

Appendix A

**NOTICE**

The text of this order may  
be changed or corrected  
prior to the time for filing of  
a Petition for Rehearing or  
the disposition of the same.

2019 IL App (1st) 171882-U

No. 1-17-1882

Order filed May 30, 2019

Fourth Division

**NOTICE:** This order was filed under Supreme Court Rule 23 and may not be cited as precedent by any party except in the limited circumstances allowed under Rule 23(e)(1).

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IN THE  
APPELLATE COURT OF ILLINOIS  
FIRST DISTRICT

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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, ) Appeal from the  
Plaintiff-Appellee, ) Circuit Court of  
v. ) Cook County.  
LAZARO ZAPATA, ) )  
Defendant-Appellant. ) No. 11 CR 10477  
 ) )  
 ) Honorable  
 ) Thomas V. Gainer Jr.,  
 ) Judge, presiding.

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JUSTICE REYES delivered the judgment of the court.  
Presiding Justice McBride and Justice Burke concurred in the judgment.

**ORDER**

¶ 1 *Held:* The trial court did not abuse its discretion in declining to instruct the jury on second degree murder based on provocation where there was insufficient evidence of mutual combat or other legally-recognized sources of provocation.

¶ 2 Following a jury trial, defendant Lazaro Zapata was found guilty of first degree murder and sentenced to 40 years in prison. On appeal, he argues that the trial court erred in refusing to instruct the jury on second degree murder based on sudden and intense provocation. We affirm.

¶ 3 Defendant was charged by indictment with first degree murder (720 ILCS 5/9-1(a) (West 2010)) arising from an incident in which he allegedly killed Raul Medina by striking him with a car and kicking him in the head.<sup>1</sup> As Raul and other individuals mentioned in this order have last names in common, we will use their first names as needed.

¶ 4 At trial, Carlos Galindo testified that he was at a gas station on South Kedzie Avenue in Chicago around midnight on June 1, 2011. As Galindo left the gas station, he saw defendant, a longtime friend, fighting a much larger “older guy,” later identified as Raul. A man Galindo knew by the nickname “Dukes” arrived and helped defendant in the fight, but Raul was “beating the s\*\*\* out of both of them.” Galindo ran over and “blindsided” Raul by punching him twice. Raul then stopped fighting and walked away down Kedzie.

¶ 5 Dukes left on a bicycle, and defendant got into a car that was parked in the middle of the street. Galindo entered the passenger’s seat. They drove away and made a right turn toward Raul, who was still walking down the street. As they passed him, Raul shouted “that’s why I took your b\*\*\*” and threw something at the car. Defendant made a U-turn and told Galindo that he was “going to park.” Before defendant could park, Raul, who looked “aggressive” and “mad,” ran in front of the car. Defendant struck Raul, lost control of the vehicle, and crashed into a pole.

¶ 6 Galindo lost consciousness and woke up in the car alone several minutes later. He tried to run away, but realized that his leg was broken. Galindo called out to defendant, who was down the street. Defendant helped Galindo limp to a nearby gangway, where defendant’s girlfriend, Irene Ayala, was waiting. Defendant and Ayala helped Galindo hide under a porch, and left him

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<sup>1</sup> Defendant was also charged in the same indictment with one count of possession of a stolen motor vehicle (625 ILCS 5/4-103(a)(1) (West 2010)) for allegedly possessing Raul’s car while knowing it to be stolen. The State dismissed the stolen vehicle charge prior to trial and proceeded on first degree murder.

with Ayala's cell phone. Galindo made several phone calls in search of a ride home before the phone died. He lost consciousness again, and woke up when he was found by emergency responders. On cross-examination, Galindo denied believing that defendant "snapped" before making the U-turn, but acknowledged that he testified to that effect before the grand jury.

¶ 7 Chicago police officer Nicholas Pronek testified that he and his partner, Officer Joe Considine, responded to the scene around 12:30 a.m. on June 2, 2011. Upon arrival, Pronek observed a car that had crashed into a pole. He learned that one person had already been taken to the hospital and another had fled the scene. Pronek walked eastbound down 40th Place and found Galindo lying beneath a porch.

¶ 8 Chicago police officer Jerry Doskocz testified that he was assigned to investigate the incident around 3:30 a.m. on June 2, 2011. He went to Mercy Hospital in search of defendant, who had been identified as a suspect, and arrested him in the emergency room waiting room.

¶ 9 Maria Sandoval testified that, around midnight on June 1, 2011, she was lying in bed in her apartment in the 4000 block of South Kedzie. She heard yelling outside, and went to her kitchen window to see what was happening. When she looked outside, she could tell that the noise was coming from a car parked on the corner of 40th Place and Kedzie. The car door pulled shut, but Maria could not see who was inside. Approximately one minute later, the tires screeched and the car "zoomed off." The car turned right onto Kedzie, and Maria headed toward her bedroom. She returned to the kitchen window "a few seconds" later because she heard tires screech again. Maria observed the car sideswipe a fence in front of her building and crash into a utility pole. She yelled for her mother and sister to call 911.

¶ 10 A man exited the driver's seat, walked to the front of the car, and "stomp[ed]" on something with "ferocity" more than five times. A woman exited the car, yelled at the driver, and then ran with him down 40th Place towards an alley. Another man exited the passenger's side of the car about a minute later, "hopping" and yelling for help. The driver and woman came to his aid, and took him back to the alley. On cross-examination, Maria acknowledged that she did not see the car turn around or hit anyone.

