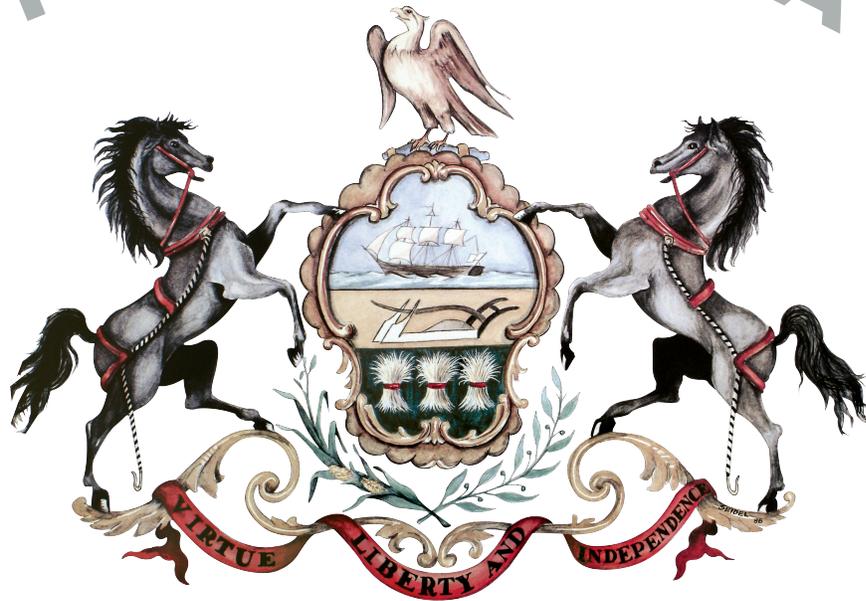


PENNSYLVANIA



OFFICE OF ATTORNEY GENERAL

Michelle A. Henry, Attorney General

INTRODUCTION

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Delaware and Philadelphia Counties, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

OVERVIEW

In 2019, the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook an investigation into allegations of sexual assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) religious community.

During the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury determined that Errol William Hall (DOB: February 3, 1973) had sexually assaulted V.F., a 16 year-old female, whom he met within the JW religious community.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Grand Jury heard testimony that in late 2013, V.F. (DOB: September 21, 1997) was introduced to Hall by her bible teacher. Hall was an elder at the Upper Darby JW congregation and V.F. was an active member of the congregation, attending meetings with her grandmother and aunt. Hall also hosted the congregation at his home in Alden, Delaware County on a regular basis. While V.F. typically saw Hall in group settings either at the Upper Darby JW congregation or at his home while hosting the congregation, at some point they became close and she "viewed him as like an uncle." They became so close that V.F. and Hall would communicate via text message, and V.F. knew Hall's daily routines. Hall would even occasionally text V.F. in the morning before she went to school.

In March 2014, V.F. was attending the Philadelphia High School for Girls and she used public transportation to travel to and from school. Travel typically took one hour and 40 minutes, so she would normally get ready for school at 5:00 a.m. One morning she missed her bus, which put her an hour behind schedule. She knew that Hall was awake early in the morning and so she sent him a text message, lamenting the fact that she had missed the bus. Hall offered to drive V.F. to an "L" train stop located at 52nd and Market Streets in Philadelphia and she accepted. This particular train stop was located near Hall's place of employment, and V.F. would only have about a 30 minute commute to school from this location. V.F. testified that when she got out of Hall's vehicle, they hugged and went their separate ways.

V.F. testified that within approximately one week, Hall texted her in the morning and offered to drive her to the train station once again. V.F. accepted Hall's offer. When she was about to get out of Hall's vehicle, they once again hugged. This time, however, V.F. felt Hall's hand graze the side of her breast. She thought that perhaps it was an accident, so she "shook it off".

Hall then began to offer to give V.F. a ride into Philadelphia once or twice a week. On the third occasion when he dropped V.F. off at the train station, his hand once again grazed V.F.'s breast when they hugged. V.F. testified that at this point she felt uncomfortable and even spoke with classmates during lunch about how to approach a situation when someone makes you feel uncomfortable. As a result, V.F. called Hall and explained that she was uncomfortable about how they hugged sometimes. V.F. testified that Hall responded by saying "oh, okay" and the conduct seemed to stop. Hall drove her to the Kingdom Hall for meetings and for the next week or two, nothing happened so V.F. felt comfortable again.

