"Davis' father described his son as having a close relationship with the victim. The entire Davis family viewed her as a friend. She often visited the family home. He saw his son as subject to drug- and alcohol-abuse problems, but was unable to help him overcome them. He could not explain why his son would kill someone who had been so kind to him and had done so many nice things for him and his family. Friends and family were unable to explain the murder. A religious counselor cited Davis' repeated expressions of sorrow for the crime.

"The State countered with expert testimony to the effect that his complex actions and his sophisticated "goal-seeking" allayed any possibility of any sufficient degree of intoxication. The prosecution also presented Dr. Robert L. Sadoff, who concluded that defendant had "cognitive or intellectual awareness of what was going on about him and acted “with goal oriented behavior." He found emotional difficulties but no mental disease. The State rebutted some of the mitigating circumstances through other factual testimony.

Steven Davis was arrested in New Jersey, where he kept the trailer he was purchasing from the victim. When police arrived at the trailer, Davis was armed and about to enter his automobile. Davis was allegedly on his way to kill his friend, who informed Davis earlier via telephone that he had reported him to the police.