¶ 11 Graciela Sandoval, Maria's sister, testified that she and her mother were in the dining room when she heard screaming outside. Graciela went to the living room window overlooking Kedzie and saw a man walking from the sidewalk toward the middle of the street. As the man stood in the street, a car drove by and someone in the vehicle "exchanged words" with him before driving off at a "high speed." Graciela described the exchange as "not pleasant," but she could not hear what was said. The man walked back to the sidewalk closest to her building. Once he reached the sidewalk, she heard a "loud screech" and saw the car "coming very fast" toward her building at an angle.

¶ 12 Graciela ran to the kitchen to get a better view. When she looked out the kitchen window, she saw that the car had collided with a utility pole next to her building. The driver exited the car, walked around the front, and "stomp[ed] and kick[ed]" toward the ground several times. A woman exited the passenger's seat and screamed at the driver to stop. They ran down 40th Place. Then, a man exited the back seat "hopping" and "screaming" as if his leg was injured. The driver and the woman returned and helped the injured man into an alley on 40th Place.

¶ 13 Forensic investigator Eric Szwed testified that he was assigned to the case in the early hours of June 2, 2011. Szwed took video and photographs of the scene and the evidence. He

collected a deployed airbag and scrapings from the hood of a car on the sidewalk, both of which contained suspected blood. Szwed also met with defendant at a police station, where he collected his blood-stained shoes.

¶ 14 The State then proceeded by entering several stipulations. First, the parties stipulated that Michael DeLacy, an investigator for the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, collected a buccal swab from defendant and sent it to the Illinois State Police Crime Lab.

¶ 15 Second, the parties stipulated that forensic analyst Justin Camilo received defendant's buccal swab. Camilo also examined the air bag, shoes, and hood scrapings collected by Szwed. All three tested positive for blood.

¶ 16 Third, Chicago police detective James Anderson collected a sample of Raul's blood from the Cook County Medical Examiner's office. Anderson submitted the blood to the Illinois State Police Crime Lab for analysis.

¶ 17 Finally, Megan Neff, a forensic biologist for the Illinois State Police, identified DNA profiles from defendant's buccal swab and Raul's blood sample. Neff concluded that the blood scraped from the hood of the car matched Raul. Two of the three blood stains on defendant's right shoe also matched Raul, but the third did not match either defendant or Raul. The blood on the deployed airbag matched defendant.

¶ 18 The State concluded its case-in-chief by calling Dr. Lauren Moser Woertz, an assistant Cook County medical examiner. Woertz testified that, on June 3, 2011, she performed Raul's autopsy, which revealed numerous injuries to his head and torso. Woertz concluded that the cause of death was being struck by a vehicle.

¶ 19 The State rested, and the defense called Robert Kelenyi, a retired lieutenant in the Chicago Police Department. Kelenyi testified that he responded to a call of kidnapping in the 4100 block of South Albany Avenue on the night of June 1, 2011. He met with defendant, who was "highly agitated" and appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Defendant first claimed that his girlfriend had been kidnapped and was being held somewhere in the building. Officers checked the building and found no one else present. Defendant then explained that his girlfriend was being held captive "somewhere out and about in a vehicle." He "insisted" that he would call his girlfriend on the phone to prove it. Defendant dialed a number and put the phone on speaker. A woman answered the call, and said that she "wasn't in any danger" and that defendant was "an asshole." Kelenyi did not remember if the woman identified herself as defendant's girlfriend. However, officers determined that there was no evidence of a kidnapping and left. On cross-examination, Kelenyi stated that defendant identified the woman on the phone as his girlfriend, Ayala.

¶ 20 Ayala testified that she and defendant were dating on June 1, 2011. The couple lived together in an apartment in the 4100 block of South Albany. At around 8 p.m., defendant told Ayala that he was going to "Jewels" to help Delilah Medina, their upstairs neighbor. Defendant left, and Delilah and Raul knocked on Ayala's back door approximately 15 minutes later. Ayala and Delilah had a conversation before Delilah went upstairs to her apartment. Delilah returned sometime later and dragged Ayala outside by the hair. Delilah took Ayala up to her apartment, where Ayala noticed that there was no television in the living room. Delilah hit and choked Ayala, held half of her body out of the third-story window, and threatened to throw her out.

¶ 21 After that, Delilah made a phone call to an unknown person. Ayala could not hear what was said, but stated that Delilah sounded “[m]ad.” Delilah and Raul forced Ayala into the back seat of Raul’s car. Delilah sat in the backseat and Raul drove. As they pulled away, Ayala spotted defendant and yelled to him. Defendant entered a different car and followed them. Raul drove westbound down the expressway while Delilah hit Ayala in the face with the seatbelt buckle. Delilah continued to talk to someone on the phone.

¶ 22 After driving for approximately 40 minutes, Raul pulled over and forced Ayala into the trunk. They continued to drive around for “no more than an hour” until Raul stopped again and returned Ayala to the back seat. Raul pulled into a gas station, where he purchased gas and beer. They then drove back to the city with Delilah in the passenger’s seat and Ayala in the backseat. Delilah was still talking on the phone.

¶ 23 As they approached their apartment building, Raul slowed down, but did not stop. He pulled over two or three blocks later, and defendant arrived on a bicycle. Raul got out of the car and “exchanged words” with defendant, but they were not yelling. Delilah then exited the car, and she, defendant, and Raul started to yell at each other. As they were arguing, Galindo arrived and opened the car door for Ayala to get out. When Ayala exited, she saw defendant, Raul, Delilah, and “more people” fighting in the middle of the street. She screamed for the fighting to stop. When the fight ceased, defendant entered the driver’s seat of Raul’s car and told Ayala to get in the back seat. Galindo sat in the passenger’s seat.

