

282 exhibit List of wrongful convictions in the United States

This **list of wrongful convictions in the United States** includes people who have been legally exonerated, including people whose convictions have been overturned or vacated, and who have not been retried because the charges were dismissed by the states. It also includes some historic cases of people who have not been formally exonerated (by a formal process such as has existed in the United States since the mid 20th century) but who historians believe are factually innocent. Generally, this means that research by historians has revealed original conditions of bias or extrajudicial actions that related to their convictions and/or executions.

Crime descriptions marked with an asterisk indicate that the events were later determined not to be criminal acts. People who were wrongfully accused are sometimes never released.

By February 2020, a total of 2,551 exonerations were mentioned in the [National Registry of Exonerations](#). The total time these exonerated people spent in prison adds up to 22,540 years. Detailed data from 1989 regarding every known exoneration in the United States is listed. Data prior to 1989, however, is limited.^[1] By 2020, twenty individuals had been exonerated while on [death row](#) due to DNA evidence.^[2]

Before 1900^[edit]

Date of crime	Defendants	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Nov 12, 1805	Dominic Daley and James Halligan	Murder	Wilbraham, Massachusetts ^[3]	Death	Executed	Yes
		In November 1805, the body of a young farmer, Marcus Lyon, was found on the open road near the town of Wilbraham , Massachusetts. Irish immigrants Dominic Daley and James Halligan were traveling in the area, heading for New Haven , Connecticut, when they were arrested for the murder on November 12, 1805. Their captor received a reward of \$500. They had a lengthy confinement, and were not granted defense attorneys until 48 hours before their trial. Once the trial began, they were convicted within minutes. One of the defense attorneys said that the evidence was so flimsy it was obvious their conviction was based on outright bigotry. They were executed the next day. On St. Patrick's				

Date of crime	Defendants	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Day 1984, Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts issued a proclamation exonerating Daley and Halligan. ^[4]				
Dec 31, 1843	John Gordon	Murder	Knightsville, Rhode Island	Death	Executed	Yes
		In 1845 Gordon was the last person executed by Rhode Island . His conviction and execution have been ascribed by researchers to anti- Roman Catholic and anti-Irish immigrant bias. ^[5] He was convicted for the murder of Amasa Sprague , a Cranston textile factory owner. The court justices, who included Justice Job Durfee , were involved in all three trials as both trial judges and the court of final appeal. ^[6] Durfee "told the jurors to give greater weight to Yankee witnesses than Irish witnesses." ^[5] Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee pardoned Gordon on June 29, 2011. ^[7]				
1855	Chief Leschi	Murder	Olympia, Washington Territory	Death by hanging	Executed	No ^[8]
		Leschi was a Nisqually chief when the United States government attempted to relocate the tribe to reservations. Leschi protested the move, claiming the reservation designated for the Nisqually was a rocky piece of high ground unsuited to growing food and cut off from access to the river that provided salmon, the mainstay of their livelihood. ^[9] Leschi traveled to the territorial capital at Olympia to protest the terms of the treaty. He became war chief, in command of around 300 men, and led a small number of raids. Early in the conflict, Territorial militiamen Abram Benton Moses and Joseph Miles (or Miller) were killed. ^[10] Leschi maintained his innocence. He was convicted and executed. In 2004, he was posthumously exonerated by a historical court of inquiry but this decision was not legally binding. ^[8]				
1863	Chipita Rodriguez	Murder	San Patricio, Texas	Death by hanging	Executed	Yes
		Rodriguez was convicted of murdering John Savage with an axe and executed. She was posthumously exonerated in 1985. ^[11]				

Date of crime	Defendants	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
May 5, 1872	William Jackson Marion	Murder*	Liberty, Nebraska	Death by hanging	Executed	Yes
		Marion was convicted of killing John Cameron, who left with him to work on the railroad in 1872. In 1891, four years after Marion's execution by hanging, Cameron turned up alive, explaining that he had vanished by his own volition. He had spent twenty years traveling across Mexico, Alaska, and Colorado. On March 25, 1987, Marion was pardoned posthumously by the State of Nebraska on the 100th anniversary of his hanging. ^[12]				
May 4, 1886	Oscar Neebe , August Spies , and Albert Parsons	Haymarket affair	Chicago, Illinois	15 years	7 years (Neebe), Executed (Spies and Parsons)	Yes
		Neebe was not present at the Haymarket Square on the day of the bombing, and stated that he was not aware it had happened until he was told about it the following day. He was arrested because of his association with the defendants. At trial, the evidence against Neebe was particularly weak, mostly based on his political views, his having attended socialist meetings, being associated with the newspaper, <i>Arbeiter-Zeitung</i> , and the fact that a shotgun, a pistol and red flag were found in his home. On June 26, 1893, Illinois Governor John Peter Altgeld pardoned Neebe and two of his co-defendants, having concluded that they were innocent. ^[13]				
1887	Charles Hudspeth	Murder of George Watkins*	Marion County, Arkansas	Death by hanging	Executed	
		Hudspeth and George Watkins's wife Rebecca were arrested. After lengthy interrogation, Rebecca allegedly made a statement accusing Hudspeth of murdering Watkins to get him out of the way so they could be married. Based on Rebecca's testimony, Hudspeth was convicted and sentenced to death. He was hanged at Harrison , Arkansas, on December				

Date of crime	Defendants	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		30, 1892. In 1893, Hudspeth's lawyer located the alleged victim, George Watkins, alive and well in Kansas .				
Aug 9, 1894	George Washington Davis	Sabotage of Locomotive 213	Lincoln, Nebraska		10 years	Yes
		Davis was convicted of causing the 1894 Rock Island railroad wreck , which killed eleven of thirty-three people on a passenger train traveling from Fairbury , Nebraska, to Lincoln . Some survivors claimed to have seen him holding a lantern at the site of the crash; however, there was no evidence that Davis had anything to do with the incident. In 1905, Davis was paroled by Nebraska governor John Mickey , citing "grave doubts" as to his involvement in the crash. ^{[14][15][16]}				
1896	Jack Davis	Murder	Silver City, Idaho	Death by hanging	6 years	Yes
		Davis was convicted of the Deep Creek murders of Daniel Cummings and John Wilson. He was later pardoned following confessions by James Bower and Jeff Gray. ^{[17][18][19]}				

1900S^{[\[edit\]](#)}

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
1900	Caleb Powers	Murder of William Goebel	Frankfort, Kentucky		8 years	Yes
		Powers was convicted of complicity in the assassination of Governor William Goebel in 1900. ^{[20]} The				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>prosecution charged that Powers was the mastermind, having a political opponent killed so that his boss, Governor William S. Taylor, could stay in office. He was sentenced to prison. An appeals court overturned Powers' conviction, though Powers was tried three more times, resulting in two convictions and a hung jury. Governor Augustus E. Willson pardoned Powers in 1908. Powers had served eight years in prison. While in prison, Powers wrote a memoir, <i>My Own Story</i> (1905).</p>				
Feb 11, 1906	Ed Johnson	Rape of Nevada Taylor	Chattanooga, Tennessee	Hanging	Lynched prior to execution	Yes
		<p>Ed Johnson, a black man, was convicted in Chattanooga, TN of the rape of Nevada Taylor, a white woman, and sentenced to death. Taylor's initial description of her assailant was very vague. She told police she did not get a good look at him, and was unsure if he was black or white. After the reward was increased to \$375, another man in town told police he saw Johnson at the scene. Taylor subsequently identified Johnson as her rapist. Johnson was beaten by sheriff Joseph Shipp to extract a confession, but maintained his innocence. On March 3, 1906, Johnson appealed the conviction, alleging that his constitutional rights had been violated. Specifically, he said that all blacks had been excluded from the jury considering his case, and that he should have been granted a change of venue, and a continuance. He was granted a stay of execution and an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.</p> <p>When Sheriff Shipp learned of the court's decision, he moved most prisoners to other floors of the jail and sent home all but one deputy. Johnson was pulled from his cell by a mob of white men and hanged at the Walnut Street Bridge. Following the lynching, Shipp publicly blamed the Supreme Court's interference with local courts for Johnson's death.</p> <p>The Supreme Court charged Shipp, his chief jailer, and several members of the lynch mob with contempt of court on the basis that Sheriff Shipp, with full knowledge of the court's ruling, willfully ignored his duties to protect a prisoner in his care and allowed Johnson to be lynched. United States v. Shipp is the only criminal trial of the Supreme Court in its entire history. It is considered an important decision in that it affirmed the right of the US Supreme Court to intervene in state criminal cases.</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Shipp and several of his co-defendants were convicted and sentenced to terms from 2–3 months in federal prison. ^[21]				

1910S[[edit](#)]

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
1912	Bill Wilson	Murder*	Blount County, Alabama	Life in prison	6 years	Yes
		Wilson was convicted of murdering his wife, Jenny Willson, and their 19-month-old daughter. Bones presented by the prosecution in court were later discovered to be those of at least four or five people and likely of indigenous ethnicity. Wilson received a formal pardon from the Alabama governor after his wife and daughter were discovered to be living in Vincennes, Indiana .				
1913	Thomas and Meeks Griffin	Murder	Chester County, South Carolina	Death	Executed	Yes
		The Griffins were prominent black farmers in Chester County, South Carolina , believed to be the wealthiest blacks in the area. They were convicted and executed via the electric chair in 1915 for the murder in 1913 of 74-year-old John Q. Lewis. The Griffin brothers were convicted based on the accusations of another black man, John "Monk" Stevenson, who was known to be a small-time thief. Stevenson, who was found in possession of the victim's pistol, was sentenced to life in prison in exchange for testifying against the brothers. Two other African Americans, Nelson Brice and John Crosby, were executed with the brothers for the same crime. Some in the community believed that Lewis may have been murdered because of his suspected consensual sexual relationship with 22-year-old Anna Davis, a black married woman. Davis and her husband were never				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>tried for the murder of Lewis, possibly for fear of a "mixed race relationship" scandal.</p> <p>Over 100 people petitioned Gov. Richard Manning to commute the brothers' sentence. The signatories included prominent white people, including Blackstock's mayor, a sheriff, two trial jurors, and the grand jury foreman. But the governor allowed the brothers to be executed.^[22]</p> <p>In October 2009, the governor of South Carolina pardoned Thomas and Meeks Griffin. Their great-nephew Tom Joyner had achieved the pardons after investigating the case and presenting evidence to the state of the injustice, after learning about his relatives' executions.^[23]</p>				
1913	Leo Frank	Murder	Marietta, Georgia	Death, later commuted	2 years; killed by lynch mob	Yes
		<p>Frank was a factory superintendent who was convicted in 1913 of the murder of 13-year-old Mary Phagan, a female employee. Originally sentenced to death, he was the subject of protests against an unjust trial. After the Georgia governor commuted Frank's sentence to life in prison, the young businessman was taken from prison and lynched by a local white group who had secretly organized his abduction. In the late 20th century, Frank was posthumously pardoned by the state.</p>				
1916	Thomas Mooney	Preparedness Day Bombing	San Francisco, California	Death	22 years	Yes
		<p>After being convicted and imprisoned for a 1916 bombing in San Francisco, Mooney appealed his case. He filed a writ of habeas corpus that was heard by the United States Supreme Court in 1937. Although he presented evidence that his conviction was obtained through the use of perjured testimony and that the prosecution had suppressed favorable evidence, his writ was denied because he had not first filed a writ in state court. His case was important for helping to establish that a conviction based upon false evidence violates due process. Mooney was pardoned in 1939 by Governor Culbert Olson.</p>				

1920s^[edit]

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
1920	Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti	Murders of Alessandro Berardelli and Frederick Parmenter during an armed robbery	Braintree, Massachusetts	Death	Executed	Yes ^[24]
		<p>In 1977, as the 50th anniversary of the executions approached, Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis asked the Office of the Governor's Legal Counsel to report on "whether there are substantial grounds for believing—at least in the light of the legal standards of today—that Sacco and Vanzetti were unfairly convicted and executed" and to recommend appropriate action.^[25] The resulting "Report to the Governor in the Matter of Sacco and Vanzetti" detailed grounds for doubting that the trial was conducted fairly in the first instance, and argued as well that such doubts were reinforced by "later-discovered or later-disclosed evidence."^[26] The report questioned prejudicial cross-examination that the trial judge allowed, the judge's hostility, the fragmentary nature of the evidence, and eyewitness testimony that came to light after the trial. It found the judge's charge to the jury troubling because it emphasized the defendants' behavior at the time of their arrest and highlighted certain physical evidence that was later called into question.^[27]</p> <p>The report dismissed the argument that the trial had been subject to judicial review, noting, "the system for reviewing murder cases at the time ... failed to provide the safeguards now present."^[28] Based on recommendations of the Office of Legal Counsel, Dukakis declared August 23, 1977, the 50th anniversary of their execution, as Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti Memorial Day.^[29] His proclamation, issued in English and Italian, stated that Sacco and Vanzetti had been unfairly tried and convicted, and that "any disgrace should be forever removed from their names."^{[30][31][32][33][34]}</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Oct 3, 1930	Alexander McClay Williams	Murder	Delaware County, Pennsylvania	Death by electrocution	Executed	Yes
		Williams, a 16-year-old black teenager, confessed to the murder and attempted rape of Vida Robare, a white matron at his reform school. At his racially-charged trial, he protested that he only confessed because he was promised that his confession would help him to avoid the death penalty. He was executed on June 8, 1931, becoming the youngest person ever executed by the state of Pennsylvania. In 2015, his attorney's great-grandson, Samuel Lemon, spearheaded efforts to renew interest in Williams's case. In 2022, following a posthumous review of Williams's case, his conviction was overturned, and all charges against him were dismissed, effectively exonerating him.				
Mar 24, 1931	Scottsboro Boys	Rape	Paint Rock, Alabama	Varied, 8 were sentenced to death	Varied	Yes
		Following an altercation with a group of white teens, nine black teenagers were accused of rape by two women, Ruby Bates and Victoria Price. The Scottsboro case is considered a landmark case, prohibiting racial discrimination in the jury selection process, as no blacks were allowed to be considered to serve on the jury before which the teenagers would be tried.				
Dec 9, 1932	Joseph Majczek and Theodore Marcinkiewicz	Murder	Chicago, Illinois	99 years (both)	11 years	Yes
		Majczek and Marcinkiewicz were arrested and convicted of the murder of 57-year-old Chicago police officer William D. Lundy ^[35] on December 9, 1932. ^[36] Initially, officials held 10 youths in custody on suspicion of killing the officer. ^[37] Some 11½ years later in 1944, following the intervention of Chicago Times reporters John McPhaul ^[38] and James McGuire, both men were exonerated of the crime. ^[39] The real killers have never been identified.				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Aug 26, 1936	Joe Arridy	Murder	Pueblo, Colorado	Death by gas chamber	Executed	Yes
		Arridy was convicted and executed for the 1936 killing of 15-year-old Dorothy Drain with a hatchet. In 2011, Gov. Bill Ritter posthumously pardoned Arridy. Ritter said an overwhelming amount of evidence suggests Arridy did not commit the crime and was likely not in Pueblo at the time of the crime. ^[40]				