The next time Hall offered to take her to school, he also offered to give her a ride home from the train stop. She accepted. That evening, they stopped at a Chinese restaurant to get

something to eat and Hall asked if it was okay if they stopped at his house before he took her home. V.F. told Hall that it was fine. V.F. testified that when they arrived at Hall's home, she went to Hall's bedroom and spent some time with Hall's wife. His wife was experiencing medical issues and was in bed. After spending time with Hall's wife, V.F. and Hall ate ice cream and then Hall took V.F. to his basement. While they were having a conversation, Hall pulled V.F. to his body, sat her on his lap, and began touching V.F.'s breasts with his hands over her clothing. While he did this, Hall's eyes were closed and he took deep breaths. V.F. testified that she did not know how to react, so she did not say or do anything. After a period of time, Hall stopped, opened his eyes, and resumed the conversation they were having before he started touching her. He then took her home.

V.F. testified that the assaults occurred twice more. On one occasion, Hall placed V.F.'s hand on his genitals, over his trousers. While she did not have direct skin to skin contact with his penis, she stated that she felt that it was erect. On April 17, 2014, the last occasion when she was sexually assaulted, V.F. indicated that Hall was particularly aggressive. V.F. testified that Hall squeezed her breasts so hard that she was in pain to the point where she believed that she may have been bleeding.

After Hall drove her home, V.F. began to feel "really bad" about what was happening, and consulted JW books that she had. Hall called her to see if she was okay because she had been silent the entire drive home. She started to cry and when she told him about how she was feeling, he kept repeating to her, "You are okay."

The next day, V.F. was with her bible teacher all day and Hall continuously called and texted V.F., which she initially ignored. She told her bible teacher what had been happening, and called Hall while in the presence of her teacher. During that telephone call, V.F. told Hall that she

did not like when he touched her breasts and asked him to stop. He agreed that he would never do it again.

The following day, V.F. and her teacher met with two of the elders at the Upper Darby JW congregation and reported the assaults. Shortly thereafter, Hall was disfellowshipped and apologized to V.F. when he saw her at the Upper Darby JW congregation, telling her that she did nothing wrong.

The Grand Jury obtained records that corroborated the account of Hall's abuse. The records revealed that after Hall was confronted and initially denied the allegations, he then admitted that in April 2014, he began an inappropriate relationship with V.F. He admitted that he would "fondle her breasts" and, on one occasion, as he characterized it, "allowed" her to straddle his knee, manipulating her vaginal area. He also confessed that he "allowed" V.F. to manipulate and touch his genitals.

INTRODUCTION

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Northampton and Berks Counties, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

OVERVIEW

In 2019, the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook an investigation into allegations of sexual assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) religious community.

During the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury determined that Luis Manuel Ayala-Velazquez (DOB: July 28, 1967) had sexually assaulted his daughter, J.B. (DOB: July 25, 1988), for over two years.

FINDINGS OF FACT

In 2001, J.B. lived in Bethlehem, Northampton County, with Ayala-Velazquez, her mother and her sister. The family was actively involved in the Bethlehem Spanish JW Congregation.

The Grand Jury learned that in 2000, the family had moved from Puerto Rico to Bethlehem, when J.B. was 12 years old. J.B. always had a close relationship with Ayala-Velazquez prior to leaving Puerto Rico. She described how he used to encourage her to succeed in school and even volunteered at her school. Their relationship changed when she turned 13.

J.B. testified that when she was 13, Ayala-Velazquez began touching her in ways that made her feel uncomfortable. She recalled the first time that this happened was when she fell asleep watching a JW video she had been assigned to watch for a congregation meeting. She remembers her father touched her to see if she was awake. While she did not recall specifically where he touched her, she indicated that it made her feel “uncomfortable.”

Shortly after this incident, Ayala-Velazquez began to sneak into J.B.’s bedroom at night. This would occur multiple times a week. Initially, Ayala-Velazquez would stand next to her bed, place his hands under her blankets and sheets, and touch her breasts and vaginal area over her clothing. By the time J.B. was 14, he began to place his hands under her clothing and underwear to directly touch her breasts and vagina, specifically touching her clitoris and penetrating her labia.