¶ 24 Defendant pulled away and turned right onto Kedzie. He drove less than a block before turning around, but Ayala did not see anybody in the street as he did so. Ayala explained that she did not recall the car turning around, but could only remember that they crashed. After the crash,

Ayala left the car and ran down 40th Place. She ran alone and did not see Raul. Ayala returned to the car when she heard Galindo screaming. She and defendant, who was already with Galindo, helped him down the street.

¶ 25 Ayala and defendant left Galindo in a yard and returned to their apartment. Defendant briefly went inside, and they then "started walking." Defendant talked to somebody they encountered along the way, and left with him. Some girls whom Ayala did not know picked her up in a car and drove her a couple blocks away, where defendant was waiting. The girls took them to "somebody's house," and defendant called his father. Defendant's father picked them up and took them to a police station. After speaking to police, they went to Mercy Hospital, where Ayala was examined in the emergency room.

¶ 26 On cross-examination, Ayala stated that she did not remember the car turning around on Kedzie because she was scared, nervous, and "wasn't paying attention." She did not hear defendant tell Galindo that he was going to park after turning around. Ayala explained that she saw a body on the ground after the crash, but did not stop to see who it was. She acknowledged that she testified before the grand jury that she saw Raul lying on the sidewalk in front of the car.

¶ 27 Defendant testified that he was at home with Ayala on June 1, 2011, when he received a phone call from Delilah around 9 p.m. After taking the call, defendant went to a Jewel-Osco grocery store to help Delilah and Raul, her boyfriend, with some "gang-bangers" who were troubling them. Defendant knew Delilah as his neighbor, but had never met Raul. Defendant's friends Galindo, Lee Ray, Dominick, and "Lalo" accompanied him to the grocery store. When they arrived, defendant did not see Delilah, Raul, or any gang members. Defendant left, and received another phone call from Delilah on the way home. Delilah told him that she was on the

expressway with Ayala in the trunk of her car. She threatened to "start chopping off [Ayala's] ears" if defendant did not "get her stuff back."

¶ 28 Defendant then returned home to find the door open and Ayala missing. His living room television was also gone. He went upstairs to Delilah's apartment and noticed that her door was open as well. Nobody was inside the apartment and her television was missing. Defendant called 911 and reported that Ayala had been kidnapped. When Kelenyi and other police officers arrived at defendant's apartment, he was talking on the phone with Delilah. Defendant put the phone on speaker for Kelenyi to hear, and asked to talk to Ayala. Delilah responded by saying that Ayala had not been kidnapped and was there on her own free will. Delilah added that Ayala did not want to talk to him because he was "an asshole," and hung up the phone. Police searched the building and, upon finding it unoccupied, left. Defendant tried to explain the situation to the officers, but was told that he would go to jail if he called them again.

¶ 29 Defendant continued talking to Delilah on the phone after the police left. He was standing outside his apartment building when Raul, Delilah, and Ayala drove past. Defendant jumped on a bicycle and followed their car until it pulled over about three blocks later. When defense counsel asked defendant if he was "angry" at this time, he responded "Well, I was a lot of things, angry—I think it was more frustration at this time."

¶ 30 Delilah and Raul exited the car and yelled at defendant about their missing property. Defendant explained that he had recovered their belongings, but they refused to let Ayala go. Instead, Delilah started "ranting and raving, talking crazy." As defendant continued "begging" for Ayala's release, his friend "Pipes" rode up on a bicycle. Defendant told Pipes to let Ayala out of the car. As Pipes went to open the door, Raul got back into the driver's seat. Defendant

grabbed Raul and hit him, initiating a fistfight in the street. Defendant and Raul fought one-on-one for 10 to 20 seconds until Galindo hit Raul from behind. Then, Delilah came up behind defendant and "swung at" him. Defendant swung back and Delilah ran away.

¶ 31 When defendant turned his attention back to Raul, he was backing away as Galindo and Pipes approached him. However, Raul still had his hands raised in a "fighting position" as he retreated. Defendant noticed that Raul's keys were still in the ignition, so he told Galindo and Pipes to enter the car. Defendant jumped in the driver's seat, accompanied by Galindo and Ayala. Pipes left on a bicycle. Defendant pulled away and made a right turn to "avoid hitting" Raul, who was approaching the car. Raul chased after them, "shouted something along the lines [of] b\*\*\*, m\*\*\* f\*\*\*, I'm gonna kill you m\*\*\* f\*\*\*," and threw something at the car. Defendant turned the car around about 20 feet later because he wanted a "resolution to this situation because [he] knew [Raul] wasn't going to stop." As defendant turned around, he saw Raul standing near a light pole next to the sidewalk. Defendant crossed into the oncoming traffic lane with the intent to stop a "considerable distance in front of" Raul. However, defendant did not stop because he accidentally hit the clutch instead of the brake pedal. Defendant swerved to avoid hitting Raul, but was unsuccessful. The car struck Raul and crashed into the light pole, deploying the air bag into defendant's face.

¶ 32 After the crash, defendant exited the car, walked around the front, and kicked Raul one time. Defendant explained that he kicked Raul because:

"It was just, you know, I mean at the time the way that everything had happened, I mean, it was just like I felt like, like, you know, it was just the way that everything had

happened. I just, you know, wanted this situation to be over. I didn't want, you know, this guy trying to come back for us or anything."

¶ 33 Defendant then ran down the street to catch up to Ayala, who had exited the car and walked past him. He heard Galindo calling for help, and returned to the car to assist him. Defendant and Ayala helped Galindo limp down the street and into an alley. They left Galindo with Ayala's cell phone and returned to their apartment. Defendant eventually went to a police station with his father and Ayala, where they spoke to the desk sergeant. At the sergeant's direction, they went to Mercy Hospital for treatment. Defendant was arrested at the hospital and taken to another police station, where he gave a videotaped interview with detectives.

