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Massachusetts family faces teen's killer at parole hearing for first time since his 1994 conviction

Richard Baldwin was convicted of murdering Beth Brodie

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Emily Maher ✉

Reporter

GROVELAND, Mass. — Thirty years after the brutal beating death of a Massachusetts teenager, her killer argued Thursday that he should be allowed out of prison during an emotional hearing.

Richard Baldwin was convicted in 1994 of murdering Beth Brodie, a 15-year-old cheerleader from Groveland.



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Baldwin was 16 when prosecutors say he lured Brodie to a friend's house, then beat her to death with a metal baseball bat because she rejected his advances. Attendees were heard crying during Thursday's hearing, while the now-48-year-old killer described the night of the murder.

"I do remember thinking in my head, 'She must be in pain.' And the last time I swung that bat was with the idea of ending whatever pain she was suffering from," Baldwin said.

Baldwin says he had taken Xanax and drank alcohol before the murder.

When asked by the board on Thursday, Baldwin said he viewed his actions as a mercy killing. The board also considered a series of violent incidents involving Baldwin during his time in prison, including a conviction for trying to strangle and beat another inmate.

Baldwin was sentenced to life in prison without parole, but in 2013, the state's highest court ruled that mandatory life sentences for juveniles were unconstitutional.

The decision allows Baldwin to appeal his life conviction periodically.

Both Baldwin and Brodie's family had the chance to make their case Thursday afternoon, although it could be weeks or months before the board rules on the matter.

"In 31 years since my crime, I have not been able to forgive myself," Baldwin told the parole board. "I am profoundly sorry for what I did to Beth and her family.



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Brodie's family has spent the last 11 years actively fighting to keep Baldwin behind bars.

"This was premeditated, first-degree murder," said Sean Aylward, the victim's brother. "He had a plan, and he saw it through."

"The state had given us justice in 1994 when they sentenced him," Aylward said. "When they changed the law for juveniles, they broke their promise."

The last time Baldwin filed for parole back in 2019, he withdrew his appeal at the last minute.



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