J.B. testified that on several occasions, Ayala-Velazquez performed oral sex on her when he would sneak into her bedroom. Eventually, Ayala-Velazquez began forcing J.B. to touch his exposed penis by placing her hands on it. She stated that there were times when Ayala-Velazquez would initially force her to place her hands on his penis, but then he would grab her head and force her mouth onto his penis, making her perform oral sex on him. These sexual assaults occurred multiple times each week, over more than two years. The abuse only ended when Ayala-Velazquez moved out of the family home after divorcing J.B.’s mother.

J.B. did not have any contact with Ayala-Velazquez for years following her parents’ divorce. She eventually agreed to visit with him and her step-mother at their home in Reading, Berks County, however. While J.B. could not recall the specific year, the visit occurred when she was an adult, so it would have been at least in 2006. She and her sister stayed overnight in separate bedrooms while there. J.B. testified that after she fell asleep, she awoke to Ayala-

Velazquez pressing his penis against her vagina, penetrating the labia. J.B. indicated that she grunted when she woke up and Ayala-Velazquez left the room.

Years later, she was approached by JW elders who had learned through her ex-boyfriend that Ayala-Velazquez had sexually assaulted her. J.B. described what had happened to her over the years, and the elders assured her that Ayala-Velazquez had been disfellowshipped, so she would not need to worry about seeing him at any meetings.

The Grand Jury obtained records that corroborated Ayala-Velazquez's abuse. While specifics were not included, the records indicated that Ayala-Velazquez "[c]onfessed to sexually abusing his two daughters."

INTRODUCTION

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

OVERVIEW

In 2019, the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook an investigation into allegations of sexual assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) religious community.

During the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury determined that David Balosa (DOB: October 11, 1961) had sexually assaulted S.M., a four year-old female, whom he met within the JW religious community.

FINDINGS OF FACT

In 1996, S.M. (DOB: April 26, 1992) lived in Philadelphia with her parents and three siblings. The family was actively involved with the Olney Spanish JW Congregation and part of the "Portuguese" speaking group.

The Grand Jury learned that at some point during that year, Balosa moved to the United States from Angola and began attending the Olney Spanish JW Congregation. Because he was new to the country and congregation, S.M.'s family was kind enough to allow him to live with them until he could find his own place to live. He was there for approximately one month and stayed in the basement of the home.

S.M. testified that although she was very young, she recalled an evening when she and her parents returned home after a JW meeting. She was wearing a dress on that occasion and went down to the basement, unbeknownst to her parents, in order to greet Balosa. She recalled that Balosa was sitting at a desk using his computer. When she walked over to him, he picked her up and placed her on his lap. While she was seated on Balosa's lap, he reached his hand underneath her dress and began fondling her vagina. He then inserted his finger into her vagina. She recalled that it was painful, and that he even attempted to insert a second finger into her vagina. He asked her if she enjoyed it, and placed her hand on his groin over his pants. When S.M. got off of Balosa's lap, he instructed her not to tell anyone.

S.M. testified that she then ran up the stairs from the basement and immediately encountered her mother who asked what she was doing. Her mother then instructed her to never go into the basement alone and that it was inappropriate to be alone with anyone. Because S.M. felt that she had done something wrong, she did not tell her mother about what Balosa had done to her.

After Balosa moved out of her family's home, S.M. would still encounter him through JW activities. At one point, Balosa even tutored S.M. and her brother in the French language. Because she had remembered what he had done, she did not like to be around him. Making matters worse, Balosa would lick his lips and kiss her on the head whenever he would greet her, which made her uncomfortable.

For years S.M. felt guilty about what Balosa had done to her and blamed herself. As a result, she did not tell anyone for 10 or 11 years. When she was 15 years old, S.M. drove with her father to drop off one of her friends. After her friend exited the car, S.M. broke down sobbing and told her father what Balosa had done to her. When they arrived home, S.M.'s father

told her mother about it, and, shortly thereafter, Balosa came to the house. S.M.'s parents sat S.M. down in front of Balosa and confronted him about the abuse. Balosa initially denied the allegation, but shortly thereafter dropped down to his knees, admitted what he had done, and begged for forgiveness. S.M. was then sent to her room by her parents and never saw Balosa again.

The Grand Jury obtained records that corroborated Balosa's abuse of S.M. According to the documents, Balosa specifically recalled the incident and admitted to fondling S.M.'s vagina while she sat on his lap.