¶ 34 On cross-examination, defendant acknowledged that Raul did not have anything in his hands during the fight. After Raul backed away from Galindo and Pipes, defendant left with Ayala because he considered the fight over.

¶ 35 The State played a video of defendant's statement to police made on June 2, 2011. In the video, defendant stated that, as he drove past Raul, Raul chased the car on foot and shouted "I'm going to kill you, m\*\*\*." Defendant made a U-turn because he felt "threatened" that Raul was "going to come back another time" to hurt him. Raul was still "talking shit" as defendant drove towards him. When Raul "realized what [defendant] was about to do," he tried to run away, but it was too late.

¶ 36 Defendant described his mental state at the time he drove toward Raul as "full of anger and hatred and \*\*\* aggravation throughout the whole situation." He explained that the "one thing on [his] mind" was "to end this right now" because he "didn't want [Raul] coming back to haunt us." Galindo and Ayala told defendant to stop, but he drove into Raul because he was

"infuriated by the whole situation" and "felt like [he] had to do it to end this whole situation because he would always be a threat to us."

¶ 37 At trial, defendant acknowledged that he made the statements depicted in the video. He also explained that he turned the car around to "resolve the situation," but reiterated that he did not intend to strike Raul. He stated that "[i]t happened really fast" and that he "felt a lot of emotions," including anger. After crashing the car, defendant got out and kicked Raul to ensure he was dead.

¶ 38 The defense rested, and the court conducted a jury instruction conference outside the jury's presence. The defense requested that the jury be instructed on self-defense, second degree murder based on an unreasonable belief of self-defense, and second degree murder based on serious provocation. The court granted the defense's request with respect to the first two instructions, but declined to instruct the jury on provocation. In reaching this decision, the court stated:

"[I]t's very clear to me that the testimony that I heard today from this defendant was that he acted in the way he acted because they struck first and he was trying to protect himself and trying to protect Irene Ayala from what they did then and what they were going to do in the future."

¶ 39 After closing arguments, the jury found defendant guilty of first degree murder. Defendant filed a posttrial motion challenging, *inter alia*, the court's refusal to instruct the jury on serious provocation. The court denied the motion, and sentenced defendant to 40 years in prison.

¶ 40 Defendant now appeals, arguing that the trial court erred by refusing to instruct the jury on second degree murder based on sudden and intense provocation. In particular, he contends that there was evidence of provocation in that Raul kidnapped Ayala, engaged in mutual combat with defendant, and threatened to kill him. Thus, defendant argues that he was entitled to a provocation instruction because the totality of the circumstances would have inflamed the passions of a reasonable person.

¶ 41 Relevant here, a person commits first degree murder when, without lawful justification, he kills another while intending to cause death or great bodily harm. 720 ILCS 5/9-1(a) (West 2010).

¶ 42 A person commits second degree murder when he commits first degree murder and one of the following mitigating factors exists. 720 ILCS 5/9-2(a) (West 2010). The first factor is that the defendant acted under an unreasonable belief of self-defense. 720 ILCS 5/9-2(a)(2) (West 2010). As the trial court instructed the jury on this factor, it is not at issue in the present case. The second mitigating factor is that, at the time of the killing, the offender acted "under a sudden and intense passion resulting from serious provocation by the individual killed." 720 ILCS 5/9-2(a)(1) (West 2010). The statute defines "serious provocation" as "conduct sufficient to excite an intense passion in a reasonable person." 720 ILCS 5/9-2(b) (West 2010).

¶ 43 "Passion on the part of the slayer, no matter how violent," does not reduce first degree murder to second degree murder "unless it is engendered by a provocation which the law recognizes as being reasonable and adequate." *People v. Austin*, 133 Ill. 2d 118, 125 (1989). Illinois courts recognize only four categories of serious provocation: (1) substantial physical injury or assault, (2) mutual combat, (3) illegal arrest, and (4) adultery with the offender's

showed that defendant withdrew from the fight with Raul in order to engage with Delilah, who attempted to sneak up behind him. By the time Delilah fled, Raul was already retreating from Pipes and Galindo. Defendant's own testimony established that he got into a car and drove away because he considered the fight to be over. Thus, any mutual combat that might have existed had ceased. See *People v. Thompson*, 354 Ill. App. 3d 579, 589-590 (2004) (mutual combat ended once an intervener pushed the defendant away from the victim); see also *People v. Pugh*, 187 Ill. App. 3d 860, 868 (1989) (doubting the existence of mutual combat where victim was shot after interveners separated the combatants of a fistfight).

¶ 49 Second, defendant's use of deadly force was grossly disproportionate to Raul's actions. The evidence established that defendant fought Raul while both were unarmed. Although Galindo testified that Raul was winning the fight, defendant only fought Raul for 10 to 20 seconds before more people arrived. Defendant then disengaged, and the combatants dispersed shortly thereafter. Thus, defendant's retaliation—*i.e.* running over Raul with a car—was wholly out of proportion to the fistfight, and mutual combat does not apply. See, *e.g.*, *McDonald*, 2016 IL 118882, ¶ 65 (deadly force against unarmed victim negates mutual combat).

¶ 50 We are unpersuaded by defendant's citation to *People v. Johnson*, 4 Ill. App. 3d 249 (1972). In that case, the defendant was convicted of murder after stabbing an unarmed victim in the leg with a knife during a fistfight. *Johnson*, 4 Ill. App. 3d at 250. This court reduced the conviction to voluntary manslaughter, stating that there was no pause between the fight and the stabbing to show that the defendant acted out of malice or revenge, rather than passion. *Id.* at 252. In the present case, however, there was a significant pause between the end of the fight and the fatal blow. Thus, *Johnson* is factually distinguishable. Furthermore, unlike the line of post-

*Johnson* cases noted above, *Johnson* itself did not address whether grossly disproportionate retaliation negates the mutual combat aspect of serious provocation, and therefore does not control here.