1940S^[edit]

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Mar 23, 1944	George Stinney	Murder	Alcolu, South Carolina	Death by electrocution	Executed	Yes
		Stinney was convicted of the first-degree murder of two pre-teen white girls: Betty June Binnicker, age 11, and Mary Emma Thames, age 8. No physical evidence existed in the case, and the sole evidence against Stinney was the circumstantial fact that the girls had spoken with Stinney and his sister shortly before their murder. Three police officers claimed that Stinney had confessed to the murders, though Stinney claimed that the officers starved him into confessing. At age 14, he was the second youngest person to be sentenced to death and executed in the United States, behind Hannah Ocuish . ^[41] On December 17, 2014, Stinney's conviction was vacated by circuit court judge Carmen Mullen, effectively clearing his name. ^[42]				
April 30, 1944	Lena Baker	Murder	Cuthbert, Georgia	Death by electrocution	Executed	Yes
		Baker, a black woman, was convicted of first-degree murder in the killing of Ernest B. Knight, her white employer. Baker contended that				

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		<p>she killed Knight in self-defense; locals to Cuthbert and Randolph County, Georgia, confirmed that Knight would hold Baker as a "slave woman" in his gristmill and physically and sexually abuse her.^[43] Baker claimed that on the night of the murder, Knight threatened to kill her with an iron bar, after which they fought over his pistol and he was shot dead. She was convicted by an all-white, all-male jury on August 14, 1944, executed by electric chair on March 5, 1945, and buried in an unmarked grave behind her church. In 1998, locals raised money for a proper headstone for Baker, generating renewed interest in her case; Cuthbert locals, alongside Baker's surviving relatives, then began campaigning to have her conviction posthumously overturned. In 2005, the Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles granted Baker a full and unconditional pardon.^{[44][45]}</p>				
July 16, 1949	Groveland Four	Rape and Assault	Lake County, Florida	Varied	Varied	Yes
		<p>The Groveland Four (Ernest Thomas, Charles Greenlee, Samuel Shepherd, and Walter Irvin) were falsely accused of raping 17-year-old Norma Padgett and assaulting her husband on July 16, 1949, in Lake County, Florida. Thomas fled and was killed on July 26, 1949, by a sheriff's posse of 1,000 white men. Greenlee, Shepherd and Irvin were arrested and beaten to coerce confessions. The three survivors were convicted at trial by an all-white jury. Greenlee was sentenced to life because he was only 16; the other two were sentenced to death. In 1949, the Florida NAACP organized a campaign against the wrongful conviction and in 1951, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the convictions and remanded the case to the lower court for a new trial. In November 1951, Sheriff Willis V. McCall of Lake County, Florida shot Irvin and Shepherd while they were in his custody and claimed they had tried to escape while being transported for the new trial. Shepherd died on the spot; Irvin survived and told Federal Bureau of Investigation investigators that McCall had shot them in cold blood and that his deputy had also shot him in an attempt to kill him. At the second trial, Irvin was represented by Thurgood Marshall and again convicted by an all-white jury and sentenced to death. In 1955, his death sentence was commuted to life in prison by recently elected Governor LeRoy Collins. He was paroled in 1968 and died the next year. Greenlee was paroled in 1962 and lived with his family until he died in 2012. On November 22, 2021, Judge Heidi Davis granted the state's motion to posthumously exonerate the men.</p>				

1950S[[edit](#)]

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Jun 3, 1957	Jack McCullough	Murder of Maria Ridulph	Sycamore, Illinois	5 years in prison	1 year	Yes
After investigation of a cold case, in 2012 Jack McCullogh was exonerated of murder, as it was decided his prosecution had been based on hearsay evidence and exculpatory evidence, FBI files proving he was nowhere near the scene at the time, were excluded by the prosecution from evidence. ^[46]						

1960S[[edit](#)]

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Jun 3, 1961	Clarence Earl Gideon	Breaking and entering, petty theft	Panama City, Florida	5 years	2 years	Yes
Gideon had been denied an attorney at the time of his first trial. At the time, the state of Florida did not have public defenders in all judicial circuits and the law did not require the court to appoint an attorney to the indigent. After conviction, he handwrote a petition for writ of certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court . The justices considered the matter as Gideon v. Wainwright and ruled unanimously that Gideon's rights had been violated. When he was retried with a defense attorney, it was determined that the primary prosecution witness had committed the crime. The case inspired the book Gideon's Trumpet and a film adaptation by the same name.						
Apr 16, 1963	James Dean Walker	Murder	Little Rock, Arkansas	Death (later life in prison)	12 years (originally) , 6 years (following	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
					escape and recapture)	
		<p>After getting into a bar fight, police shot Walker five times, during which Officer Jerrell Vaughan was killed. Despite Walker's gun not having been fired, he was convicted of murder. He spend several years in prison before escaping during a furlough, remaining free for four years in Nevada. Although he fought extradition back to Arkansas due to its poor prison conditions, he was sent back. In 1985 he was exonerated by evidence showing he did not fire at the officer, and he returned to Lake Tahoe before eventually moving to Boise, Idaho.^[47]</p>				
Feb 21, 1965	Muhammad Aziz and Khalil Islam	Assassination of Malcolm X	Manhattan, New York	Life in prison	55 years	Yes
		<p>Aziz and Islam were convicted of the murder of Malcolm X based on mistaken witness ID and official misconduct, despite Thomas Hagan, one of Malcolm X's actual killers, testifying that Aziz and Islam had nothing to do with the murder.^{[48][49][50]}</p>				
Jun 17, 1966	Rubin Carter	Murder	Paterson, New Jersey	Life in prison	19 years	No
		<p>Carter was a professional boxer who was twice convicted of the murders of James Oliver, Fred Nauyoks, and Hazel Tanis, along with his friend and fellow defendant John Artis. Carter's second conviction was overturned in 1985. Carter inspired the 1975 Bob Dylan song "Hurricane", and the film The Hurricane (1999) was based on his case.</p>				
Oct 25, 1967	James Joseph Richardson	Murder	Arcadia, Florida	Death	21 years	Yes
		<p>James Richardson was convicted of poisoning his seven children with pesticides and received the death penalty.^[51] Authorities believe that it is likely that a neighbor, Bessie Reece, committed the murders. After she</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		developed Alzheimer's disease , she confessed more than 100 times to the murders of these children to her caregivers at the nursing home. ^{[51][52]} At the time of the crime, Reece was on parole after being convicted of the poisoning death of her late husband. ^[52] Reece was not investigated thoroughly at the time, although she was the last known person to see the children alive, and the last to feed them. She had at first denied going into their apartment. ^{[51][52]}				

1970S^[edit]

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
1971	Richard Phillips	Murder	Detroit, Michigan	Life without parole	45.7 years	Yes
		<p>Richard Phillips was 25 years old when he was imprisoned for a fatal shooting in Detroit in 1971—a case prosecutors now say was "based entirely" on false testimony from one witness. He was sentenced to life without parole. He was released in 2017 and exonerated in 2018 after the University of Michigan's innocence project took up his case, declaring him the longest-serving innocent man in the United States.^[53] although his record has since been broken.^[54]</p> <p>In prison Phillips taught himself to paint watercolors. He painted custom greeting cards for other inmates to send to their families, and used the proceeds to buy more art supplies. Phillips painted and saved hundreds of original watercolors, now on display in his gallery. As the gallery describes, "He painted to stave off the loneliness. He painted to break up the monotony. He painted to fill the long days. He painted to keep his heart soft and hope alive."^[55]</p>				
1972	Anthony Mazza	Murder	Boston, Massachusetts	Life without parole	47.3 years	Yes
		A Massachusetts jury found Mazza guilty of first-degree murder and robbery based on his answers often contradicting his statements to police				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		and to the grand jury due to Mazza having a developmental disability and that he was functionally illiterate and had been in special-education classes for most of his time in school which was not revealed to the jury at his trial. He is now the longest-serving innocent man in the United States. ^{[56][57][54][58]}				
1972	Wilbert Jones	Sexual assault	Baton Rouge, Louisiana	Life in prison	44.7 years	Yes
		A Louisiana jury found Jones guilty of aggravated rape based solely on the victim's testimony. The victim expressed some uncertainty about her identification of Jones in a lineup, e.g., "[the victim] described her attacker variously as 5 feet 8 inches tall, 5 five feet 9 inches tall, and 6 feet 3 inches tall. She said he had a single gap between his front teeth and a smooth, soft voice. ... [After identifying Jones as the perpetrator] she expressed concern because Jones's voice was "rougher" than her attacker's, and because Jones was only 5 feet 3 inches tall" The prosecution did not tell the defense about a serial rapist who had been arrested recently and fit the victim's [in Wilbert Jones' case] description. Louisiana incarcerated Jones for nearly 45 years before Innocence Project New Orleans helped him petition for a new trial. A district judge vacated Jones' conviction and ordered a new trial. The prosecution appealed to the Louisiana Supreme Court, but the state's highest court rejected the appeal. The prosecution dismissed the charges on October 11, 2018. Jones' nearly 45 years in prison was the second longest time spent incarcerated after a known wrongful conviction in U.S. history at the time. ^[59]				
June 3, 1973	Chol Soo Lee	Murder	San Francisco, California	Life in prison	9.8 years	Yes
		Lee was convicted of the shooting death of Chinatown gang leader Yip Yee Tak and sentenced to life in prison. While behind bars, Lee was also convicted of killing Morrison Needham in a prison yard, which he claimed was self-defence. In 1982 Lee was retried and acquitted of Tak's murder and Lee's death sentence was nullified. He was released on March 28, 1983. He was not given an apology nor compensation from the state.				
1974	Gregory Bright	Murder	New Orleans, Louisiana	Life in prison	27.5 years	
		Bright was convicted of second-degree murder in 1974 at the age of 20. ^[60] After several years of appeals , Bright was granted a new trial in 2001 on the grounds that the prosecution had withheld evidence from the defense in his previous trial. On June 24, 2003, after 27½ years in prison for a crime they did not commit, Bright and Earl Truvia were both released after the Orleans Parish district attorney dismissed all charges.				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Bright speaks around the country about his wrongful incarceration and life since prison. In 2010, Bright joined Innocence Project New Orleans as Assistant Education and Outreach Director. ^[61]				
Feb 3, 1974	Delbert Tibbs	Rape, murder	Fort Myers, Florida	Death	3 years	No
		Teenager Cynthia Nadeau was raped and her boyfriend, Terry Milroy, was murdered by a man who picked them up while hitchhiking . Despite an alibi, Tibbs was convicted on the basis of a false eyewitness identification and an alleged confession to a fellow inmate. ^[62] In 2011, Tibbs was instrumental in the decision of Governor Pat Quinn to repeal the death penalty in Illinois. ^{[63][64][65]}				
May 15, 1974	Michael Lloyd Self	Murder	Galveston, Texas	Life in prison	Life (died in prison)	No
		Teenagers Rhonda Johnson and Sharon Shaw disappeared while at a beach in Galveston, Texas, on August 4, 1971; their remains were found in a marsh in January 1972. Though Michael Lloyd Self, a local sex offender , wrote a confession, he contended that police officers forced him to do so at gunpoint. Self was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1975. In 1976, two of the officers who took his confession were arrested for numerous bank robberies and sentenced to 30–50 years. In 1998, Edward Harold Bell, a convicted serial killer , admitted to the murders of Johnson and Shaw, though no direct connection could be made. Self died in prison in 2000 of cancer. Numerous investigators, a Galveston police officer, and a former Harris County prosecutor all protested Self's conviction. ^[66]				
Mar 29, 1975	David Bryant	Murder	Bronx, New York	25 years to life	40 years, 9 months	Yes
		In March 1975 8-year old Karen Smith was found dead in a stairwell of her apartment building. Previously charged twice for sexual misconduct, David Bryant was taken in as a suspect the same day and was convicted to serve 25 years to life a year later in October 1976. Bryant was briefly released in 2013 but was taken back to prison in 2014, until finally being released in 2018 and having his charges dismissed in 2019. ^[67]				
Sep 6–Oct 21, 1975	Ledura Watkins	Murder	Detroit and Highl and Park, Michigan	Life without parole	41 years, 3 months	Yes
		^[68]				
1975	Ricky Jackson, Ronnie Bridgeman,	Murder	Cleveland, Ohio	Death	Varied	Yes
		Jackson and both the Bridgeman brothers were convicted and sentenced to death for the killing of Harold Franks, a money order salesman, based on the evidence of a 12-year-old boy, Eddie Vernon, who claimed to have seen them attack Franks. There were no other witnesses nor evidence				

