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Stupidest Crimes in ISU History

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Stupidest Crimes in ISU History

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compiled by *ethos* staff

Stupidest crimes in isu history



Kenny Pratt

After tossing back a few too many brewskies one December day in 1996, ISU star basketball player Kenny Pratt hopped behind the wheel (even though he had a suspended license at the time) and collided with another car. The incident wouldn't even have made this list if it had ended there, though. After the cops showed up, Pratt allegedly harassed them, then kicked one officer in the head, knocking his tooth loose.

But the real fun started when Pratt was taken back to the Ames Police Department. A video monitor caught Pratt swearing and spitting at an officer. After the tape was released to the press, the *Iowa State Daily* printed the transcript in its entirety. We don't know what's funnier — that Pratt actually said these things, or that the *Daily* printed them on the front page. What follows are a few choice excerpts from Pratt's conversation. (We at **ethos** have never been ones to shy away from using

as many gratuitous swear words as we can muster. But this transcript singed even our seasoned ears. Asterisks have been added for your protection.)

Officer: You want to talk to someone?

Pratt: Why don't you get me out of here? Take these motherf*cking handcuffs off and put me in the ring with your punk ass then since you so tough, you bitch. F*ck you, too! You want some? F*ck you. You know who I am? F*ck you, you blind-ass nerd. Yeah, I called you a nerd, bitch.

[*More epithets...*]

Pratt: You take these handcuffs off me, man —

Officer: That's fine; that's fine.

Pratt: — because I'm not going to be motherf*cking cooperative —

Officer: That's fine.

Pratt: — like you motherf*cking want me to be.

Officer: That's fine. You just sit there for a while.

Pratt: ... You're a pussy. You let me out, you laugh so motherf*cking much.

You take your motherf*cking badge off and your gun off now and see how tough your punk ass is now. What the f*ck, you try to grab me like I'm a ho? Man, f*ck you all, man. F*ck you all.

[*Pratt later spits at an officer.*]

Pratt: F*ck you. F*ck you, pussy-ass bitch, trying to sound like I'm drunk. F*ck you all, man, can't believe this shit, telling me I'm drunk, man. F*ck you all, man. I'm as cold as a motherf*cker in a flip-flop, and you telling me I'm drunk. You pussy-ass sh*t. You old crack-ass bitch.

Further investigation revealed that the hotshot forward was already on probation for disorderly conduct stemming from a similar situation that had happened only a month earlier. Pratt had cussed and shouted at police, calling them 'pigs' when they tried to remove him from a bar, according to *Daily* reports.

Head basketball coach Tim Floyd obviously took the situation very seriously. Pratt was suspended for one game. — *Bethany Kohoutek*



Rusty Sills

Lots of people have collections. Sports cards, dolls, shot glasses, bells, porcelain figures, rocks. Rusty Sills collected shoes — women's shoes. Unfortunately for Rusty, one person's collecting is another person's theft.

In March of 1999, terror gripped ISU's Schilleter Village apartments as pair after pair of women's shoes disappeared. Police eventually discovered Sills was behind the terror. Turns out he would drive up from Des Moines to steal shoes. Sills claimed he had a foot fetish, and when officials searched his home, they found 185 pairs of women's shoes and 37 single shoes. They also found more than 100 homemade tapes showing women's feet. Sills was charged with two counts of 5th degree theft in connection with the Schilleter Village cases. He was sentenced to five days in jail.

stupidest crimes

Sills didn't wait long to begin expanding his collection again. In August of 1999, he was charged with two counts of burglary and one count of theft after a series of apartment break-ins in West Des Moines. Sills was working as an apartment building maintenance man and used master or duplicate keys to enter women's apartments. Sills would then steal shoes, as well as undergarments and magazines. West Des Moines police confiscated more than 500 pairs of women's shoes from his apartment. Sills was sentenced to a ten-year jail term and was released earlier this year after serving two years and nine months.

Sills was previously convicted of burglary in Polk County in 1980 and 1983, after a series of incidents involving women's shoes. — *Dustin Kass*

Sam Mack

Another fine ISU athlete, the basketball team's starting forward Sam Mack, ran into trouble in the spring of 1989 when he and Levin White, a defensive back for the football team, attempted to rob Burger King.

Mack and White entered BK just before 11 p.m., announced that a robbery was occurring, and herded employees into a walk-in freezer. One employee, however, was able to slip out the drive-thru window and run to the Ames police station.

So when Mack and White were leaving the restaurant with their haul, they were greeted by the police and ordered to drop their weapons. White pointed his .22-caliber rifle towards officers, while Mack, carrying a knife, attempted to dash back inside. Both men were shot and injured by Ames PD.