¶ 51. Defendant next argues that he was entitled to a serious provocation instruction because the totality of his experiences on the night of Raul's murder was sufficient to inflame the passions of a reasonable person. In particular, defendant notes that, "through no fault of his own," Delilah and Raul kidnapped his girlfriend, threatened harm against her, physically fought with him, and threatened his life. However, as noted, the only categories of legally-sufficient provocation recognized by our supreme court are (1) substantial physical injury or assault, (2) mutual combat, (3) illegal arrest, and (4) adultery with one's spouse. See *McDonald*, 2016 IL 118882 ¶ 59. We have already determined that there was no mutual combat in the present case, and the latter two categories are clearly inapplicable. Similarly, there was no evidence that defendant was enraged because of a physical injury, and he does not make such an argument on appeal. Instead, defendant acknowledges that his arguments fall outside of the four categories, but asks us to "look beyond" them to a broader conception of provocation. As our supreme court has been clear on this point, we decline defendant's invitation to expand our analysis beyond the four categories.

¶ 52. We also find no support for defendant's contention that the recent amendment to the second degree murder statute "evinces a recognition on the part of the legislature that there are categories outside of the four recognized categories where serious provocation could be found." Effective January 1, 2018, the legislature amended the statutory definition of "serious provocation" to read as follows:

“Serious provocation is conduct sufficient to excite an intense passion in a reasonable person provided, however, that an action that does not otherwise constitute serious provocation cannot qualify as serious provocation because of the discovery, knowledge, or disclosure of the victim’s sexual orientation as defined in Section 1-103 of the Illinois Human Rights Act.” Pub. Act 100-460, § 5 (eff. Jan. 1, 2018) (amending 720 ILCS 5/9-2(b)).

¶ 53 Initially, we note that the version of the statute under which defendant was convicted did not contain language concerning the victim’s sexual orientation, and instead defined “serious provocation” only as “conduct sufficient to excite an intense passion in a reasonable person.” 720 ILCS 5/9-2(b) (West 2010). Thus, even if the legislature intended to expand its conception of serious provocation by amending the statute, the new language would not apply in defendant’s case. Moreover, nothing in the language of the amendment implies that the legislature intended for the prior version of the statute to apply more broadly than our supreme court has interpreted. Accordingly, we reject defendant’s provocation argument to the extent that it does not conform to the four judicially-recognized categories.

¶ 54 In short, the trial court did not abuse its discretion in refusing to instruct the jury on second degree murder based on serious provocation, as there was insufficient evidence of mutual combat or any other source of legally-significant provocation. Therefore, we will not disturb defendant’s conviction for first degree murder.

¶ 55 For the foregoing reasons, the judgment of the circuit court is affirmed.

¶ 56 Affirmed.

Appendix B

## THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
 V. )  
 LAZARO E ZAPATA )  
 Defendant

CASE NUMBER 11CR1047701  
 DATE OF BIRTH 09/09/86  
 DATE OF ARREST 06/02/11  
 IR NUMBER 1384579 SID NUMBER 046162080

ORDER OF COMMITMENT AND SENTENCE TO  
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
=====

The above named defendant having been adjudged guilty of the offense(s) enumerated below is hereby sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections as follows:

Count	Statutory Citation	Offense	Sentence	Class
001	720-5/9-1(A) (1)	MURDER/INTENT TO KILL/INJURE and said sentence shall run concurrent with count(s) _____	YRS. 040 MOS.00	M
		and said sentence shall run (concurrent with) (consecutive to) the sentence imposed on: _____	YRS. _____ MOS. _____	_____
		and said sentence shall run (concurrent with) (consecutive to) the sentence imposed on: _____	YRS. _____ MOS. _____	_____
		and said sentence shall run (concurrent with) (consecutive to) the sentence imposed on: _____	YRS. _____ MOS. _____	_____
		and said sentence shall run (concurrent with) (consecutive to) the sentence imposed on: _____	YRS. _____ MOS. _____	_____

On Count \_\_\_\_\_ defendant having been convicted of a class \_\_\_\_\_ offense is sentenced as a class x offender pursuant TO 730 ILCS 5/5-3(C) (8).

On Count \_\_\_\_\_ defendant is sentenced to an extended term pursuant to 730 ILCS 5/5-8-2.

The Court finds that the defendant is entitled to receive credit for time actually served in custody for a total credit of \_\_\_\_\_ days as of the date of this order

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the above sentence(s) be concurrent with the sentence imposed in case number(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
AND: consecutive to the sentence imposed under case number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED THAT THREE YEARS MSR; CREDIT THE DEFENDANT FOR TIME CONSIDERED SERVED SINCE JUNE 2, 2011; COUNT TWO MERGES WITH COUNT ONE; BOND EXONERATED; MITT TO ISSUE.

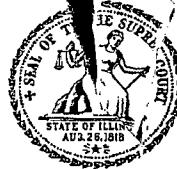
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk provide the Sheriff of Cook County with a copy of this Order and that the Sheriff take the defendant into custody and deliver him/her to the Illinois Department of Corrections and that the Department take him/her into custody and confine him/her in a manner provided by law until the above sentence is fulfilled.