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	and Wiley Bridgeman	linking the accused to the crime. In a signed affidavit in 2014, Vernon recanted, saying he had been coerced by the police. Jackson had escaped the death sentence because of a paperwork error. The sentences of the Bridgemans had been commuted to life. Jackson and Wiley Bridgeman were held in prison longer than any other persons who had been exonerated. Ronnie Bridgeman had been paroled after serving 28 years. ^[69] All three men received compensation and settlements from the state for their wrongful convictions and imprisonment.				
May 2, 1976	Clifford Williams Jr.	Murder, attempted murder	Jacksonville, Florida	Death	42 years, 7 months	Yes
		^[70]				
Jul 1976	Charles Ray Finch	Murder	Wilson, North Carolina	Death	42 years, 11 months	Yes
		^[71]				
Jul 1976	Lewis Fogle	Rape, murder	Indiana County, Pennsylvania	Life without parole	34 years	No
		Fogle was convicted in 1982 of raping and killing 15-year-old Deann Katherine Long, who had died in 1976. DNA tests on the semen in the girl's body proved he was not the rapist. In August 2015, a senior judge vacated his conviction. The local district attorney joined in the motion to vacate his conviction, and Fogle was released. ^[72]				
Nov 27, 1976	Randall Dale Adams	Murder	Dallas, Texas	Death	12 years	No
		Adams was convicted of killing Dallas police officer Robert W. Wood. In 1988, the film The Thin Blue Line , which was based on the case, was released. Public outcry over the film prompted officials to re-examine the case. Adams was released in 1989. ^[73]				
1977	Dewey Bozella	Murder	Poughkeepsie, New York	20 years to life	26 years	No
		Bozella was accused of killing 92-year-old Emma Kapser. He was convicted on the basis of testimony from two jailhouse informants. DNA testing was not available because evidence from the crime had been destroyed post-conviction. ^[74] Bozella's first conviction was overturned because the prosecutor removed all African Americans from the jury. He was tried again in December 1990. At the second trial, one witness recanted his prior statements, but Bozella was convicted a second time. The other witness later recanted. In addition, the defense later learned that the prosecution failed to turn over exculpatory evidence to the defense, including a fingerprint recovered from the scene that was linked to a felon. In 2009, Bozella's conviction was overturned and all charges were dropped. ^[75]				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Mar 14, 1977	Brian Baldwin	Murder	Monroe County, Alabama	Death	Executed	No
		Naomi Rolin was a white girl of 16 who was raped and murdered. Ed Horsely confessed to the murder, which he said he alone had committed, and was executed. But the police charged Baldwin with the murder based on his confession, which Baldwin said was extracted under beatings and an electric cattle prod . No forensic evidence connected Baldwin with the crime. The murder was committed by a left-handed person whereas Baldwin was right-handed. ^[76] All evidence was lost or destroyed after the execution.				
Jul 9, 1977	Gary Dotson	Rape	Chicago, Illinois	25–50 years	6 years (approximately)	Yes
		Sixteen-year-old Cathleen Crowell Webb made up a rape allegation to explain her pregnancy concerns to her foster parents after having had consensual sex with her boyfriend the previous day. After a religious conversion, Webb confessed to her pastor that she had wrongly accused Dotson and began efforts to get him released. The prosecution refused to take any action, so they went to the media. The resulting public sympathy led the authorities to review the case. Eventually Dotson was cleared via DNA testing and released.				
May 11, 1978	The Ford Heights Four : Verneal Jimerson, Dennis Williams, Kenneth Adams, and Willie Rainge	Rape, murder	Ford Heights, Illinois	Death (Jimerson, Williams), 75 years (Adams), life (Rainge)	18 years (Williams, Adams, Rainge), 11 years (Jimerson)	Yes
		The Ford Heights Four were convicted of the rape of Carol Schmal and murder of Schmal and Lawrence Lionberg based on false forensic testimony, coercion of a prosecution witness, perjury by another witness who had an incentive to lie, and prosecution and police misconduct. Witness and DNA evidence uncovered in an investigation by three journalism students at Northwestern University cleared the Ford Heights Four and led to the arrest and conviction of the real killers. ^[77]				
May 11, 1978	Paula Gray	Rape, murder, perjury	Ford Heights, Illinois	50 years	9 years	Yes
		Paula Gray was an additional suspect in the Ford Heights Four case. Gray, an intellectually-disabled teenager, was interrogated for two days before confessing to her involvement in the crime. However, Gray soon recanted her confession, stating that she had been drugged and coached				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		by the police. Upon her recantation, Gray was charged with rape and murder and with perjury. She was ultimately found guilty and sentenced to 50 years in prison. In 1982, after two of the Ford Heights Four won new trials, prosecutors offered to release Gray in exchange for her testimony against the two men. Gray accepted the offer and was released in 1987. Following the exoneration of the Ford Heights Four, Gray's conviction was overturned, and in 2002, the Governor issued her a pardon. ^[78]				
Aug 31, 1978	Joseph Sledge	Murder	Elizabethtown, North Carolina	Two consecutive life sentences	36 years	Yes
		Sledge escaped from prison during a four-year sentence for misdemeanor larceny and was recaptured days later. During this time, Josephine and Aileen Davis were killed in their home in Elizabethtown, North Carolina. Sledge was convicted of murdering the two women based on the testimony of two inmates who claimed that Sledge had admitted to the crime while in prison the next year. One of the informants later recanted his testimony, saying that he had lied due to police coercion and a reward of early parole and \$3,000 prize money. The other informant received similar special treatment. Mitochondrial DNA testing of hairs found at the crime scene believed to be from the killer did not match Sledge, and he was declared innocent in January 2015. He had served more than 36 years for the crime. ^[79]				
Aug 31, 1978	Bobby Joe Maxwell	Murder	Los Angeles, California	Life without parole	39 years	Yes
		Maxwell was falsely believed to be the Skid Row Stabber , and was convicted of two stabbings. ^[80]				
Nov 11, 1978	Craig Coley	Murder	Simi Valley, California	Life without parole	39 years	Yes
		Coley was convicted of the murder of 24-year-old Rhonda Wicht and her 4-year-old son Donald Wicht in 1978. DNA tests not available at the time of his trial later showed Coley could not have done the murders, and DNA from others was present. Police officers testified that the original investigating officer had mishandled the investigation. Coley was pardoned in 2017 after serving 39 years. ^[81]				
Nov 23, 1979	Cornelius Dupree	Aggravated robbery	Dallas, Texas	75 years	30 years	Yes
		Dupree was convicted of aggravated robbery on the basis of eyewitness identification after allegedly robbing and raping a 26-year-old woman				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
May 21, 1980	Kenneth Waters	Murder	Ayer, Massachusetts	Life in Prison	18 years	Yes
		Kenneth Waters was convicted on May 11, 1983 for the 1980 murder of Katherina Reitz Brow and was sentenced to life in prison until he was exonerated, with the help of his sister Betty Anne, on March 15, 2001 when DNA test results proved he was not the perpetrator. Waters died in an accident six months later on September 19, 2001. His case became the subject of a 2010 film titled Conviction . ^[87]				
Oct 12, 1980	Steve Titus	Rape	Seattle, Washington	N/A	N/A	Yes
		Titus was convicted of the 1980 rape of Nancy Von Roper, a hitchhiking teenager. Seattle Times reporter Paul Henderson began investigating the case after a similar rape was committed a few months after Titus's conviction. His investigation of the case led to Titus's conviction being overturned, and the charges were dropped before he was sentenced. Henderson won the Pulitzer Prize for his articles on the case. Titus lost his job as a result of the case and died of a heart attack in 1985, shortly before being awarded compensation.				
Aug 23, 1980	Clarence Brandley	Murder	Conroe, Texas	Death	9 years	No
		Brandley was working as a janitor at Conroe High School ^[88] when 16-year-old Ferguson was raped and murdered in the loft above the auditorium following a volleyball game. A foreign blood sample was found on Ferguson's shirt that did not match either Ferguson's or Brandley's blood type . Following conviction, Brandley's defense team discovered that several pieces of exculpatory evidence were not disclosed by the prosecution. Semen had been found at the scene, but was destroyed without being tested. A Caucasian pubic hair was found on the body; Brandley is African American. Also missing were photographs taken of Brandley on the day of the				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		crime showing that he was not wearing the belt that the prosecution claimed had been the murder weapon. The prosecution received statements implicating two other men in the crime, but failed to disclose them. One of the janitors went to police following Brandley's arrest. He told police he saw another janitor leading the victim up the stairs. He alleged that he was threatened with arrest if he didn't implicate Brandley at trial.				
1980s	At least 36 people	Child sexual abuse	Kern County, California	Varied	Varied	Some
		<p>The Kern County child abuse cases are a notable example of day-care sex-abuse hysteria of the 1980s.^[89] The cases involved claims that a pedophile sex ring performed Satanic ritual abuse; as many as 60 young children testified they had been abused. At least 36 people were convicted and most of them spent years imprisoned. 34 convictions were overturned on appeal. Two convicts died in prison.^{[90][91][92]} A documentary titled Witch Hunt was produced and released in 2007. MSNBC also did a documentary on John Stoll and the Kern County cases. In 2009, John Stoll sued Kern County and was awarded \$5 million in compensation.^[93]</p> <p>Prior to the start of the Kern County child abuse cases, several local social workers had attended a training seminar that foregrounded satanic ritual abuse as a major element in child sexual abuse, and had used the now-debunked memoir Michelle Remembers as training material.^[94]</p>				
1980s	Cathy Woods	Murder	Reno, Nevada	Life without parole	35 years	Yes
		^[95]				
Dec 21, 1980	Claus von Bülow	Attempted murder	Newport, Rhode Island	30 years	3 years	No
		Claus von Bülow was convicted of attempted murder of his wife, Sunny von Bülow , on the theory that he injected his wife with insulin , sending her into a coma. She was comatose for 28 years until her death in 2008. His conviction was overturned and he was retried. His defense team hired a number of world-class experts who argued that Sunny's coma was caused by a combination of oral medications, alcohol, and chronic health				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>conditions. Also entered into evidence was a hospital admission only three weeks prior to her irreversible coma where she ingested at least 73 aspirin tablets. The defense argued that this act demonstrated Sunny's mental state was such that she once again ingested an overdose of drugs. They also argued that the presence of insulin on the tip of the needle found near Sunny suggested that it had been dipped in the insulin, but not injected, as injecting it would've wiped the needle clean. He was acquitted.^[96]</p>				
Summer 1981	Thomas Martin Thompson	Rape, murder	Laguna Beach, California	Death	Executed	No
		<p>Thompson was convicted and executed for the rape and murder of Ginger Fleischli, a crime for which he is widely believed to be innocent.^{[97][98][99]} He was mainly convicted on the evidence of two notorious informants who claimed Thompson had admitted committing the crime in jail. The prosecution did not inform the judge or the defense that they had also charged and later convicted another person of the crime.^[97]</p>				
Sep 7, 1981	Grover Thompson	Stabbing	Mount Vernon, Illinois	40 years	Died in prison in 1996	Yes
		<p>Serial killer Timothy Krajcir broke into the apartment of 72-year-old Ida White and stabbed her in her shower. Thompson, who was sleeping in a post office across the street from White's apartment building, was arrested for the crime; the victim misidentified Krajcir as a black man, as did a man who witnessed the culprit fleeing. Thompson's possession of a pocket knife with a speck of dried blood was used as evidence against him.</p> <p>While confessing to other crimes in return for avoiding the death penalty, Krajcir said he attacked a woman in Mount Vernon and that a "black guy" had been arrested for the crime. Reporter Carly O'Keefe linked the crime to White's stabbing; after work from the Illinois Innocence Project and unsuccessful appeals, Governor Bruce Rauner granted Thompson posthumous executive clemency based on actual innocence.^[100]</p>				
Sep 18, 1981	Raymond Towler	Assault, rape	Cleveland, Ohio	12 years to life, 7–25 years, and 5–25 years	27 years	Yes
		<p>Towler was convicted for the assault of a 12-year-old boy and rape of 11-year-old girl in a wooded area. Towler was exonerated by DNA testing.</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Dec 1981	Gloria Killian	Murder, attempted murder, burglary, robbery, conspiracy	Rosemont, California	32 years to life	20 years	Yes
		<p>In December 1981, Gary Masse and Stephen DeSantis, disguised as telephone repairmen, entered the home of an elderly couple in Rosemont, California, shot both occupants and stole six suitcases of silver. Masse's wife told the police that a woman named Gloria masterminded the robbery, prompting the police to arrest 35-year-old Gloria Killian, a former law student with no criminal record. After a preliminary hearing, the charges against Killian were dismissed. Masse was sentenced to life in prison without parole. However, after striking a deal with the Sacramento Sheriff's Department to reduce his sentence in exchange for testimony against others involved, Masse implicated Killian. Killian was re-arrested, and based solely on Masse's testimony, a jury convicted her of first-degree murder, attempted murder, burglary, robbery and conspiracy and sentenced her to 32-years-to-life in prison. Masse's sentence was reduced to 25 years. Ten years later, defense investigators discovered the deal struck between Masse and prosecutors, including a letter where Masse wrote to the prosecutors, "I lied my ass off for you people." Masse later admitted that his testimony against Killian was false. In March 2002, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed Killian's conviction, and in August 2002, Killian was released. The prosecutor, Christopher Cleland, was admonished by the California State Bar for his conduct in the case.^[101]</p>				
Aug 14, 1981	Arthur Lee Whitfield	Rape	Norfolk, Virginia	63 years	22 years	Yes
