

SUMMARY STATEMENT

State of Idaho v. Melissa Heiner

Docket No. 44575

Melissa Heiner, aka Olin was charged with felony possession of methamphetamine. At trial, Heiner's defense was that she did not have knowledge that methamphetamine was in her purse. Defense counsel requested the district court provide a jury instruction with language from Idaho Code § 18-201(1), which explained a person is incapable of committing a crime if the person committed the act under ignorance or mistake of fact which disproves any criminal intent. The district court declined to give the requested instruction.

The jury found Heiner guilty of possession of methamphetamine. Heiner filed a motion to set aside the verdict and a motion for a new trial, which the district court denied. Heiner appealed from her judgment of conviction and argued the district court erred when it denied Heiner's request to instruct the jury on I.C. § 18-201(1). Heiner also argued the district court erred when it denied her motion for a new trial.

The Court of Appeals determined the given jury instructions adequately covered the subject of I.C. § 18-201(1), and thus, the district court did not err in declining to give Heiner's requested jury instruction. Additionally, because Heiner's motion for a new trial was based exclusively on the denial of Heiner's requested I.C. § 18-201(1) instruction, and since the district court did not err when it denied Heiner's requested jury instruction, the district court did not abuse its discretion when it denied Heiner's motion for a new trial. The Court of Appeals affirmed the district court's judgment of conviction.