

Trailside Murders

Local



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✓ Trailside killer created 'fantasy world,'

By FELIX GUTIERREZ

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Convicted "Trailside Slayer" David Carpenter created a "fantasy world" to compensate for his feeling of inadequacy, a San Francisco clinical psychologist testified today in the penalty phase of Carpenter's murder trial.

"It's as if he is the supermale, the person who is competent," said Dr. William Pierce. "He's telling himself he is not this wimp, this sissy, this stuttering person."

Pierce took the stand after Superior Court Judge Dion Morrow denied a prosecution motion to have a prosecution-appointed psychiatrist examine Carpenter.

"It seems we're entitled to examine this defendant," said Santa Cruz District At-

torney Arthur Danner, referring to the extensive psychological evidence introduced by defense attorneys in recent weeks of the trial.

But Morrow, outside the presence of jurors, rejected the request. He indicated testimony from defense experts about Carpenter's troubled childhood appeared insufficient to create a direct link to two slayings for which Carpenter was convicted.

In open court, Danner asked Pierce how Carpenter's fantasy world influenced his behavior at the time of the crimes.

Because of his mental state, Carpenter was "unable to control strong emotions," Pierce said. "It certainly influenced his behavior in the crimes he has been convicted of."

Carpenter was convicted July 6 of two

counts of first-degree murder in the killing of Heather Scaggs and Ellen Marie Hansen, both 20, in separate attacks in Santa Cruz County state parks during 1981.

He also was convicted of raping Scaggs and attempting to rape Hansen and attempting to murder her boyfriend, Stephen Haertle, then 20.

The penalty phase jury heard testimony during the trial and now must decide whether Carpenter will be sent to the gas chamber or sentenced to life imprisonment without possibility of parole.

Carpenter has been charged, but not yet tried, for five 1980 murders in Marin County, just north of San Francisco. As in Santa Cruz County, the bodies of the victims were found along mountain hiking trails in 1980.

The murders were dubbed the Trailside

Slayings by the media and the Santa Cruz charges were tried in Los Angeles because of pretrial publicity on the case in Northern California.

Other witnesses in the penalty phase have described Carpenter as an emotionally and physically abused youth whose intellectual and emotional development was stifled by a severe stuttering problem.

"There was a pervasive atmosphere on the part of his parents that they were ashamed of him as a human being," Michael Healy, a psychologist called by the defense testified earlier.

He said that pictures taken of Carpenter as a boy show "an extreme frightened look on his face." The stuttering problem was a symptom of the anxiety and stress Carpenter felt, Healy said.