		<p>In less than one hour on the night of August 14, 1981, two women in Norfolk, Virginia were raped. Both victims eventually identified Arthur Whitfield as the assailant. In 1982, he was convicted of one of the crimes and pled guilty to the second in order to receive a lighter sentence and have some of the charges dropped. DNA testing in 2004 proved that he was innocent of both crimes. The first victim was accosted as she got out of her car. The assailant threatened her with a knife, stole her money, and ordered her to undress. The perpetrator raped her and left her there. She then drove to a friend's house and reported the rape. At trial, she testified that she had several opportunities to view the perpetrator by the light of a streetlight and a spotlight on a nearby house. At the police station, she picked out seven photographs. One of the pictures was</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>Whitfield's. She subsequently identified him from a live lineup. The second victim was attacked not long after the first. She had exited her car and was accosted, threatened with a knife, and raped. At trial, the defense argued that Whitfield had been misidentified. Both victims described their attacker as having no facial hair, but Whitfield wore a beard at the time. Whitfield's family testified that he was with them the entire evening. The jury convicted and Whitfield was sentenced to 45 years. He pled guilty to the second crime and received 18 years, to run consecutively to the first sentence, a total of 63 years. In October 2003, Whitfield filed prose under the Virginia statute that governs postconviction DNA testing (passed in 2001). It appeared that the evidence had been destroyed. In December 2003, however, the state crime laboratory found pieces of evidence taped inside a notebook of the serologist who had originally tested the evidence. Mary Jane Burton had, against laboratory protocol, saved samples from some of the cases she had worked on. In 2001, evidence located in a similar manner exonerated Marvin Anderson. In 2003, the evidence Burton saved in Julius Ruffin's case was tested and exonerated him. In 2004, the evidence in Whitfield's case was subjected to DNA testing. Whitfield was excluded from the rape kit samples of both victims. The profile obtained from testing indicated that another inmate, already serving life for another sexual assault, was the true perpetrator.^[102]</p>				
Dec 6, 1981	Julius Ruffin	Rape, sodomy, robbery	Norfolk, Virginia	Life	21 years	Yes
		<p>On December 6, 1981, Julius Ruffin was accused of raping, sodomizing, and robbing a woman in her home. The victim looked for a black male and identified Ruffin as her attacker, though the description did not match up. Ruffin is 6'1" (187 cm), with light skin, and two distinguishable gold teeth and facial hair. She identified her attacker as 5'8" (174 cm) with dark skin. On October 1, 1982, he was sentenced to life in prison.^[103] Although the real criminal has been convicted, only one of the 'convicts' has had his name totally cleared. Julius Ruffin received \$1.5 million in compensation and has had his name completely erased from the registered sex offender list and his record has been cleared of the crimes. Aaron Doxie III, the real perpetrator, was convicted for unrelated rapes, and will not be tried for the Virginia rapes because the cases are too cold and much of the evidence has been destroyed.</p>				
1982	Anthony Porter	Murder	Chicago, Illinois	Death	17 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>In 1998, students in a journalism course taught by Northwestern University professor David Protess investigated the murders of Marilyn Green and her fiancé Jerry Hillard as part of a class assignment for the Medill Innocence Project. The students gathered evidence exposing serious flaws in the prosecution. A witness recanted, saying that Chicago police had "threatened, harassed and intimidated" him into accusing Porter. Another student noted that the shot had been fired by a left-handed shooter; Porter was right-handed. Inez Jackson, the estranged wife of Alstory Simon, came forward and said that she had been with Simon when he killed Hilliard in retaliation for "skimming money from drug deals". Four days later, Simon himself confessed to the crime on videotape. Protess and the students came forward with the information. Porter was released. Simon and his wife later recanted.</p> <p>In October 2014, Illinois State's Attorney Anita Alvarez decided to release Simon, stating that David Protess, a former Northwestern University journalism professor whose students initially investigated the murders and private investigator Paul Ciolino had used coercive tactics that were "unacceptable by law enforcement standards". Among the charges that Alvarez made was that Ciolino used an actor to falsely implicate Simon. She also criticized Simon's attorney, Jack Rimland, who represented Simon at the suggestion of Ciolino.^[104]</p>				
1982	Ron Williamson and Dennis Fritz	Murder	Ada, Oklahoma	Death (Williamson), life in prison (Fritz)	11 years	Yes
		<p>Debra Carter was murdered in her apartment following a night out with friends at a local bar. Evidence against the men included expert testimony in hair analysis, which is now regarded as unreliable. Ada resident Glen Gore testified against both Williamson and Fritz that Carter had complained to a friend that Williamson "made her nervous". Gore was later connected to the murder by DNA testing and convicted.^[105] He is serving life without parole.^{[106][107]} The case served as the inspiration for John Grisham's The Innocent Man: Murder and Injustice in a Small Town.</p>				
Jun 1982	Earl Washington Jr.	Murder	Culpeper, Virginia	Death	17 Years	Yes
		<p>Washington was convicted of the murder of Rebecca Lynn Williams solely on the basis of coerced confessions during which he seemed to have little knowledge of the crime, the victim's appearance, or the location of the crime. Washington, a farmworker</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		who has an intellectual disability, was exonerated in 2000 by DNA tests. ^[108]				
Jul 12, 1982	Walter Forbes ^[109]	Murder, arson	Jackson, Michigan	Life in prison	37 years	Yes
		<p>On July 12, 1982, a man died in a fire that was set in Jackson, Michigan. Dennis Hall was killed in an apparent arson at his apartment. Prior to his death, he was involved in an altercation at a bar which was broken up by college student Walter Forbes. The day after the bar fight, Hall shot Forbes requiring a few months to recover. As Hall and Forbes had been involved in two recent altercations, police arrested Forbes for Hall's death. Forbes would be convicted in court for the murder and arson in May 1983 and he was sentenced to life in prison for first degree murder.</p> <p>In 2017, a witness who had claimed she had seen Forbes and two others burn down the apartment recanted her statement. She claimed to a judge in 2020 that she had been threatened to do so by two men from her neighborhood who warned they would harm her and her family if she failed to testify against the three. Of them, only Forbes had been convicted due to discrepancies in her testimony. In addition to other evidence being uncovered, Forbes' conviction was overturned and he was freed in November 2020.</p> <p>It is now believed that the owner of the apartment, David Jones, was behind the arson as part of an insurance fraud scheme. Jones received a significant payout for the arson that damaged the building and killed Hall. Eight years later, Jones would be convicted of a different insurance fraud scheme involving arson where another person died. Two people confessed to conspiracy in that arson and testified against Jones in court.</p>				
Oct 21, 1982	Johnny Briscoe	Rape, robbery	St. Louis, Missouri	45 years	23 years	Yes
		<p>Briscoe was tried for a 1983 rape and robbery. After the rape, the perpetrator smoked a cigarette, leaving the butt behind. While at the crime scene, the victim asked the perpetrator for his name. He told her his name was John Briscoe. Briscoe's photo was shown to the victim. A week later, she picked him out of a lineup in which he was the only one wearing a prison jumpsuit; the other men were wearing civilian clothing. Briscoe was convicted on the basis of a cross-racial eyewitness identification and hair analysis of hairs found at the crime scene, both of which are known to have a high degree of unreliability. In 2004, the cigarette butt was found from the crime scene matching another man named Larry Smith. Prior to the identification of Smith via DNA, Briscoe and Smith were serving time together in the same prison. Briscoe had heard rumors</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		that Smith was the perpetrator and confronted him about it. Smith denied that he was involved. It is unknown why Smith used Briscoe's name during the crime, although he may have done it in order to frame Briscoe. ^[110]				
Aug 1983	Willie Earl Green	Murder	Los Angeles, California	33 years to life	25 years	No
		Denise Walker was killed during a robbery at the home of her boyfriend, Willie Finley. One burglar struck Finley on the head as he was returning from a store, and then brought him into the house where he ordered Walker to let in a second burglar. Walker's mother told police that Willie Green had robbed Denise a year earlier. Finley identified Green in a lineup and he was convicted. Green sought help from Centurion Ministries, a New Jersey -based wrongful conviction advocacy group. In 2004, during their reinvestigation, Finley recanted his testimony. He said that he was high on crack at the time of the attack and that his eyesight had been impaired by the blow to the head. He told investigators that he did not identify Green until police suggested Green as the attacker and told him of the earlier robbery. Based on Finley's recantation, his conviction was vacated in March 2008, and prosecutors decided not to retry him. ^[111]				
Sep 13, 1983	Juan Roberto Melendez-Colon	Murder	Auburndale, Florida	Death	17 years	No
		Melendez had an alibi and was convicted of the murder of Delbert Baker largely on testimony of David Falcon, who had a longstanding grudge against Melendez. Witnesses said Falcon had threatened to kill Melendez at some point prior to Melendez allegedly confessing to him. His appeal was denied three times when defense lawyers discovered a taped confession made by Vernon James. In light of the new evidence, Justice Barbara Fleischer determined that Melendez was entitled to a new trial. The state of Florida declined to prosecute a second time since the key witness at the original trial, David Falcon, was now dead and another witness for the prosecution had since recanted his testimony.				
Nov 1983	John Gordon Purvis	Murder	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	Life in prison	10 years	
		Police received a tip that a man named Robert Wayne Beckett Sr. may have been involved in the murder of Susan Hamwi. Eventually a new set of detectives investigated Beckett, who admitted to				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		the murder for hire on the instruction of Paul Hamwi, her ex-husband. He named Paul Serio as an accomplice. ^[112]				
Nov 1983	Glenn Ford	Murder	Shreveport, Louisiana	Death by electrocution	30 years	Yes
		An all-white jury delivered a guilty verdict in the case of the murder of Isadore Rozeman without any physical evidence directly linking Ford to the crime, with the inexperienced public defenders unable to secure any witnesses. Evidentiary hearings in 2004 and 2005 found the state failed to disclose exculpatory evidence. The state actively suppressed evidence from before the trial that showed two confidential witnesses corroborating Ford's story that he became involved in the crime after the murders, and that another man was in possession of the murder weapon after the crime. In 2013, the state notified Ford's counsel that a confidential informant for the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office stated that another man confessed to the murder. Ford was exonerated and released in 2014. ^[113]				
1983	Mary Ann and Joe Elizondo	Child sexual abuse	Jefferson, Texas	35 years	7–13 years	Yes
		In 1983, 10-year-old Robert Bienvenue and 8-year-old Richard told police that they had been sexually abused by their mother, Mary Ann Elizondo, and stepfather, Joe Elizondo. At the time, the boys were in the custody of their father and only spent weekends with their mother. Both Mary Ann and Joe were arrested and charged with sexual abuse, and in 1984, Joe was sentenced to life in prison, while Mary Ann was sentenced to 35 years in prison. After Mary Ann was released on parole in 1991, she was jailed for another six months for refusing to admit to sexually abusing her sons. All the while, Robert's father told him that Mary Ann simply abandoned him. But on his 17th birthday, Robert discovered a letter from his mother and learned for the first time that she and Joe were in prison, prompting him to reveal to the authorities that his father forced him to falsely accuse his mother of sexual abuse in retaliation for Mary Ann marrying Joe. A court granted Joe a new trial, and in 1997, prosecutors dismissed the case. In 2005, an appeals court vacated Mary Ann's conviction. ^[114]				
1983–1984	Anthony Capozzi	Rape, sodomy, sexual abuse	Buffalo, New York	11–35 years	21 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>Capozzi spent 21 years in prison maintaining his innocence when in 2006, a woman was killed along a bike path in a Buffalo suburb. Investigators noticed similarities to a number of other rapes and murders in the area and believed they were committed by one individual. DNA testing implicated Altemio Sanchez, who would eventually plead guilty to the 2006 murder and two others. At least eight crimes were eventually linked to Sanchez via DNA analysis. During the investigation, a detective noticed that one of Capozzi's alleged victims testified that she saw her rapist driving several days later and she copied down his license plate information. When the police initially investigated the tip, they found the owner of the vehicle, but he had an alibi. He was reinterviewed in 2006 and admitted that he had lent the car to his nephew, Altemio Sanchez, that day.</p> <p>Authorities subpoenaed the hospital where the rape victims were initially treated for evidence from the rape kits. It was believed that the evidence had been lost or destroyed, but eventually it was found and tested, excluding Capozzi and implicating Sanchez.^[115]</p>				
1984	Bernard Baran	Child sexual abuse	Pittsfield, Massachusetts	Three life sentences	21 years	No
		<p>Baran's conviction is cited as an example of the day-care sex-abuse hysteria of the 1980s and 1990s as well as a case of homophobia. The Baran case is the subject of the documentary film Freeing Bernie Baran.</p>				
1984	Alfred Chestnut, Ransom Watkins, and Andrew Stewart Jr.	Murder, robbery, illegal use of a weapon	Baltimore, Maryland	Life in prison	35 years	Yes
		^[116]				
1984	Leroy Orange	Murder	Chicago, Illinois	Death	19 years	Yes
		<p>Leroy Orange was arrested along with his half-brother Leonard Kidd. He was convicted of killing Ricardo Pedro, Michelle Jointer, his ex-girlfriend Renee Coleman, and her 10-year-old son, Tony, on the basis of a confession allegedly obtained through torture methods such as beating, suffocation, and electroshock. He was pardoned in 2006. Kidd's death sentence was commuted to life in prison. He maintains his innocence and contends that his confession was elicited through torture as well.^[117]</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
1984	Kirk Bloodsworth	Murder	Baltimore, Maryland	Death	8 years	Yes