INTRODUCTION

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Butler County, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

OVERVIEW

In 2019, the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook an investigation into allegations of sexual assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) religious community.

During the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury determined that Shaun Sheffer (DOB: February 12, 1978) sexually assaulted K.S., his younger sister, from the time she was at least seven years old through 12 years of age.

FINDINGS OF FACT

K.S. (DOB: May 4, 1988) grew up in Callery, Butler County, with her parents and her four older brothers. The family was actively involved with the Zelienople JW congregation.

The Grand Jury learned that K.S. was home-schooled and never attended public or private school. Her father owned his own HVAC business and was seldom at home. K.S.'s mother had medical issues and spent time in and out of the hospital. In addition, when she was not in the hospital, she frequently left the children home alone so that she could assist with the HVAC business or run errands. Accordingly, the children were frequently unsupervised.

K.S. testified that beginning in 1995 when she was seven years old, her oldest brother Shaun would sexually assault her. He raped her by placing his penis into her vagina and he also

forced her to perform oral sex on him. K.S. indicated that he raped her 50 to 75 times until she was 12 years old. She stated that he would have sexual intercourse with her until he would ejaculate. During the rapes, he would place his hand on her mouth in order to keep her quiet. According to K.S., she would not say a word because she was "very afraid" of him.¹ K.S. stated that the rapes occurred in the same locations: Sheffer's bedroom in the basement, an unfinished bathroom, their parents' bedroom, and, in or around their above ground swimming pool. While she was uncertain as to how many times she was forced to perform oral sex on Sheffer, she specifically recalled that on one occasion they were both in the pool and none of her brothers were around. That day, Sheffer grabbed her by the head and forced his penis into her mouth, making her perform oral sex on him. K.S. indicated that when Sheffer would sexually assault her, he would tell her not to tell anyone.

K.S. testified that she ultimately told her brother B.S. about the abuse. B.S. then reported the abuse to their mother, who approached K.S. and asked her to draw a penis to find out if she would know what one looked like. In addition, their mother told K.S. that she should not tell anyone what had happened.

K.S. testified that although she reported the sexual assaults to her mother, Sheffer continued to rape her and force her to perform oral sex on him through the year 2000. Sheffer would have been 18 years old in 1996 and 22 years old when the assaults stopped.

The Grand Jury heard testimony from B.S. who corroborated his sister's testimony. B.S. described Sheffer as mean, narcissistic, manipulative and controlling. He indicated that Sheffer seemed to enjoy inflicting discomfort and pain upon others. B.S. explained that K.S. struggles with a mental handicap that rendered her non-verbal until at least age four. She is

¹ In addition to the sexual assaults she experienced, K.S. witnessed Sheffer frequently bully and physically assault her other brothers.

developmentally disabled, and it was believed that she would never be capable of learning to read and write. It was this disability that Sheffer used to manipulate situations requiring someone to comfort or help K.S. B.S. stated that Sheffer would pick on him and usually fight with their brother J.S. These fights were often violent and would trigger K.S. to the point where she would become agitated, ending with her hiding within a room of the house. B.S. believes Sheffer likely used this as an opportunity to sexually assault K.S., as he would tell B.S. and the other brothers that he needed to go “console [K.S.]” as their parents would be home soon and he did not want anyone to get into trouble.

B.S. specifically recalled that Sheffer would be behind closed and locked doors with K.S. B.S. testified that if anyone would approach, or knock and attempt to enter, Sheffer became very aggressive and angry. B.S. recalled a specific incident when K.S. and Sheffer were behind a locked door and B.S. picked the lock to enter the room. While he does not recall seeing anything that he would have comprehended as a sex act, he testified that he obviously interrupted something as he got his “ass-whooped” by Sheffer.

B.S. stated that he did not know what Sheffer was doing to K.S. until she disclosed the abuse to him in 1995 when he was 12 years old. Thereafter, he took the information to his parents. B.S. testified that he was concerned that his father was going to seriously hurt Sheffer when he found out about the sexual assaults, and he was surprised that nothing happened. To the contrary, the parents did nothing but create a “family rule” that prohibited Sheffer from being alone with K.S. when they were not home. B.S. stated that because his parents were hardly ever home, there was no way to prevent Sheffer from being alone with K.S. B.S. stated that he and his brothers were told that their parents would take care of it and to keep quiet about it.