DATED FEBRUARY 19, 2016  
CERTIFIED BY C. LEWIS

DEPUTY CLERK  
VERIFIED BY \_\_\_\_\_

ENTER: 02/19/16  
JUDGE THOMAS V. GAINER, 1839  
FEB 19 2016  
CLERK OF COOK COUNTY  
DEPUTY CLERK

Appendix C



**SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS**

SUPREME COURT BUILDING  
200 East Capitol Avenue  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721  
(217) 782-2035

Lazaro Zapata  
Reg. No. R31426  
Menard Correctional Center  
P.O. Box 1000  
Menard IL 62259

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE  
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601-3103  
(312) 793-1332  
TDD: (312) 793-6185

September 25, 2019

In re: People State of Illinois, respondent, v. Lazaro Zapata, petitioner.  
Leave to appeal, Appellate Court, First District.  
125030

The Supreme Court today DENIED the Petition for Leave to Appeal in the above entitled cause.

The mandate of this Court will issue to the Appellate Court on 10/30/2019.

Very truly yours,

*Carolyn Taft Gosboll*

Clerk of the Supreme Court



## SUPREME COURT OF ILLINOIS

SUPREME COURT BUILDING  
200 East Capitol Avenue  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62701-1721

CAROLYN TAFT GROSBOLL  
Clerk of the Court  
(217) 782-2035  
TDD: (217) 524-8132

July 08, 2019

FIRST DISTRICT OFFICE  
160 North LaSalle Street, 20th Floor  
Chicago, IL 60601-3103  
(312) 793-1332  
TDD: (312) 793-6185

Lazaro Zapata  
Reg. No. R31426  
Menard Correctional Center  
P.O. Box 1000  
Menard, IL 62259

In re: People v. Zapata  
125030

Dear Lazaro Zapata:

This office has timely filed your Petition for Leave to Appeal, styled as set forth above. You are being permitted to proceed as a poor person.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carolyn Taft Grosboll".

Clerk of the Supreme Court

cc: Attorney General of Illinois - Criminal Division  
State's Attorney Cook County

Appendix D

1 STATE OF ILLINOIS )  
2 ) SS:  
3 COUNTY OF COOK )  
4

4 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
5 COUNTY DEPARTMENT-CRIMINAL DIVISION  
6

6 THE PEOPLE OF THE )  
7 STATE OF ILLINOIS, )  
8 Plaintiff, )  
9 vs. ) CASE NO: 11 CR 10477-01  
10 LAZARO ZAPATA, )  
11 Defendant. )  
12

13 REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS had in the  
14 above-entitled cause on the 30th day of SEPTEMBER, 2014,  
15 before the HONORABLE THOMAS GAINER, Judge of said court.  
16

17 A P P E A R A N C E S:  
18 HONORABLE: KIMBERLY M. FOXX,  
19 State's Attorney of Cook County by;  
20 MR. SHITAL THAKKAR,  
21 Asst. State's Attorney,  
22 On behalf of the People of Illinois;

23 MR. MATT McQUAID,  
24 PRIVATE COUNSEL,  
ATTORNEY AT LAW,  
On behalf of the Defendant.

JAMIE MITCHELL  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER #084-003450  
CIRCUIT COURT OF COOK COUNTY

1 THE CLERK: Zapata.

2 THE COURT: Mr. Zapata is present before the Court.

3 Lawyers, identify themselves, please.

4 MR. McQUAID: Matt McQuaid on behalf of Lazaro Zapata.

5 MR. THAKKAR: Shital Thakkar on behalf of Lorraine  
6 Lynott.

7 THE COURT: Record should reflect that the lawyers came  
8 to me yesterday and explained that there was a witness for the  
9 defense that was missing -- not missing, but unavailable for  
10 this week. So, I told the lawyers that I would call off the  
11 jury and we would reschedule the jury trial to a time when the  
12 witness would be available. Is that correct, Mr. Thakkar?

13 MR. THAKKAR: Yes.

14 THE COURT: Mr. McQuaid.

15 MR. McQUAID: Yes.

16 THE COURT: So, today you're asking leave to file a  
17 motion in limine, is that correct?

18 MR. McQUAID: Yes, sir.

19 THE COURT: And you've been given a copy of the motion?

20 MR. McQUAID: Yes, Judge.

21 THE COURT: Are you prepared to argue the motion today?

22 MR. McQUAID: Yes, Judge.

23 THE COURT: I just received it.

24 MR. McQUAID: Yes.

1 THE COURT: All right.

2 MR. THAKKAR: Your Honor, may I clarify one thing.

3 Mr. McQuaid -- we've had a lot of open communication. When  
4 the unavailability of the witness first became apparent, we  
5 had discussed, you know, a possible stipulation. But, I mean,  
6 ultimately, that maybe the defense's evidence, but I did  
7 indicate, at that time, that we had this motion that we would  
8 be filing, mainly point No 1, which would be the one that's  
9 the most contentious portion. So, I did give him a heads up  
10 of the written portion. It wasn't filed until today.

11 THE COURT: The only reason I asked him if he was  
12 prepared to proceed, was because if he wasn't, I was going to  
13 give him a week to get up to speed. But, since he says he is,  
14 I take him at his word. He's a fine lawyer. I need some  
15 context. I need to know more about what's going on here.  
16 Just reading paragraph one, doesn't do it for me, if you know  
17 what I mean.

18 MR. THAKKAR: Sure, because precluding the defense's  
19 evidence. I would -- I feel more comfortable letting  
20 Mr. McQuaid maybe inform the Court as to what they propose and  
21 then I could respond.

22 THE COURT: Could I see the file, please, Sharice? It's  
23 just a two-count -- I'm sorry, three-count indictment alleging  
24 first degree murder of Raul Medina, knowing and intentional

1 strong probability of death or great bodily harm and  
2 possession of a stolen motor vehicle owned by Medina, correct?