		<p>On July 25, 1984, 9-year-old Dawn Hamilton was found dead in a wooded area. She had been beaten with a rock, sexually assaulted, and strangled. Kirk Bloodsworth was convicted on March 8, 1985, of sexual assault, rape, and first-degree premeditated murder. A Baltimore County judge sentenced Bloodsworth to death. He was exonerated almost nine years later after DNA testing excluded him.^[118] Bloodsworth became the first person in the U.S. exonerated with DNA evidence.^[119] The Innocence Project established the Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA Testing Program, a program that helps states defray the costs of post-conviction DNA testing.^[120]</p>				
1984	Darryl Hunt	Murder	Winston-Salem, North Carolina	Life in prison	19.5 years	
		<p>Hunt was convicted of the murder of Deborah Sykes on the basis of eyewitness testimony. He was later cleared by DNA testing.</p>				
Jan 3, 1984	Thomas Haynesworth	Rape	Richmond, Virginia	84 years	27 years	Yes
		<p>Haynesworth was arrested at the age of 18 in 1984 after a woman identified him as her attacker. He was convicted of a series of violent rapes in Richmond, Virginia, now believed to have been committed by a neighbor who resembled Haynesworth. In 2009, new state laws and procedures allowed for DNA testing, which was not available in the 1980s, and semen collected from the first attack implicated the neighbor.</p> <p>The case, which <i>The Washington Post</i> called "one of the state's most extraordinary legal cases",^[121] utilized DNA testing and new state laws that allowed possibly innocent convicts to present new evidence.</p>				
Sep 23, 1983	Henry McCollum and Leon Brown	Murder, rape	Red Springs, North Carolina	Death (McCollum); death, commuted to life (Brown)	31 years	Yes
		<p>McCollum and Brown were 19 and 15-year-old half-brothers, respectively, when they were arrested for the rape and murder of 11-year-old Sabrina Buie. Both half-brothers had intellectual disabilities, which made them susceptible to manipulation during their police interrogations. Red Springs and Robeson County police and interrogators convinced McCollum and Brown to waive</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>their Miranda rights and sign inconsistent and contradictory confessions that implicated them in the murder, despite the evidence suggesting that Roscoe Artis, a serial rapist and possible serial killer in the area, had committed Buie's murder as he had committed several other similar crimes against at least two other women. In addition, Brown signed his confession in block letters rather than a signature because he was nearly illiterate and could not read his confession. In October 1984, both McCollum and Brown were sentenced to death, with Brown becoming the youngest person on North Carolina's death row. U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia used McCollum's case to justify the existence of the death penalty.^[122]</p> <p>After appealing, both death sentences were overturned in 1988, and the two had retrials in 1991. McCollum was again convicted of rape and murder and re-sentenced to death, while Brown was only convicted of rape and sentenced to life imprisonment. The two remained in prison/on death row for a total of 31 years before DNA testing confirmed that neither McCollum's DNA nor Brown's were found at the crime scene. However, because technology could not provide a positive match at the time, the two were held in prison until the North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission looked into their case and concluded that the physical evidence matched Roscoe Artis. McCollum and Brown were exonerated in September 2014, with McCollum being the longest-serving death row inmate in North Carolina history. The two were formally pardoned in 2015, enabling them to pursue compensation for their wrongful imprisonment. After multiple state and federal lawsuits, a federal court cumulatively awarded McCollum and Brown with \$75 million, the largest award for a wrongful conviction in United States history.^[123] Artis died in prison in 2020 while serving a life sentence for a separate murder.</p>				
Dec 6, 1984	John Thompson	Murder, carjacking	New Orleans, Louisiana	Life plus 49 years	18 years	Yes
Feb 5, 1985	Beatrice Six : Thomas Winslow, Joseph White, Ada JoAnn Taylor, Kathy Gonzalez, James Dean, and Debra Shelden	Murder	Beatrice, Nebraska	Varies	Varies	Yes
		<p>Thomas Winslow, Joseph White, Ada JoAnn Taylor, Kathy Gonzalez, James Dean, and Debra Shelden were found guilty of the 1985 rape and murder of Helen Wilson. They were pardoned in 2008 after DNA evidence from the crime scene identified Bruce Allen Smith as the true culprit. Smith died in 1992.^[124]</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Feb 25, 1985	Anthony Ray Hinton	Murder, armed robbery	Birmingham, Alabama	Death	29 years	Yes
		Hinton was sentenced to death in 1985 for armed robbery and the murders of John Davidson and Thomas Wayne Vason, two fast food managers in Birmingham. The US Supreme Court ruled in 2014 that his defense lawyer had been deficient. Prosecutors admitted that the bullets found at the scene did not match Hinton's gun; Hinton's conviction was thrown out by a circuit court judge in April 2015 and he was freed. ^[125]				
Mar 1985	Dennis Perry	Murder	Camden County, Georgia	Two life sentences	19 years	Yes
		Harold and Thelma Swain were killed after an invasion at their church during a bible study session. Perry was convicted based on witness testimony by an ex-girlfriend's mother who later received a Crimestoppers reward. Perry was also believed to resemble a composite sketch made based on the information of several women who were at the church that night. Perry took a post-conviction deal to avoid the death penalty which restricted his ability to appeal. ^[126] After coverage by the podcast Undisclosed and The Atlanta Journal-Constitution a potential alternate suspect was identified and DNA testing was pursued by the Georgia Innocence Project. DNA evidence from hairs on glasses left at the scene were tested, and did not match Perry, but were consistent with the alternate suspect.				
Mar 1985	Margaret Earle	Murder	Plymouth, Massachusetts	Life in prison	5 years	Yes
		In March 1985, Margaret Earle left her 21-month-old daughter Rachelle in the care of her boyfriend, Michael Burnham, to celebrate her 21st birthday with a friend. The next morning, Margaret found her daughter ill but was unable to reach her doctor. While Margaret went to a pharmacy, the paramedics rushed Rachelle to the hospital, where she was pronounced dead. Rachelle's autopsy revealed significant injuries, including fractured ribs and internal bleeding. However, both Margaret and Michael denied any wrongdoing, and the case went cold. Years later, Michael called 911 and confessed to murdering Rachelle in anger over having to babysit a child. Police accused Margaret of failing to promptly seek medical treatment for Rachelle, and both Michael and Margaret were charged with first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison. But after Margaret's appellate lawyer uncovered evidence of Margaret's phone calls to the doctor, the Massachusetts				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Supreme Judicial Court reversed Margaret's conviction. Prosecutors subsequently dismissed the case. ^[127]				
Jul 29, 1985	Steven Avery	Rape	Two Rivers, Wisconsin	32 years	18 years	Yes
		<p>36-year-old Penny Ann Beerntsen was jogging along Lake Michigan when she was grabbed from behind, dragged into a wooded area and raped. Despite having alibis, Avery was convicted on the basis of a visual identification by the victim and visual hair analysis. In April 2002, DNA testing of 13 pubic hairs recovered from Beerntsen excluded Avery. The DNA matched a man named Gregory Allen, who bore a striking resemblance to Avery. Avery was exonerated and released. As a result of the case, Wisconsin made changes to their eyewitness protocol. Avery also filed a civil suit for wrongful conviction against Manitowoc County, Wisconsin, and some county officials, seeking \$36 million in damages.^{[128][129]} Avery settled the lawsuit for \$400,000, used for his defense of the 2005 murder of Teresa Halbach, for which he and nephew Brendan Dassey were convicted.</p> <p>On December 18, 2015, Netflix released a documentary that covers both of Avery's convictions. This 10-episode documentary titled Making a Murderer was filmed over 10 years.^[130]</p>				
1985	Tim Cole	Rape	Lubbock, Texas	25 years	14 years (died in prison)	Yes
		<p>Cole was convicted of rape on basis of a visual identification by the victim, Michele Mallin, his classmate.^[131] Among other things, Mallin told police that the rapist smoked during the rape. However, Cole never smoked because of his severe asthma. He died in prison on December 2, 1999, from an asthma attack. Another man, Jerry Wayne Johnson, confessed to the rape in 2007. DNA evidence later confirmed that the rape was committed by Johnson.^[132] Cole was posthumously exonerated; it was the first posthumous DNA exoneration in the history of the state of Texas.^[133]</p> <p>Johnson confirmed in court that he was the rapist and asked the victim and Cole's family to forgive him. "It's been on my heart to express my sincerest sorrow and regret and ask to be forgiven," said Johnson, who is serving life in prison for two other 1985 rapes. However, Johnson cannot be charged in the Mallin case because the statute of limitations has expired.^{[134][135]}</p>				
Apr 13, 1986	Johnny Lee Wilson	Murder	Aurora, Missouri	Life in prison	8 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		In 1995, Wilson was pardoned by the governor of Missouri, Mel Carnahan . He had been sentenced to life in prison without parole for the 1986 murder of an elderly woman, seventy-nine-year-old Pauline Martz. Wilson confessed to the crime, but Carnahan concluded in his investigation that Wilson, an intellectually disabled twenty-year-old, was coerced by the authorities. Carnahan also concluded that there was no evidence linking Wilson to the murder. ^[136]				
Aug 13, 1986	Michael Morton	Murder	Williamson County, Texas	Life in prison	25 years	Yes
		Morton was convicted of his wife Christine Morton's murder in 1987. He was exonerated in 2011 after DNA tests linked another man, Mark Alan Norwood, to the murder. Norwood was subsequently convicted of Christine's murder. He also is a suspect in the 1988 murder of Debra Baker in her Austin home. Both women were beaten to death in their beds. ^[137] The prosecutor in the case was charged with contempt after it was discovered that he withheld evidence from the defense team. He gave up his law license and served five days in jail as part of a plea bargain . ^{[138][139][140]}				
Jul 14, 1986	Santiago Ventura Morales	Murder	Sandy, Oregon	10 years to life	5 years	No
		Morales was convicted of the murder of Ramiro Lopez Fidel in 1986. At trial, he was provided a Spanish interpreter, though his native language is Mixtec . He maintained his innocence and several jurors later had second thoughts about the conviction and began advocating that he be released from prison. The lack of an appropriate interpreter and other deficiencies in his trial led to his conviction being overturned as well as evidence that pointed to another person. ^[141] In 1995, the state of Oregon passed a law that requires testing and certification of court interpreters as a result of the Morales case. ^[142]				
Jun 30, 1986	Kenny Richey	Murder*	Columbus Grove, Ohio	Death	21 years	No
		Two-year-old Cynthia Collins perished in an apartment fire while her mother was away. Her mother told police that Richey was babysitting. After partying with Cynthia's mother, Richey agreed to keep an eye on the girl in exchange for a place to sleep for the night. Richey was able to escape when the fire broke out, but Cynthia died from smoke inhalation . He was convicted on a number of charges related to starting the fire. The scientific evidence presented at trial to prove this was not accidental was				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		highly disputed, and his conviction was eventually overturned. In lieu of taking the case to trial again, prosecutors had offered to accept a "no contest" plea to attempted involuntary manslaughter , child endangerment and breaking and entering in exchange for release. Although his conviction still stands, the case gained widespread attention across Europe. The European Parliament approved a resolution urging that Richey's life be spared, and Pope John Paul II made an appeal on his behalf. Amnesty International described his case as "the most compelling case of innocence we have come across on death row." ^{[143][144]}				
Jan 22 and Feb 16, 1987	Glen Woodall	Sexual assault, sexual abuse, kidnapping, robbery	Barboursville, West Virginia	2 life terms without parole plus 203–335 years	5 years	Yes
		<p>Two victims in two separate incidents were abducted, raped, and robbed. The assailant wore a ski mask, but both victims noted a few characteristics, such as the perpetrator was uncircumcised. Woodall was convicted on circumstantial evidence, including testimony that he shared the same blood type, similar body and beard hair, voice identification, and a partial visual identification by victim two, and the fact that Woodall was uncircumcised.</p> <p>Woodall was granted DNA testing in 1988 on semen samples recovered from the victims—the first ever admitted as evidence at the state level in the United States—which excluded Woodall, and the conviction was thrown out.</p> <p>Woodall was the first person to be exonerated after being convicted due to testimony by lab technician Fred Zain. Woodall's defense team conducted its own tests on the evidence, which determined that Zain had used flawed blood-typing methods in tying the semen to Woodall. It further appeared that Zain had initially determined a piece of hair was unidentifiable pubic hair, but later changed his identification to hair from Woodall's beard.^{[145][146]} Woodall subsequently sued the state for false imprisonment and won a \$1 million settlement.^[147]</p> <p>At the request of the state police, Kanawha County Prosecutor William Forbes began a criminal investigation. Forbes was so disturbed by what he found that he asked the Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia to appoint a special judge and a panel of lawyers and scientists to investigate the serology department.^[146] On November 4, 1993, Senior Circuit Court Judge James Holliday issued a report finding that Zain had engaged in a staggering litany</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		of misconduct and outright fraud. According to the report, Zain had misstated evidence, falsified lab results and reported scientifically implausible results that may have resulted in as many as 134 people being wrongfully convicted. Holliday found that Zain's misconduct was so egregious that any testimony offered by Zain should be presumed as <i>prima facie</i> "invalid, unreliable, and inadmissible". It also found serious deficiencies in the serology division's quality-control procedures. The Supreme Court unanimously accepted Holliday's report on November 12, calling Zain's actions "egregious violations of the right of a defendant to a fair trial" and a "corruption of our legal system". ^{[146][147][148]} West Virginia paid out a total of \$6.5 million to settle lawsuits by people who had been wrongfully convicted due to Zain. ^{[149][150][151]}				