B.S. testified that it made sense to him that the sexual assaults would have stopped in 2000 because that is when Sheffer was forced to move out following a somewhat violent argument with J.S. At that time, their parents moved Sheffer into an apartment on their grandmother's property.

Investigators were able to identify K.S. through records obtained from the Zelenople JW congregation that documented an investigation into Sheffer's conduct. Although Sheffer denied the assaults, the records revealed that vigilance in monitoring his conduct on JW property would be undertaken.

INTRODUCTION

We, the members of the Forty-Ninth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, having received and reviewed evidence regarding violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code occurring in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania pursuant to Notice of Submission of Investigation No. 3, do hereby make the following findings of fact and recommendation of charges.

OVERVIEW

In 2019, the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General received a resource referral from a District Attorney's Office pursuant to the Commonwealth Attorneys Act. As a result, the Grand Jury undertook an investigation into allegations of sexual assault involving members of the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) religious community.

During the course of its investigation, the Grand Jury determined that Terry Booth (DOB: December 6, 1966) had sexually assaulted D.W., a 16 year-old male, whom he met within the JW religious community.

FINDINGS OF FACT

In 2010, D.W. (DOB: December 19, 1994) lived in the North Versailles area with his mother, step-father and older brother. The family was actively involved with the White Oak Kingdom Hall JW congregation.

The Grand Jury learned that Booth and his family moved to the area and began attending the White Oak Kingdom Hall JW congregation. Booth befriended D.W.'s family, and in a short time, Booth took it upon himself to "mentor" D.W.

In December 2010, Booth was assisting in the renovation of a building in East Hills, Allegheny County, and recruited D.W. to assist him. For several weeks, Booth would regularly

drive D.W. to the renovation site.¹ On one occasion, while at the renovation site, Booth asked if he could hug D.W. D.W. indicated it was much different than a normal hug, as Booth held onto him for an extended period of time. D.W. also recalled a specific instance where Booth requested that D.W. lift up his shirt to expose his abdomen. D.W. complied with the request, and Booth rubbed the side of his hand on D.W.'s stomach and commented on his skin tone. At one point, while at the renovation site, Booth exclaimed to D.W., "Let me grab those buns," and touched D.W.'s buttocks.

In addition to the touching, Booth would typically engage in sexual discussions with D.W. under the guise of providing spiritual guidance. Typically, the discussions involved the viewing of pornography and masturbation. While driving home from the renovation site, Booth often engaged D.W. in "what if" scenarios involving women. These "what if" scenarios typically involved questions about how D.W. would react if a female did something sexual to him, or if a female was aggressive with him in a sexual way. While D.W. was uncomfortable with these discussions, he engaged in the conversation because he was hopeful Booth could provide him with spiritual guidance.

The final time that D.W. accompanied Booth to the renovation site, Booth brought beer with him. Booth drank several beers, and provided D.W. with a beer. D.W. testified that he did not really like the taste, so he hardly drank what he had been given. While they were driving home from the renovation site, Booth asked D.W., "What if a woman came over to you?" He then simultaneously reached over and grabbed D.W. by the genitals over his jeans and held his

¹ It should be noted that during this time period, Booth learned that D.W. enjoyed playing the guitar, and gifted him a guitar. Documents that this Grand Jury obtained as a result of a subpoena confirmed this and also revealed that Booth gave D.W. a power drill and a jacket, as well.

hand there for several seconds. D.W. was shocked and made very uncomfortable by the assault and eventually pulled away and pushed Booth's hand away.

After Booth dropped D.W. off at home, D.W. told his parents about the assault. As a result, D.W.'s parents took the matter to the elders at the White Oak Kingdom Hall JW congregation. D.W. indicated that he had two meetings with elders where he told them everything Booth had done, including the assault. At the second meeting, Booth was present and downplayed and denied assaulting D.W.

The Grand Jury obtained records that corroborated the sexual assault of D.W. The records revealed that Booth denied the sexual assault, however according to the documents, Booth: "seemed to back-pedal on what he said or not remember if he said something, or if he did, he certainly didn't mean it that way. He agreed with us that the sequence of events and things he did certainly fit the profile or MO of a sexual predator or pedophile."