Botched robberies happen all the time, so why does this make the list? Well, even if an employee had not alerted the police, Mack and White would not have been able to enjoy their combo meals for long. During the course of the robbery, Mack stood right beside an Iowa State Men's Basketball poster with

his picture on it. Employees knew they were being robbed by the ISU basketball player, Sam Mack. — *D.K.*

The Deases brothers

So you hate your roommate's girlfriend. She's always over at your place. You fight with her all the time. You just can't take it anymore. What's the most logical thing to do? You got it. Choke her to death, then decapitate her. Stuff the body in a box, and throw the head out your car window. At least that's what brothers Ruben, 17, and Edward, 21, Deases thought. (Read carefully. This story's got more kinks than Pam and Tommy Lee.)

It was summer, 1989. After a particularly heated argument in their Sheldon Avenue apartment with Jennifer Gardner, who was the girlfriend of their roommate and brother Eustaquio Deases, the two murdered her. (Eustaquio, 22, a pre-business student at Iowa State, was out of town at the time.) They tried to cram her body in a cardboard box, but it wouldn't quite fit, so they chopped off her head to make room. One of the brothers reportedly had sex with the corpse. Later that night, they tried to sink the box in a nearby pond, where, unbeknownst to them, an off-duty police officer just happened to be stargazing. The head they threw into a ditch two miles south of Ames.

A few days later a jogger found the head. Soon after the police officer remembered the suspicious splash, connected it to the crime and led investigator's to the woman's body.

Sound like the plot of a B-grade suspense flick? It gets better.

At the time of the killing, big brother Eustaquio was wanted for selling cocaine in Ames. A few months later, he turned himself in, but while he was out on bail, he got busted in Kansas for speeding. What did they find in his car? More cocaine.

Both Ruben and Edward are serving



life sentences without parole. Another brother, Johnny, who was 15 at the time, was the prosecution's star witness in both of his brothers' trials. Turns out his brothers had done away with Gardner right in front of him. — *B.K.*

Travis Spivey

Travis Spivey might have made this list just for the time in December 1998 when he was charged with public intoxication and assault when a boozed-up Spivey, a heralded transfer point guard who was sitting out the year to comply with eligibility transfer rules, yelled at and punched a Hardees employee in the chin.

Not bad, Travis. Not bad at all.

Unfortunately for him, and fortunately for those of us who enjoy a good when-



Joseph Viles

His name: Joseph Viles. His crime: neglecting animals. Often. He's been charged over 30 times in the last seven years, in fact. The catch: He's a zoology professor. The stupidest part: He was charged most recently after he left two of his Alaskan malamute dogs chained together in his 1987 Dodge Colt Vista. In the parking lot of the Story County Courthouse in Nevada. On an 85-degree July day. While he was busy inside, taking care of charges he had incurred earlier for hitting another of his dogs, Sweetheart. "I never hit the dog," Viles testified during his trial. "I

forced the puppy to submit and, of course, she screamed." In 1999, Viles was barred from keeping animals at his home. In 2002, he was barred from owning or handling animals in the state of Iowa.

— Sara Tennessen

John Shields

One February evening in 1998, three friends were working in the computer lab at Durham Center when they noticed a student sitting in front of them looking at a Web site titled "Amputees and Midgets" and, from what they could tell, fondling himself.

"... he clicked on a picture, and both hands went under his desk and started to move back and forth rapidly," one of the students later reported. Another of the students reported it to a DPS officer, who couldn't do anything about it because he hadn't actually seen the guy in action. So the friends left Durham and forgot about it.

Until a week later. The same three buddies were in the computer lab when the Mystery Masturbator appeared again. This time, one of the three first called DPS, then sent an email to a reporter at the *Daily* who was covering the incident. The *Daily* printed portions of the email in its next-day story. The student wrote, "...he's in here again!! He's about 6 [foot]. (I saw him walk in), long sideburns and a goatee. I know it's him because he's got the same ball cap on, and he's gone straight to the porno pages and 'pulling it' as I write."

This time DPS questioned the student, who was identified as John Shields, a freshman in liberal arts and sciences. Shields told officers that he was not, in fact, spanking his monkey. Instead, he claimed, he was innocently looking for the *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit issue online when he became the victim of all those naughty grown-up Web sites. You know, the ones that just pop up and you can't seem to get off your screen? DPS charged him with indecent exposure. — B.K.

DeAngelo X

DeAngelo Moore, or DeAngelo X as he is known, first allegedly threatened his history professor Christie Pope in 1993 with a jihad. The then-freshman was temporarily removed from the class.