Feb 11, 1987	Tim Masters	Murder	Fort Collins, Colorado	Life in prison	9 years	Yes
		Peggy Hettrick was murdered in 1987. Masters was a sophomore in high school at the time of the murder. He was convicted largely on the basis of graphic drawings by Masters portraying violent scenes. He was later eliminated via DNA testing. In 2008, special prosecutors assigned to the case agreed that critical information was not turned over to the original defense team. ^{[152][153]} Rather, the DNA results pointed to Hettrick's sometime boyfriend. ^[154] In 2008 a Colorado judge vacated Masters' conviction and ordered him released immediately.				
Sep 1987	Susie Mowbray	Murder	Cameron, Texas	Life in prison	9 years	Yes
		In September 1987, car dealer Bill Mowbray shot himself in his bed, while his wife, Susie Mowbray, was lying next to him. Despite the fact that Bill had been threatening to commit suicide for months over financial troubles, the police zeroed in on Susie as the culprit and charged her with first-degree murder. At her trial, detectives claimed that the blood spatter indicated that Susie shot her husband, and in June 1988, Susie was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. In 1996, Susie was granted a new trial after it was revealed that the prosecution suppressed a report from blood spatter expert Herbert MacDonnell, who concluded that the police's luminol staining procedure was unreliable and that no blood spatter was found on Susie's nightgown. The police even admitted at a hearing that there was no scientific support for their case. In January 1998, a jury acquitted Susie of the charges. ^[155]				
Oct 24, 1987	Willie Grimes	Rape, kidnapping	Hickory, North Carolina	Life in prison and 9 years	24 years, 9	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
					months, 23 days	
		<p>On October 24, 1987, around 9 p.m., a black man forced his way into the home of a white 69-year old widow in Hickory, North Carolina, brandishing a knife. He raped her on her couch, dragged her to her bedroom and raped her again before leaving through the back door, stealing some fruit from a bowl in the kitchen on his way out. Linda McDowell, a neighbor of the victim and sister of Grimes' ex-girlfriend, pointed the police to Willie Grimes, knowing of a \$1000 reward. During his trial, microscopic hair analysis was used to indicate him and the victim identified him as the perpetrator - after pointing to his attorney first. Eight friends who spent the evening with Grimes gave him an alibi and four other witnesses spoke to his "calm" character with no violent tendencies. Grimes himself pointed out that the victim never mentioned a significant scar on his chest and two missing fingertips. Grimes was convicted by a mostly white jury to life in prison for the rapes and 9 years for the kidnapping. In 2001, when post-conviction DNA testing was established in North Carolina, Grimes sought testing of the hair and was told the evidence was destroyed - although his lawyer had requested it to be preserved immediately after the conviction. In 2003, finger prints taken from fruit in the kitchen were matched to Albert Lindsey Turner who had been a suspect before the informant's call. In 2010, a petition was filed with the North Carolina Innocence Inquiry Commission and the case and new evidence were given to a tribunal of judges in 2012. The tribunal decided within 30 minutes to vacate Grimes convictions. In the retrial the DA apologized to Grimes instead of a closing argument and he was exonerated. He was awarded \$6.2 million in damages in settlements with the city and state.^[156]</p>				
1987	Levon Jones	Murder	Duplin County, North Carolina	Death	14 years	No
		<p>Jones was sentenced to death in 1993 for the murder of Leamon Grady. Lovely Lorden, the sole witness against Jones, admitted in an affidavit that she "was certain that Bo did not have anything to do with Mr. Grady's murder" and that she did not know what happened the night Grady was murdered. His conviction was overturned in 2006 and he was released.^[157]</p>				
Jan 22, 1988	James Calvin Tillman	Rape	Hartford, Connecticut	45 years	16 years	Yes
		<p>Accused and found guilty of rape, Tillman was released after DNA tests proved he was not the culprit.</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Sep 7, 1988	Martin Tankleff	Murder	Long Island, New York	Two terms of 25 years to life	17 years	Yes
		Martin Tankleff's parents, Seymour and Arlene Tankleff, were murdered while the 17-year-old Tankleff was sleeping in the home. He was convicted on the basis of a false confession given during an extended interrogation. His convictions were overturned in 2007 after his defense attorney presented an alternative scenario involving Seymour's business partner, to whom he owed money, and three former convicts, one of whom confessed to being the getaway driver.				
Sep 1988	Virginia LeFever	Murder	Newark, Ohio	Life in prison	21 years	Yes
		In September 1988, William LeFever, while in the middle of a divorce, died of an acute drug overdose. His wife, Virginia, found an empty bottle of antidepressants in their home and subsequently told police that he had committed suicide. However, the police accused Virginia of poisoning her husband and charged her with murder. In February 1990, Virginia was convicted and sentenced to life in prison. 20 years later, Virginia's lawyer discovered that the prosecution's key witness, toxicologist James Ferguson, lied about his credentials, prompting a court to reverse Virginia's conviction. In April 2011, the prosecution dismissed the case. ^[158]				
Oct 24, 1988	Chris Ochoa and Richard Danziger	Murder	Austin, Texas	Life in prison (both)	13 years	Yes
		<p>In 1988, Nancy DePriest was raped and murdered at the Pizza Hut where she worked in Austin, Texas. A coworker, Chris Ochoa, pleaded guilty to the murder. His friend and coworker, Richard Danziger, was convicted of the rape. Ochoa confessed to the murder, as well as implicating Danziger in the rape. The only forensic evidence linking Danziger to the crime scene was a single pubic hair found in the restaurant, which was said to be consistent with his pubic hair type. Although semen evidence had been collected, a DNA analysis of only one gene was performed at the time; even though Ochoa had this gene, it was known also to be present in 10–16% of individuals.^[159] Both men received life sentences with no possibility of parole.^[159]</p> <p>Years later a man named Achim Marino (who was in prison serving his three-life sentences for robbery, rape and murder respectively) began writing letters from prison claiming he was the actual murderer in the Pizza Hut case and that Ochoa and Danziger were innocent. He said that he had converted to Christianity while in prison and wanted to tell the truth to free Ochoa and Danziger</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>from prison. The DNA from the crime scene was tested, and it matched that of Marino.^[<i>when?</i>] The DNA of Ochoa and Danziger was excluded from matching that evidence. Ochoa later said that he was coerced by the police to confess and implicate his friend in the rape and murder.</p> <p>In 2001 Ochoa and Danziger were exonerated and released from prison after 12 years of incarceration. While in prison, Danziger had been severely beaten by other inmates in 1991 and suffered permanent brain damage. He requires all day medical care for the rest of his life.^[160] Marino was later convicted of the murder (he couldn't be charged with the rape due to the statute of limitations) and was given an additional life sentence.</p>				
Nov 8, 1988	Joseph Burrows	Murder	Kankakee, Illinois	Death	6 years	
		<p>William Dulan, an 88-year-old retired farmer, was found dead November 8, 1988. Several hours after the murder, a man named Chuck Gullion attempted to cash one of Dulan's checks at a local bank. Gullion was arrested along with 32-year-old Gayle Potter. Potter admitted to the killing, but implicated two others: Burrows and Ralph Frye, 22, an intellectually disabled friend of Burrows.</p> <p>No physical evidence linked either Burrows or Frye to the crime, and the two men had alibis. After a lengthy interrogation, Frye agreed to a plea deal in exchange for testifying against Burrows. Following Burrows' conviction, Frye recanted his testimony to news reporter Peter Rooney, claiming that police had coerced him in exchange for a lesser sentence. Burrows' lawyers discovered a letter written by Potter asking a friend to lie and say that she had seen Burrows drive her to the crime scene. Confronted with the letter, Potter admitted that she had falsely accused the men in part because she mistakenly believed that Burrows had burglarized her trailer.</p>				
Jan 1989	Employees at the Little Rascals day care facility	Child sexual abuse	Edenton, North Carolina	Varied, 7 years to life	Varied	No
		<p>Day-care sex-abuse hysteria: In January, 1989, allegations were made that Bob Kelly had sexually abused a child. A total of 90 children, after many therapy sessions (in some cases up to ten months' worth), also made allegations leading to accusations against dozens besides Kelly and charges against seven adults (Bob and Betsy Kelly, three workers at the day care, a worker at a local Head Start center and the son of a judge). The charges ultimately involved rape, sodomy and fellatio, while other bizarre</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>allegations were also made, including the murder of babies, torture, and being thrown into a school of sharks.</p> <p>During the trial, children were asked to testify about events that had occurred three years previously, with memories "refreshed" in therapy sessions, meetings with the prosecution and repeated discussions with their parents. While the alleged abuse was occurring, no parents noticed anything unusual about their children's behavior to indicate abuse or torture. The eight-month trial against Bob Kelly was the most expensive in North Carolina history, ending in conviction on 99 of 100 charges and twelve consecutive life sentences, though on May 2, 1995, all convictions were reversed in the Court of Appeals. ^{[161][162]}</p>				
Apr 19, 1989	Central Park Five : Yusef Salaam, Antron McCray, Raymond Santana, Kevin Richardson, and Korey Wise	Assault, rape	Manhattan, New York	Varied	Varied	Yes
		<p>The five boys, who were between the ages of 14 and 16 at the time, were convicted of the assault and rape of Trisha Ellen Meili, who was jogging in Central Park. They were convicted and their convictions were upheld on appeal, though they asserted that their convictions were based on allegedly coerced confessions and allegedly faulty scientific evidence. The convictions were vacated in 2002 when Matias Reyes, a convicted rapist and murderer serving a life sentence for other crimes and whose DNA evidence confirmed his involvement in the rape, claimed after the statute of limitations had run that he had committed the crimes alone, a claim the Armstrong Report disagreed with.</p>				
Apr 11, 1989	Sabrina Butler	Murder*	Mississippi	Death	5 years	
		<p>Butler was convicted of murder and child abuse after her unresponsive nine-month-old son, Walter Dean Butler, was rushed to the hospital. At retrial, one of Sabrina's neighbors corroborated her account of events and the medical examiner changed his opinion about Walter's cause of death, which he now believed occurred due to a renal condition. Sabrina was acquitted.</p>				
Aug 1989	Jeffrey Scott Hornoff	Murder	Warwick, Rhode Island	Life in prison	6 years	Yes
		<p>Victoria Cushman was killed in 1989. Hornoff was a police detective who had an affair with the victim. He was arrested in 1994, and convicted by a jury of first-degree murder in June 1996, despite what seemed a rock-solid alibi and no physical evidence linking him to the crime.</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		In November 2002, Todd Barry confessed to the murder and in 2003, Barry was sentenced to 30 years in prison. ^[163]				
Dec 2, 1989	Debra Milke	Murder	Phoenix, Arizona	Death	23 years	
		Milke was convicted of the murder of her four-year-old son, Christopher Milke, on the basis of testimony by police officer Armando Saldate that she had freely confessed to him, orally, in private and without a recording. Saldate had a long record of misconduct, including a suspension for taking "liberties" with a female motorist and then lying about it to his supervisors; four court cases where judges tossed out confessions or indictments because Saldate lied under oath; and four cases where judges suppressed confessions or vacated convictions because Saldate had violated the Fifth Amendment or the Fourth Amendment in the course of interrogations.				
Jan 4, 1989	Debbie Tucker Loveless and John Harvey Miller	Murder	Emory, Texas	Life in prison	4 years	Yes
		Loveless and Miller were convicted of murdering Loveless's 4-year-old daughter, April Renee Tucker, who died on the operating table after sustaining multiple lacerations, including a severed femoral artery . Loveless and Miller claimed that April had told them she had been attacked and mauled by dogs, but investigators rejected their theory, in large part because April's wound was a clean cut, lacking the jagged edges one would expect in a dog attack. On November 5, 1989, they were convicted and sentenced to life in prison. While working on their appeal, lawyers for Miller and Loveless found that April's emergency room and autopsy photos, which had not been turned over the defense prior to the trial, strongly supported the theory that April was attacked by dogs. Furthermore, a key piece of prosecution evidence was found to be flawed: while trying to save April's life, doctors had cut away some of the damaged skin with scalpels, causing the clean cuts that had been mistakenly attributed to abuse. Based on the prosecution's failure to disclose potentially exculpatory evidence, Loveless and Miller's convictions were overturned and they were granted a new trial. Loveless and Miller were released from prison on December 23, 1993; prosecutors elected not to re-try Loveless and Miller for the crime, and formally dismissed the charges against them on May 2, 1994. ^[164]				
Jul 1989	Patricia Stallings	Murder	Jefferson City, Missouri	Life in prison	8 months	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		In July 1989, Patricia Stallings took her sick newborn son Ryan to the hospital for treatment, where tests revealed ethylene glycol, the main ingredient in antifreeze, in his blood. Patricia was accused of poisoning Ryan and was quickly arrested. While in jail, she gave birth to a second child, who began exhibiting the same symptoms as Ryan despite having no contact with Patricia. He was diagnosed with Methylmalonic Acidemia (MMA), a rare genetic disorder that may have explained Ryan's symptoms. However, Patricia's lawyer decided to argue that Ryan simply died of natural causes, and in January 1991, Patricia was convicted of first-degree murder and assault and sentenced to life in prison. But additional blood tests by biochemist William Sly revealed that Ryan did in fact die of MMA. Based on the new evidence, Patricia was granted a new trial, and in September 1991, the prosecution dismissed the case. ^[165]				
1989	Mark Denny	Sexual assault, robbery, other violent felony	Manhattan, New York	19–57 years	28 years	Yes ^[166]

