeting the Mentally Ill



CONTACT the NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI) to stop this execution: call 615-361-6608 or visit www.nami.org/template.cfm?section=your_local_NAMI

**GET INVOLVED in your community:
615-463-0070
dont_kill_the_mentallyill@tcask.org**

Greg Thompson is a 43-year old black man on Tennessee's death row since 1985. He has been diagnosed as schizophrenic. His symptoms range from delusional thought processes, psychosis, both auditory and visual hallucinations, mania, paranoia, and self-mutilation. Prison doctors have treated him with psychotropic drugs since he arrived at the prison twenty years ago. Thompson's prison file consists of over 4000 pages documenting his severe mental illness.

Greg Thompson's guilt is not in question but his sentence of death is deeply questionable. He kidnapped and killed Brenda Lane in Coffee County, Tennessee January 1, 1985. He used her car to escape what he, in a delusional state, believed was a gang of Ku Klux Klan members pursuing him and his companion, a white teenaged girl. When he was apprehended the next day, he quickly confessed and directed police to her body.

There is no doubt that this was a horrible tragedy. Years ago, when Thompson was capable of moments of lucidity, he expressed deep remorse for his crime. Yet executing Mr. Thompson would only compound this catastrophe, for Thompson is profoundly insane and incapable of making rational decisions.

Tennessee Attorney General Paul Summers has admitted that Thompson is afflicted with severe mental illness. In fact, it is very likely that early-onset schizophrenia prevented Mr. Thompson from accurately perceiving reality and understanding his actions at the time of the crime.

Unmedicated, as he was at the time of the crime, he hears voices, suffers from severe delusions, is often suicidal, has eaten his own feces, believes that Brenda Lane is alive and working in the prison, and believes that he can survive execution. Even in his current medicated state he believes that he wrote all the songs played on the radio, that he has a fortune in gold bars, and that he was a lieutenant and dentist in the Navy, making him ineligible for execution because he is "federal property."

Thompson's childhood was one of poverty in the rural South. Following the death of his parents, their grandmother raised him and his four siblings. He was a good student in high school. He entered the Navy as a mechanic after graduation and began to display radically different behavior and thought patterns. Thompson began having problems with violent behavior around age 22. Instead of diagnosing him, the Navy dishonorably discharged him. When he returned home everyone noticed a dramatic change in him but they could not afford psychiatric care for him. His trial attorneys knew he had a mental problem but did not hire a psychiatric expert to examine him although the court authorized the funds for one. He wasn't diagnosed until he arrived in prison. By then it was too late. Brenda Lane was dead and Greg Thompson was condemned to die.

www.petitiononline.com/acfdgreg/petition.html

**TENNESSEE COALITION TO ABOLISH STATE KILLING
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