3 MR. McQUAID: Yes.

4 THE COURT: Okay. Why don't you give me some context  
5 here.

6 MR. McQUAID: Your Honor, my client is charged with  
7 running over Raul Medina with the intent to commit first  
8 degree murder. That allegedly happened on June 2nd, 2011.  
9 We've raised an affirmative defense of self defense in this  
10 case. When the car hit Raul Medina, that's not where the case  
11 begins and ends. The defense's position is this began way  
12 into the late evening hours of June 1st. The incident between  
13 Raul Medina or Raul Medina's ex-wife, who lived upstairs from  
14 the defendant and his girlfriend, Ms. Ayala.

15 It's our contention, your Honor, that due to some  
16 type of a dispute, Ms. Medina felt that her t.v. was stolen by  
17 the defendant or his friends. They beat up Irene Ayala, took  
18 her in their car and took her on a ride out to Naperville and  
19 basically letting the defendant know they had his girlfriend,  
20 and until he returned the property, they were going to keep  
21 her. That's how it began.

22 So, there's evidence, your Honor, from Irene Ayala  
23 and Delilah Medina and from the defendant who will testify in  
24 this case because we have raised self defense, that that, in

1 fact, did occur. That was the beginning of this particular  
2 case. It's a steady flow, your Honor, until the defendant is  
3 alleged to have run over Raul Medina on the 2nd of June. The  
4 defendant is alleging that he was defending himself and others  
5 when he was in the car and drove the car.

6 Detective -- after defendant was informed that Irene  
7 Ayala had been taken by Delilah Medina, he called the police.  
8 The police came to the location where they lived. All these  
9 people lived in the same building, three-flat building on  
10 Kedzie -- near Kedzie, near where this happened. The police  
11 came out, several police officers, including a lieutenant.  
12 The defendant will testify that he did call the police. The  
13 police came to investigate. Ultimately, your Honor, they  
14 didn't do anything. They didn't believe him. They didn't  
15 believe what he was telling them. They didn't believe that  
16 Irene Ayala was kidnapped. There is an indication that there  
17 was a conversation overheard between the lieutenant and Irene  
18 Ayala. We dispute that was Irene Ayala on the phone; however,  
19 we want to call the lieutenant to corroborate that defendant's  
20 testimony that he did call; that he was seeking assistance for  
21 this kidnapping, that the police did respond. We want to call  
22 the lieutenant and ask him questions if he did respond, what  
23 he did, what information that he -- did he attempt to get  
24 information, not anything specific as to content. I'm not

1 necessarily looking to get into that, your Honor. But, I  
2 think in order to corroborate the defendant's version of what  
3 happened, we should be allowed to call this witness to that  
4 fact that this did occur. It's in the report. We know it  
5 happened. We know that he indicated that he did respond to  
6 the defendant's location in response to a call. What did he  
7 say? What became of that? And then after the police left,  
8 the case continues, the evidence continues, the witnesses  
9 would testify to what happened after that, including the  
10 defendant up until the point where the car hits Raul Medina.

11 I think it's an essential part of our defense. We  
12 should be allowed to put on our defense from the beginning of  
13 the case. Your Honor, we should be allowed to present our  
14 version of what happened, what his mental state was, at this  
15 time. This is an essential part of including all the evidence  
16 that would be gotten from witness' testimony indicating how  
17 this begin and how it ended up. I think that's fair, and I  
18 think that's what we're asking to do in this case.

19 THE COURT: So, are you asking to use the words that  
20 Ayala is alleged to have said, "I'm here on my own free will.  
21 I'm not coming home"?

22 MR. MCQUAID: No, not necessarily. I'm not looking to  
23 get to the content. I want to call this witness -- I think --

24 THE COURT: You want to call him, this lieutenant, the

1 guy that's not available, to testify to the fact that he  
2 responded to a call that was placed by your client to the 911  
3 center at your client's home and he had a conversation with  
4 your client without going into the contents of the  
5 conversation and what he did thereafter?

6 MR. McQUAID: Basically what he did in response to what  
7 he said. I think that it helps prove my case. It  
8 corroborates what my client says.

9 THE COURT: Your client is going to testify to having  
10 called the police and informed the police -- your client is  
11 going to testify to having called the police and saying the  
12 girlfriend has been kidnapped and the police respond to the  
13 home. What you want this lieutenant for is to corroborate  
14 they actually went to the home and looked for Irene Ayala in  
15 the home and didn't find her, and that's the --

16 MR. McQUAID: That's it.

17 THE COURT: No statements?

18 MR. McQUAID: No, Judge.

19 MR. THAKKAR: Our objection is two-fold. First is on  
20 relevance, and here's why, your Honor. We dispute that there  
21 was ever a kidnapping in the first place. Secondly, the  
22 reason why it's irrelevant is because when the police showed  
23 up, this happened hours before, hours before this incident  
24 happened. There was a physical altercation on scene. This is

1 the murder scene. Hours later, there is a physical  
2 altercation between this defendant at least two of his friends  
3 and the victim. So, it's three on one. Once the victim,  
4 although it seems like he was handling himself pretty well,  
5 once he realizes it's three on one, he starts walking away,  
6 walking away from the incident, at which point, this defendant  
7 got into a -- the victim's vehicle with Irene Ayala, and one  
8 of these other individuals, and was leaving. There was  
9 something that was said by the victim. This defendant then  
10 proceeded to make a u-turn and goes after the victim, rides a  
11 fence until he hits the victim and smashes him against the  
12 pole.