1990s^[edit]

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
1990	Jeffrey Mark Deskovic	Murder	Peekskill, New York	15 years to life	16 years	Yes
		Deskovic was convicted of the murder of Angela Correa on the basis of a coerced confession. He claims that during a 7-hour intensive interrogation, detectives fed him details and promised him he wouldn't go to prison if he confessed. Hair and semen samples collected did not match Deskovic, but prosecutors argued that they were from earlier consensual sex and were not related to the murder. ^[167] The DNA was later matched to a man who is serving time for another Westchester murder. ^[168]				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Jan 18, 1991	Francisco "Franky" Carrillo	Murder	Los Angeles, California	Life in prison	20 years	No
		Carrillo was convicted of the murder of Donald Sarpy on the basis of testimony of six teenage boys who witnessed the murder. He was released after five of the six witnesses recanted; the sixth refused to testify. ^[169]				
Aug 14, 1991	John Bunn	Murder	Brooklyn, New York	7 years to life	16 years	Yes
		Bunn was convicted of the murder of Rolando Neischer in 1992. Bunn was one of 15 individuals whose convictions were overturned during 2013–2019 after long prison terms, in Brooklyn homicide cases involving the retired New York City Police Department detective Louis N. Scarcella . ^[170]				
Nov 1991	Dixmoor 5: Robert Taylor, Jonathan Barr, James Harden, Robert Lee Veal, and Shainne Sharp	Murder	Dixmoor, Illinois	varied	varied	Yes
		Robert Taylor, Jonathan Barr, James Harden, Robert Lee Veal, and Shainne Sharp were convicted of the murder of Cateresa Matthews. They were between the ages of 14 and 16 at the time. Three of them confessed after high-pressure police interrogations, and all five were arrested and charged with the crime. Two pleaded guilty and testified against the others in exchange for shorter sentences. Both men have since recanted their testimony. Each received at least 80 years in prison. DNA testing on semen excluded the suspects. ^{[171][172]} A convicted sex offender has been identified as the source of the DNA, but his name has yet to be released and he has not been charged. A suit filed by the men alleges police withheld exculpatory evidence, including the DNA, from their defense teams. ^[173] In 2014, they reached a wrongful conviction settlement with the state of Illinois for \$40 million US dollars, the largest wrongful conviction settlement in state history. ^[174]				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Dec 23, 1991	Cameron Todd Willingham	Murder, arson*	Corsicana, Texas	Death penalty	Executed	No
		<p>Willingham was convicted and executed for the death of his three children who died in a house fire. The prosecution charged that the fire was caused by arson. He has not been posthumously exonerated, but the case has gained widespread attention as a possible case of wrongful execution. A number of arson experts have decried the results of the original investigation as faulty. In June 2009, five years after Willingham's execution, the State of Texas ordered a re-examination of the case. Dr. Craig Beyler found "a finding of arson could not be sustained". Beyler said that key testimony from a fire marshal at Willingham's trial was "hardly consistent with a scientific mind-set and is more characteristic of mystics or psychics".^{[175][176]} The Texas Forensic Science Commission was scheduled to discuss the report by Beyler at a meeting on October 2, 2009, but two days before the meeting Texas Governor Rick Perry replaced the chair of the commission and two other members. The new chair canceled the meeting, sparking accusations that Perry was interfering with the investigation and using it for his own political advantage.^{[177][178]} In 2010, a four-person panel of the Texas Forensic Science Commission acknowledged that state and local arson investigators used "flawed science" in determining the blaze had been deliberately set.^[179]</p> <p>In 2011, a documentary film titled Incendiary: The Willingham Case was released.^[180]</p>				
Dec 29, 1991	Ray Krone	Murder	Maricopa County, Arizona	Death penalty, life in prison	11 years	Yes
		Krone was twice convicted of the murder of Kim Ancona largely on the basis of bitemark analysis, a science that would later come into question. He was eventually cleared via DNA testing.				
Jan 31, 1992	Mark Mason Jones, Kenneth Eric Gardiner, and Dominic Brian Lucci	Malice murder, firearm possession	Savannah, Georgia	Life in prison plus 5 years	25 years	Yes
		Three white servicemen stationed at Fort Stewart, Jones, Gardiner, and Lucci, were convicted of the drive-by slaying of Stanley Jackson. The sole witness, James White, who is black,				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		admitted to lying decades later, which helped start a review of the case. Prosecutors said the crime was racially motivated. The state's Supreme Court ruled that the government prosecutors improperly withheld evidence. ^{[181][182]} The Georgia legislature approved financial compensation to each of the three men. ^[183]				
Apr 6, 1992	Robert Jones	Armed robbery, rape, murder	New Orleans, Louisiana	Life in prison	23 years	Yes
		Jones was convicted largely on eyewitness identification, even though another man was also found guilty of the crimes and the prosecution withheld exculpatory evidence. Jones' conviction was eventually overturned by the Louisiana Supreme Court , and all charges against him were subsequently dropped.				
Aug 17, 1992	Juan Rivera	Murder	Waukegan, Illinois	Life in prison	20 years	Yes
		<p>Rivera was wrongfully convicted three times for the murder of 11-year-old Holly Staker, who was babysitting at a neighbor's house when she was raped and murdered by an intruder. Swabs were taken of a semen sample, but DNA testing was not performed at the time. Rivera was convicted on the basis of a confession that he claims was given under duress and which contained many factual inconsistencies. He was convicted twice before DNA testing was performed on the swabs taken from the crime scene. DNA testing excluded Rivera from being the source of the semen. Prosecutors decided to try him again despite the results of the DNA test, arguing that the semen sample was from consensual sex prior to the murder. He was convicted a third time.</p> <p>His case was overturned a third and final time with the appellate court heavily criticizing prosecutors for arguing that Holly was sexually active without evidence and for putting so much weight on a confession obtained while Rivera, who suffered from mental illness, was in an "acute psychotic state" and which contained so many inaccuracies.</p> <p>Following his exoneration, his defense team sought to do further testing on shoes that the state had once sought to enter into evidence. Holly's blood was found on shoes worn by Juan. The evidence had been dropped once it was discovered that the shoes were not for sale anywhere in the US until after the murder. Genetic testing performed in 2014 found not only Holly's blood, but genetic material that matches the semen found at the crime scene. His defense team argued that the reasonable interpretation is that in an effort to plant blood on Juan's shoes, the state also</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>planted DNA from Holly's real killer. Following this revelation, the state agreed to settle with Rivera, giving him a US\$20 million settlement, which at the time was the largest wrongful conviction settlement in US history.</p> <p>The source of the DNA has never been identified, but it has been linked to evidence found at another murder scene. The man convicted of that murder insists this is proof that he himself has been wrongfully convicted.</p>				
Jan 1993	Mary Weaver	Murder	Marshall County, Iowa	Life without parole	3 years	Yes
		<p>In January 1993, babysitter Mary Weaver called 911 to report that 11-month-old Melissa Mathes was unresponsive. The child was rushed to the hospital and died the next day. While the autopsy revealed that Melissa sustained significant head injuries sometime before her death, the medical examiners concluded that the cause of death was Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS), caused by Mary violently shaking the baby. Mary was charged with first-degree murder, but when the jury could not reach a verdict, the case ended in a mistrial. Mary opted for a bench trial for her second trial, and the judge ultimately found Mary guilty and sentenced her to life in prison without the possibility of parole. The Iowa Court of Appeals upheld her conviction, but the Iowa Supreme Court granted a hearing for a new trial. At the hearing, multiple witnesses testified that Melissa had hit her head on the coffee table and was knocked unconscious. Mary's motion for a new trial was granted, and in February 1997, the jury acquitted her of the charges.^[184]</p>				
Apr 8, 1993	Gary Gauger	Murder	McHenry County, Illinois	Death penalty	3 years	Yes
		<p>Gary Gauger's parents, Morris and Ruth Gauger, were murdered in 1993. Following the murder, police interrogated Gauger for 21 hours. Detectives lied to Gauger, claiming they had found blood-soaked clothes in Gauger's bedroom and that he had failed a polygraph test. Gauger was instructed to discuss a hypothetical situation and describe how he would have killed his parents during a possible alcohol-induced blackout. The interrogation was not tape-recorded and Gauger did not sign a confession. His hypothetical statements were later used in court in support of a claim that Gauger confessed to the crime. In 1996, he was granted an appeal and his alleged confession was thrown out. Without that evidence they were forced to drop the charges. James Schneider and Randall E. Miller, members of the Outlaws</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Motorcycle Club , were later convicted of the murders. Gauger was pardoned in 2002. ^[185]				
Feb 13, 1993	Lynn DeJac	Murder*	Buffalo, New York	25 years	14 years	Yes
		Lynn DeJac summoned police to her home on February 13, 1993, after finding her daughter, Crystallyn Girard, dead in her bed. DeJac told police that she spent the evening out with her boyfriend, Dennis Donohue, with whom she had had an argument that evening. The coroner ruled that she died from strangulation . Donohue became a suspect for a brief time after DeJac told police he may have returned to her house while she was out. He was arrested, but was later granted full immunity in return for testimony regarding DeJac's use of cocaine that evening. Wayne Hudson, a childhood friend of DeJac, claimed that DeJac confessed to him that she had killed her daughter. She was convicted on the basis of the testimony from the two men. At the time he came forward, Hudson was facing forgery charges and a possible life sentence in prison as a repeat offender . In 2008, a new autopsy determined that Crystallyn died of a cocaine overdose, not strangulation. ^[186]				
Aug 29, 1993	Mark Maxson	Murder	Chicago, Illinois	Life plus 40 years	23 years	Yes
		Police subjected Maxson to torture and beatings until he made a confession to the murder of six-year-old Lindsay Murdoch. In spite of withdrawing his confession and lack of physical evidence against him, Maxson was convicted and sentenced to life plus 40 years. In 2015 the Cook County Conviction Integrity Unit got DNA testing done which proved another man, Osborne Wade, had committed the murder. Wade confessed to the murder. ^[187]				
1994	Dontae Sharpe	Murder	Greenville, North Carolina	Life	24 years	Yes
		On April 7, 1994 Sharpe was arrested for the murder of a 33-year-old white man, George Radcliffe. He was convicted despite a lack of testimony and the existence of another potential suspect. ^[188] Immediately after he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison, a leading witness recanted her testimony. Nevertheless, Sharpe remained in prison until his exoneration and release in August 2019. He received a pardon of innocence from Governor Roy Cooper on 12 November 12, 2021. ^[189]				
Jan 1994	Freddie Joe Lawrence and Paul Jenkins	Kidnapping, murder	Montana City, Montana	Life	23 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Lawrence and Jenkins were convicted of murdering Donna Meagher, who was kidnapped as she closed her family's casino and murdered near Helena . In 2018, a man serving a life sentence for a double homicide confessed to the murder, and DNA confirmed the man was at the scene. Lawrence and Jenkins's convictions were subsequently overturned. ^[190]				
Apr 30, 1994	Ken Wyniemko	Criminal sexual conduct, armed robbery, breaking and entering	Clinton Township, Michigan	40–60 years	8 years	Yes
		Wyniemko was convicted on the basis of his resemblance to the composite sketch and identification of Wyniemko in a lineup by the victim. He was later cleared by DNA testing. ^[191]				
Sep 1994	Michelle Murphy	Murder	Tulsa, Oklahoma	Life without parole	19 years	Yes
		In September 1994, 17-year-old Michelle Murphy awoke to find her infant son Travis stabbed to death in her kitchen. Police quickly set their sights on Michelle, and in violation of Oklahoma law, interrogated the teenager alone for eight hours. Despite the fact that Murphy's blood was not found on the scene, both the prosecutor and crime scene analyst suggested that her blood was present as proof of her guilt. In November 1995, Michelle was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole. In 2011, Michelle's appellate lawyers discovered that the prosecution lied about the lab's blood analysis. After DNA testing discovered DNA of an unknown male at the crime scene, Murphy's conviction was vacated, and in September 2014, the charges were dismissed. ^[192]				
Oct 30, 1994	Lamar Johnson	Murder	St. Louis, Missouri	Life	28 years	Yes
		Two men entered the home of Marcus Boyd and shot him, with prosecutors saying it was a dispute over drug money. Johnson and another man, Phil Campbell, were arrested and charged with the murder, with Campbell pleading guilty, while Johnson was convicted in 1995. Johnson testified that he was at his girlfriend's home the whole night aside from a five-minute period where he made a drug sale. A witness who said Johnson was involved later recanted his testimony, while another inmate later stated it was him, not Johnson, who had accompanied Campbell. His				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		conviction was vacated in 2023, with a judge citing "actual innocence". ^{[193][194]}				
Mar 2, 1995	Shareef Cousin	Murder	New Orleans, Louisiana	Death	4 years	No
		Cousin was convicted of Michael Gerardi's murder on the basis of an eyewitness identification by Gerardi's date. It was later discovered that she had made statements to police indicating that she wasn't wearing her glasses and didn't get a good look at the assailant. This statement was not disclosed to the defense. Another witness testified that he was coerced to testify against Cousin in exchange for a reduced sentence on his own charges. ^[195] After his release, Cousin alleged that the prosecutor's office had illegally detained witnesses whom Cousin had planned to call to testify in his defense, making it impossible for them to testify. ^[196]				
Apr 14, 1995(discovered)	Alan Gell	Murder of Allen Ray Jenkins	Aulander, North Carolina	Death	9 years	No
		Allen Ray Jenkins, age 56, was found dead on April 14, 1995, in his home in Aulander, North Carolina . He had been shot twice in the chest with a shotgun. In the days and weeks after the murder, the police talked to several disinterested witnesses who said they had seen Jenkins alive as late as April 10. ^[197] Two teenage girls testified that they were involved in a conspiracy involving Gell in exchange for a lower sentence. Gell was in prison or otherwise out of town for all but one day in April. Although the date of death is unknown, prosecutors hitched their timeline to that date. Gell's conviction was overturned after it was later discovered that prosecutors had withheld exculpatory evidence, including the testimony of 17 witnesses who said they had seen Jenkins alive after that date as well as a tape recording of one of the girls saying that she had to make up a story to tell the police. Gell was retried and acquitted of all charges. ^[198]				
Jul 1995	Rosalynd Collier-Hammond	Child sexual abuse	Cuyahoga County, Ohio	Two life sentences	18 years	Yes
		In July 1995, Rosalynd Collier-Hammond was released from prison for robbery and sought to rekindle her relationship with her daughter, A.Y. However, A.Y. was angry at her mother, having been told by her father that Rosalynd abandoned her. A.Y. went on to claim that her mother and stepfather, Reynard Hammond, sexually abused her while under their care. Rosalynd and Reynard were charged with rape, and in April 1999,				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Rosalynd was convicted and sentenced to two concurrent life sentences, while Reynard was acquitted of all charges. 15 years later, A.Y., now 32, revealed to her aunt that her father forced her to falsely accuse Rosalynd of sexual abuse. At a hearing for a new trial, A.Y. testified, "She never did anything that I said she's done to me. All that came about because that's what my father told me to say." Rosalynd was granted a new trial, and in April 2017, after multiple unsuccessful appeals, prosecutors dismissed the case. ^[199]				
November 26, 1995	Vincent Ellerbe, James Irons, and Thomas Malik	Murder	New York City, NY	25 years to life	25 Years	Yes
		Around 1 a.m. on Nov. 26, 1995, two men approached a subway token booth in Brooklyn, poured gas through the slot and lit a book of matches. The resulting explosion leveled the structure and sent the clerk inside flying, his body in flames. He died two weeks later. Three teenagers, Vincent Ellerbe, James Irons and Thomas Malik, subsequently confessed to the crime, were convicted of second-degree murder and were sentenced to 25 years to life in prison. On July 15, 2022, a state court judge cleared the three at the request of the Brooklyn district attorney, who said his office had determined the confessions were false and had been coerced by detectives whose work in dozens of other cases has come under scrutiny. ^[200]				
1996	Kristine Bunch	Arson, murder	Decatur County, Indiana	110 years	17 years	Yes
		Bunch was convicted of deliberately setting a fire in her mobile home that took the life of her 3-year-old son, Anthony. The conviction was largely based on the testimonies of Fire Marshall investigators Brian Frank and James Skaggs, who claimed that the fire was caused by the presence of liquid accelerants that had been poured across the floor. Their testimony was corroborated by forensic analyst William Kinard, who found traces of liquid accelerants in wood samples taken from the home. During the trial, Bunch had become pregnant. At Bunch's sentencing hearing, Judge John Westhafer accused her of orchestrating the pregnancy to gain an advantage in court and declared that she will "have nothing to do with that child." Bunch maintained her innocence. Years later, lawyers found that Kinard's original report found no traces of liquid accelerants anywhere in the home and that Frank and Skaggs conspired with Kinard to alter the report to score a conviction. In 2008, in light of the fabricated evidence against Bunch, her legal team filed a petition for a new trial, which was rejected by Judge Westhafer. The defense appealed, and in March 2012, the Court of Appeals of Indiana				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		reversed the conviction and held that Bunch was entitled to a new trial. In August 2012, the Indiana Supreme Court declined to disturb the Court of Appeals decision. 24 days later, Bunch was released on her own recognizance, and in December 2012, the prosecution dropped the remaining charges against her. ^[201]				