In October, X and his 23-year old wife Cassandra Renee Moore stole more than \$900,000 worth of cashier's checks from Firststar Bank of Ames, where the couple worked as janitors.

They then went to a Waterloo bank and tried to open a business account with checks totaling \$523,557. Bank said No way, so the Moores bought a \$29,000 Chevy Blazer from a Waterloo car dealer, using forged money orders. X was brought into custody the next day. In 1996, he was sentenced to seven and a half years in prison, followed by three years supervised release and a special assessment of \$150. — Paul Kix

athletes-go-wild story every now and again, the following year Mr. Spivey managed to trump his earlier run-in with the fry boy.

Flash one month ahead to January, 1999. Now Coach Larry Eustachy is giving this kid, this good, kindhearted kid a second chance. A second chance at becoming a man. A second chance to become the next great floor general at Iowa State.

Then, in a plot twist Stevie Wonder could have seen coming, Travis Spivey was again swayed to the dark side, accused of raping two underage female runaways from an Ames shelter in his duplex. Oh, Travis. Guess we hardly knew ya.

This time, the athletic department was less than thrilled and axed him from the team. Spivey pled guilty to statutory rape and was later sentenced to five years probation for having sex with one of the girls. He never played a game with the Cyclones, instead being granted another chance, a third chance, at the basketball mecca that is... Utah. — Tim Paluch

Matthew Bergman

Here was the plan: Matthew Bergman, a freshman in pre-architecture in 1997, would have his friend attack a girl Bergman wanted to impress. Then, Bergman — da, dada DAAAH — would appear on the scene, struggle with his buddy, and return the chick to safety.

Problem was, his buddy shot Bergman in the shoulder. Bergman said getting shot was never a part of the plan. The buddy — Timothy Hedden, who went to UNI at the time — said it was. They were sentenced to two years probation and fined \$750. In addition, both guys were required to pay for any counseling the chick, Julie Rens, then a junior in architecture, received. — P.K.

Ziyi Dai

This was the opening line from the *Des Moines Register* story last February: “A former Iowa State University student who was jailed in December for allegedly attacking his wife with a knife on campus is accused of planning to kill her from jail.” Ziyi Dai, claimed his plan to kill his wife from jail to be a fabrication. Regardless, in September of 2002 attempted murder charges inside and outside the slammer were combined, and Dai was sentenced to 15 years in prison. — P.K.

Katie Robb

Most current students are familiar with the twisted tale of Katie Robb. In August of 2001, Robb, then a sophomore at Iowa State, said she was kidnapped at gunpoint and sexually assaulted by four black males. Days later, Robb admitted that she had made up everything.

According to Robb, she was approached by a man brandishing a

handgun and ordered to go with him. She was then forced into a car where three other men were waiting. Robb said the four men took her to a wooded area, sexually assaulted her, and then released her.

Department of Public Safety officials soon saw through Robb’s story, though. Allegedly, the abduction had taken place at around 11 a.m. at the bus stop in front of Gilman Hall. At 11 a.m. on any weekday, there are only a couple hundred students within a 50-foot radius of that bus stop. Surprisingly, though, no one could remember seeing a man waving a handgun.

In addition to the outrage that a false sexual assault charge would be levied, the identification of the assailants as four black males angered many. Thanks to the report’s general description, which named the four assailants as “black males, one over 6 feet tall, the others about 6 feet tall,” nearly every black male on campus fell onto the list of suspects.

In January of 2002, Robb was sentenced to 18 months probation, psychiatric evaluation and 100 hours of community service for filing a false report. At that time, Robb was a student at Drake University, but her current whereabouts are unknown. — D.K.

Nick Johnson

He said it himself: “I just made a stupid mistake.”

That was Nick Johnson’s apology to Iowa State officials after he was given a \$37,000 fine, five-year probation, 200 hours of unpaid community service and a bill for the court costs.

In the fall of 2000, the senior in management information systems lopped off the head of the middle toddler in Christian Petersen’s “Ring of Life” sculpture, in the Mackay Hall entryway. Five days later, a janitor found the head, which had been broken into in six pieces, in a trash can.

Johnson turned himself in after reading accounts of his crime in the newspaper.

His Theta Xi fraternity brother, Quincy Jones, was also charged with felony criminal mischief and theft.

Theta Xi has had a history of statue mishaps. Although no charges were filed, the fraternity has been held responsible for the theft of two other statues from homes in Ames and Hamilton County in 1998.

The head has had many adventures of its own. It has been stolen four times in the last six decades — so often that the university moved the original sculpture inside and put a \$40,000 replica in the original position in 1991. — S.T.



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