13 Now, I don't know what the defense is going to  
14 testify to, but at least from the discovery that we have as  
15 far as the statements to the police, that's all uncontested.  
16 So, that's why I'm saying that this previous incident is in  
17 essence a jury nullification area because the defense wants to  
18 say -- essentially, it's what the defendant indicated to the  
19 police, that this guy was a menace to society and I had to  
20 take care of him because in the future, he was going to keep  
21 bothering us. That's not a legal defense. So, that's why our  
22 first objection is relevance. Whether or not this incident  
23 occurred early, whether or not he called the police, is  
24 actually irrelevant to his u-turn to him riding a fence and

1 smashing this gentleman who is unarmed against the pole. It's  
2 there to distract the jury from the legal -- the relevant  
3 legal issues here, which is essentially what happened right  
4 there.

5 Our second objection is hearsay. The defense has  
6 indicated that it's to corroborate what the defendant is going  
7 to testify to. It's improper bolstering of what he's going to  
8 testify to. There has to be some context as to how they got  
9 there. He could certainly testify about that. Now, if your  
10 Honor does decide to allow this in, then we believe that that  
11 quoted information is then admissible although the defense --  
12 of course they don't want -- they don't want that information  
13 coming in, that's why they're not seeking to have testimony  
14 come in. They don't want the information coming in that the  
15 woman on the phone said "I'm here on my own free will".  
16 Excuse my language "you're an asshole, and I'm not coming  
17 home".

18 I did indicate to Mr. McQuaid -- I forgot to include  
19 the secondary part that we ask that that entire factual  
20 analysis scenario be precluded. I apologize, I didn't put  
21 that in the written portion. But, that's essentially our  
22 entire objection to point No 1.

23 THE COURT: So, how did your client learn that someone  
24 had been kidnapped?

1 MR. McQUAID: They called him.

2 THE COURT: Who's they.

3 MR. McQUAID: Raul Medina and Delilah, but Delilah  
4 called.

5 THE COURT: Delilah who?

6 MR. McQUAID: They lived upstairs. Delilah and Raul are  
7 together. They're ex-wife and ex-husband who are still  
8 friends and they were together in her apartment, at that time.

9 THE COURT: So, your theory is that this goes to his  
10 state of mind at the time?

11 MR. McQUAID: From the defendant's point of view, she was  
12 not being allowed to get out of the car. He was asking her to  
13 get out of the car and they weren't doing that. There's  
14 confrontation. The confrontation moves from that location to  
15 another location.

16 THE COURT: She's beaten?

17 MR. McQUAID: Yes. Now, they're going to say my client  
18 did the beating first. Again, they're going to say she is in  
19 their voluntarily. She had to be there because she was safe  
20 with them. They are the ones that did it. That's our point  
21 of view. It is our defense that they did it. So, it's a  
22 conflict how she got in the condition that she was in at the  
23 time when the fight essentially between the defendant and the  
24 people that the State indicates are the victims.

1                   THE COURT: How do you explain the statement "I'm here of  
2 my own free will. You're an asshole. I'm not coming home".

3                   MR. McQUAID: My explanation for the statement is that,  
4 at some point, Kelliani (phonetic sp) gets on the phone and  
5 he's indicating that it's Irene. We dispute that it was Irene  
6 that made the call. If the State wants to put it in, Judge, I  
7 -- for purposes of calling my witness and pulling him on the  
8 stand, I have no intention of putting that on in direct  
9 examination. Your Honor can make a ruling whether it's  
10 relevant or not. I'm willing to deal with it. It's part --  
11 it's just part of what happened.

12                  THE COURT: What's your guy do? Does he give them the  
13 phone and say "here, dial this number"?

14                  MR. McQUAID: We're saying it's Delilah. I just dispute  
15 who said it.

16                  THE COURT: All right. Anything more that you want to  
17 say. It's your motion?

18                  MR. THAKKAR: Very briefly. That further explains --  
19 creates almost a trial within a trial. We have secondary  
20 issues of who actually made that statement, which really again  
21 putting in context of what happened hours later, it's  
22 absolutely nothing to do with the u-turn he makes to smash the  
23 guy up against the fence.

24                  THE COURT: Well, here's how I will rule. I believe that

1 the defendant's state of mind a couple hours before the  
2 incident is relevant. So, I believe that the defense ought to  
3 be able to call this detective to explain that he went there  
4 in response to a call of a kidnapping of Irene Ayala and they  
5 searched the premise for Irene and didn't find her. I believe  
6 that you ought to be able to cross examine this witness to the  
7 extent that you can establish that they did not take this as a  
8 serious matter. I believe that you could use the content of  
9 what was said. But, I think since it has an impact on his  
10 state of mind at the time he encountered the defendant, I'm  
11 thinking that Mr. McQuaid ought to be able to call the  
12 detective.

13 MR. THAKKAR: Yes.

14 THE COURT: I'll take you at your word that your client  
15 is going to testify.

16 MR. McQUAID: I'm not calling him prior to my client  
17 testifying.

18 THE COURT: I understand that. But, I was about to say I  
19 take you at your word that your client is going to testify. I  
20 take it that this lieutenant will testify after your client  
21 testifies.

22 MR. McQUAID: Yes.

23 DEFENDANT ZAPATA: Thank you, your Honor.

24 MR. THAKKAR: We are looking for October 20th.

1 THE COURT: I like to start picking in the morning. What  
2 time would you be here?

3 MR. THAKKAR: 11:00.

4 THE COURT: I would typically send the deputy to get the  
5 jury at 10:45 and start picking before lunch. Ms. Ayala, the  
6 subpoena that we served on you is in full effect until October  
7 20th, 2014 at 9:30 in the morning. Do you understand your  
8 subpoena is in full force and affect. I will expect you to be  
9 here on that date and time. Do you understand?

10 MS. AYALA: Yes.

11 THE COURT: Okay. Thank you.

12 (Which were all the  
13 proceedings had on this day.)