Jun 13, 1996	Christopher Tapp	Rape, murder	Idaho Falls, Idaho	30 years to life	20 years	Yes
		On June 13, 1996, Angie Dodge was found raped and murdered in her Idaho Falls apartment. Months later in 1997, 20-year-old Tapp, a high school dropout, was arrested. Police interrogated him for 60 hours. He was subjected to sham polygraph tests and was told information that only the murderer would know. Then the police falsely said he had described the information himself. ^[202] He confessed to police that he had been involved although he later retracted his confession. Tapp's DNA did not match samples taken at the crime scene, and no other physical evidence linked him to the crime. But at trial, that inconsistency was explained away by a theory that multiple people had participated in the killing. It was also outweighed by Tapp's confession. In 1998, Tapp was convicted by a jury of rape and murder and sentenced to 30 years to life. The Idaho Innocence Project took up Tapp's case in 2007. At the same time, more than a decade after her daughter's murder, Carol Dodge was still searching for answers. While Tapp had been convicted, authorities had failed to match the crime scene DNA to any suspect, though they believed the crime had more than one perpetrator. In 2017, in the face of mounting evidence of his innocence, Tapp's rape charge was vacated and his murder sentence was reduced to time served, allowing him to leave prison. But authorities still hadn't connected the DNA evidence with an alternate suspect. Then, in late 2018, police partnered with Parabon NanoLabs , a Virginia company that specializes in DNA analysis, to analyze crime scene evidence using genetic genealogy via GEDmatch which Eventually, narrowed down her results to a new suspect: Brian Leigh Dripps Sr who had lived across the street from Angie Dodge in 1996. Dripps admitted to the crimes and said had never met Tapp and had acted alone. ^[202] Tapp was exonerated on July 17, 2019, which makes him the first man to be exonerated with use of genetic genealogy. ^{[203][204]}				
1996	Richard Alexander	Rape	South Bend, Indiana	20 years	5 years	Yes
		Alexander was convicted of a series of rapes in South Bend, Indiana, and was dubbed the "River Park Rapist". He was convicted largely on the basis of eyewitness testimony. In 2001,				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>with Alexander already having served five years in prison, an alleged burglar and child molester named Michael Murphy confessed to one of the two rapes of which Alexander had been convicted, knowing details only the true assailant would know.^[205] With this revelation, a judge ordered a new round of DNA testing in Alexander's case. Hairs found at the scene of the rape were submitted to mitochondrial DNA testing.^[206] At the time of Alexander's original conviction, such testing was not available in the state of Indiana. The tests proved that the DNA did not match Alexander's profile, but did match Murphy's.^[205] Alexander was released from prison on December 12, 2001.^[207] It is now believed that the River Park Rapist was actually two separate perpetrators.</p>				
Oct 18, 1996	Darrell Lee Clark and Cain Joshua Storey	Murder	Rome, Georgia	Life in prison	25 years	Yes
		<p>On October 18, 1996, 15-year-old Brian Bowling was shot in the head at his family's mobile home moments after telling his girlfriend over the phone that he was playing Russian roulette with a gun brought by Storey. Although evidence suggested Bowling shot himself, Storey and Clark, who was at his own home when Bowling died, were charged with his death. Both were 17 at the time of the tragedy. In 2021, a podcast investigated the death and interviewed a witness who had claimed Storey and Clark plotted the murder of Bowling to cover up a theft the two had committed. The witness told the podcast that police had coerced her into giving false statements, threatening to take her children if she did not comply. Another witness, who had identified Clark as the person running through the yard, had actually based his testimony on an unrelated yet similar shooting, and he had never identified Clark as being in the yard, not did he witness anyone in the yard. In December 2022, the District Attorney's office and a Superior Court judge agreed to dismiss the charges against them. Storey took a plea deal for involuntary manslaughter for bringing the gun, but was released due to time served.^[208]</p>				
Mar 1997	Fancy Figueroa	Filing a false report	Queens, New York	Community service		Yes
		<p>In March 1997, 16-year-old Fancy Figueroa was brutally raped by a man on her way home from school. When the medical examination revealed that Fancy was pregnant, the police accused Fancy of fabricating the rape to cover up her pregnancy. Fancy insisted that she was raped but was disbelieved. The police promised to search for the culprit if she gave them a written admission of her guilt but instead used her statement to charge</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		her with filing a false report. Fancy pled guilty and was sentenced to community service. Six years later, DNA testing revealed that the DNA of convicted rapist Vincent Elias matched the DNA in Fancy's rape kit. Elias later pled guilty to raping Fancy and was sentenced to 22 years in prison. Fancy stated, "For six years, nobody believed me. I lost my family. I lost my freedom. I lost a little of my sanity." ^[209]				
Jul 8, 1997		Rape, murder	Norfolk, Virginia	Varied, 8.5 years to life	Varied	Yes
		<p>Michelle Moore-Bosko was raped and murdered in her apartment. Police initially focused on a neighbor of Moore-Bosko, Danial Williams, coercing a confession with threats of receiving the death penalty if he did not plead guilty. When his DNA did not match the DNA found at the scene, police coerced confessions from Joseph J. Dick Jr., Eric C. Wilson, and Derek Tice, operating under the new theory that it was a gang rape and murder, even though none of the evidence at the scene pointed to this.^[210] After Dick, Tice, and Wilson's DNA failed to match the DNA found at the crime scene, three additional men were charged, though charges were dropped against these three after Tice refused to testify against them.^[210]</p> <p>Norfolk Four: Derek Tice, Danial Williams, Joseph J. Dick Jr., and Eric C. Wilson</p> <p>Police later obtained a letter written by Omar Ballard, where he indicated that he had murdered Michelle Moore-Bosko.^[210] Ballard's DNA matched the DNA at the scene, and he admitted to the crime, stating that he had acted alone.^[210] However, the authorities refused to drop charges against the other four. Wilson pled not guilty and was acquitted of murder but was convicted of rape, and was sentenced to eight and a half years in prison.^{[210][211]} Williams sought to withdraw his guilty plea, but his motion was denied and he was given a life sentence.^[211] Dick pled guilty and was given a life sentence.^[211] Tice pled not guilty and was convicted of capital murder and rape, and was sentenced to two consecutive life terms.^{[210][211]} Although evidence from the scene indicated that there was only one assailant, by the time the cases came to trial, police and prosecutors were advancing the notion that there were eight participants in the rape and murder.^[210]</p> <p>Wilson was released from prison in 2005.^[211] In 2009, Virginia governor Tim Kaine granted Dick, Tice, and Williams "conditional pardons", which reduced their sentences to time served, but they were placed on parole and were required to register as sex offenders.^[211] Derek Tice won a full exoneration in 2011.^[211] In 2016, U.S. District Judge John Gibney vacated the convictions of Joseph Dick and Danial Williams, with the judge</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		declaring that both men were innocent of the crime. ^[211] In 2017, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe granted Joseph Dick, Derek Tice, Danial Williams, and Eric Wilson full pardons. ^[211]				
Jul 1997	Susan Mellen	First-degree murder	San Pedro, California	Life in prison without parole	17 years	Yes
		<p>In July 1997, 3 gang members named Lester Monllor, Chad Landrum and Santo "Payaso" Alvarez beat 30-year-old Richard Daly to death with a claw hammer in a lot owned by Allene Mellen. Multiple police informants identified the three men as the culprits. However, a few weeks after the murder, a woman named June Patti called the police and falsely implicated Susan Mellen, the daughter of the lot owner. Despite being told that Patti was not a credible witness, the police promptly arrested Susan while she was at a McDonald's with her young daughter and charged her with first-degree murder. At trial, Susan's lawyer, an elderly family law attorney who had just experienced a stroke and was on probation for inadequate defense, failed to challenge Patti's false testimony or call key witnesses. Susan was convicted and sentenced to life in prison without parole. Landrum was also sentenced to life in prison, while Monllor was acquitted. Alvarez was never charged. Years later, Alvarez began to reveal that Susan was innocent and that she "took my place." Landrum and other witnesses further confirmed that Susan was not involved. Susan's lawyers also discovered that Patti's credibility issues were never disclosed to Susan's defense lawyer. In September 2014, in light of these revelations, the court vacated Susan's murder conviction and Susan was released. Susan was later declared factually innocent.^[212]</p>				
Oct 13, 1997	Julie Rea Harper	Murder	Lawrenceville, Illinois	65 years	4 years	Yes
		<p>In the early morning hours of October 13, 1997, 10-year-old Joel Kirkpatrick was stabbed to death in his bedroom. His mother, Julie Rea Harper, had visitation with him that weekend and testified that she was awakened by screams and rushed into her son's room, where she fought off the intruder. Despite the fact that Harper sustained substantial injuries, and the absence of any physical evidence linking her to the crime, the police immediately discounted her testimony and focused on her as the prime suspect. In 2000, Harper was charged with capital murder by special prosecutor Edwin Parkinson. When Harper requested two capital-qualified attorneys to defend her, in compliance with state law, Parkinson announced that he no longer intended to seek the death penalty, forcing Harper to rely on a public</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>defender. During the trial, prosecutors asserted that Harper was angry about her loss in her custody battle with her ex-husband and used her pursuit of a post-graduate degree to vilify her as a career-obsessed woman with no time for a child. They also elicited false testimony from her ex-husband that she had once considered having an abortion (Harper was 17 at the time of Joel's birth) in order to demonstrate that she was capable of murder. In March 2002, Harper was convicted and sentenced to 65 years in prison.</p> <p>In 2004, Tommy Lynn Sells, a serial killer who murdered several children, confessed that he had broken into a home, stabbed a little boy to death and scuffled with a woman around the same time and place that Kirkpatrick was murdered. Sells's confession was remarkably similar to Harper's account of the crime. It was also discovered that the prosecution withheld exculpatory evidence and relied on false testimony from several deputies during the trial. In response, the Illinois Appellate Court reversed Harper's conviction and ordered a new trial. Harper was re-arrested immediately upon walking out of jail. In her retrial, the defense presented extensive forensic evidence substantiating Harper's account and established that her injuries could not have been self-inflicted. In July 2006, a jury found Harper not guilty of killing her son. Despite this, the day after her trial, Lawrence County State attorney Patrick Hahn praised Parkinson as "a man of the highest integrity."^[213]</p>				
November 12, 1997	James Chad-Lewis Clay ^{[214][215][216]}	Child sex abuse	Detroit, Michigan	25–50 years	1 year, 7 months	Yes
		<p>On November 12, 1997, a 15-year-old girl was sexually assaulted in an alley near Hayes Street and Harper Avenue in Detroit, Michigan. She said she was dragged into the alley at gunpoint and a cloth was put over her head and was raped. She had not seen her attacker before. The girl was taken to a hospital where a rape kit was prepared. The crime went unsolved. It was not until 2009, when the Detroit Police Department obtained a federal grant, that the kit and more than 10,000 others were submitted for DNA testing, a process that took several years.</p> <p>In 2017, a DNA profile developed from the rape kit was linked to James Chad-Lewis Clay because his DNA profile was in the FBI's DNA database due to a prior conviction for possession of a stolen vehicle. Detroit police showed the rape victim, who was in her 30s, a photographic lineup that included a photograph of Clay as an adult. She was unable to identify Clay. When police questioned Clay, he denied attacking the woman. When he was shown a recent photograph of the woman taken in 2015–18 years</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>after the attack—he denied knowing her. “I never seen her,” Clay said. “I do not know her. I never saw her a day in my life.” When he was informed that his DNA had been identified in the rape kit, he became angry. “That's impossible,” he declared. “This is crazy....I never dated her. I don't know her.” On August 4, 2017, he was charged with first-degree criminal sexual conduct. Not long after, the woman learned that Clay's full name was James Chad-Lewis Clay. She told police that she had a boyfriend in high school who she knew as Chad, and that they had been sexually involved at the time. She told police that she met him through a friend named Dion who was five feet, two inches tall, had green eyes, and played on the high school basketball team. She said that she and Chad would often skip school and stay at Chad's aunt's house. She said also she had a scar on her arm. When police questioned Clay about the woman's statements, he said he lived with his mother and denied having sex with a girl with the woman's first name or a girl with a scar on her arm. He denied knowing anyone named Dion. And he said nothing about staying at his aunt's house—a fact he later attributed to being in shock because of the accusation.</p> <p>During a court hearing prior to trial, Clay suddenly recalled the woman and that they had a sexual relationship 20 years earlier. However, during trial in November 2017 in Wayne County Circuit Court, the woman said she did not recall Clay or having consensual sex with him. The prosecution presented the evidence that Clay's DNA was found in the rape kit. There was additional DNA present that was not identified due to the size of the sample. On November 12, 2017, based solely on the DNA evidence, the jury convicted Clay of first-degree criminal sexual conduct. He was sentenced to 25 to 50 years in prison.</p> <p>While his case was on appeal, Clay's mother reached out to Steven Crane, of ACS Investigations, a private investigation firm in West Bloomfield, Michigan, to re-investigate the case. At the time, Crane was working on an investigation for Clay's cellmate, who suggested Clay contact Crane. In 2019, Crane obtained a photograph of Clay when he was a teenager and showed it to the victim. She identified the photograph as that of a boyfriend named Chad with whom she had a consensual sexual relationship. When Crane showed her a photograph of Clay as an adult, she said that was the man who raped her, based on seeing him in court. Informed that the photos were of the same person, the woman subsequently provided a statement saying, “The James Clay that is in prison for my rape was my boyfriend in high school who went by the name Chad.” Crane also located Dyeon McIntyre, who had green eyes and confirmed that he knew the victim and “Chad.” He said he played basketball during</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>high school, although on playgrounds. Shown a photograph of Clay as an adult, he identified it as “Chad.” When Crane provided the results of his investigation to Clay's appellate attorney, Melvin Houston, he declined to accept it or review it, according to Crane. As a result, Crane reached out to the Michigan State Appellate Defenders Office and subsequently an investigator from that office was assigned to work with Houston.</p> <p>When Crane couldn't get anyone to indicate that they were moving forward on a review of the case, he passed his information to reporter Elisha Anderson at the Detroit Free Press newspaper, and she began reinvestigating the case. On July 19, 2019, Anderson published a detailed account of the case that included interviews with the woman in which she confirmed what she told Crane as well as an interview with McIntyre. Clay's aunt told Anderson that she had a home near where the victim lived and that “Chad was in and out of my house all the time.” A day earlier, the Wayne County prosecutor's office and Houston had filed a joint motion with the Michigan Court of Appeals seeking to release Clay. A spokeswoman for the prosecutor's office said, “When we were informed by the Free Press of the identity issue in the case (the prosecutor's office) immediately began an investigation. It should be completed in the near future.” “Based upon our findings so far, we have determined that it is in the best interests of justice to move the court to have Mr. Clay immediately released on a personal recognizance bond until the investigation concludes.” On July 23, 2019, Clay was released from prison. On August 31, 2019, Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Wanda Evans dismissed the case.</p>				
Jun 7, 1998	Clarence Elkins	Murder, rape	Barberton, Ohio	Life in prison	6.5 years	Yes
		<p>Judith Johnson was beaten, raped and murdered while her 6-year-old granddaughter, Brooke, was staying at her house. Brooke was also beaten and raped, but survived. She told police that the killer "looked like Uncle Clarence". He was convicted on the basis of this identification. She later explained that she meant the killer resembled him, rather than being a positive identification and she felt pressured to testify against him at trial by the prosecutor. DNA testing performed after conviction from semen found on the victims excluded Elkins, but his appeal was denied. Elkins's wife, who is Judith's daughter, solved the case through her research. She identified Earl Mann, Johnson's neighbor, as a likely suspect. Elkins, who was in prison with Mann at the time, collected a cigarette butt from Mann. It was a match. ^[217]</p>				
1998	Luis Vargas	Sexual assault,	Los Angeles, California	55 years	16 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant (s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		kidnapping				
		[218]				
May 1999	Brandy Briggs	Child abuse	Harris County, Texas	17 years	6 years	Yes
		In May 1999, Brandy Briggs called 911 to report that her 2-month-old baby Daniel Lemons was unresponsive. Daniel was rushed to the hospital and died in Brandy's arms. The medical examiner declared the cause of death to be Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) caused by Brandi violently shaking the baby. Brandy was subsequently arrested and charged with first-degree felony injury to a child. After being coaxed into taking a plea deal by her attorney, who told her that she would receive probation, Brandy was sentenced to 17 years in prison. However, two pediatricians hired by Brandy's appellate lawyers found that the cause of death was actually a urinary tract infection. A new medical examiner also discovered that doctors inserted the breathing tube into the baby's stomach instead of his lung, depriving him of oxygen for 40 minutes and causing asphyxia. In 2005, an appeals court vacated Brandy's conviction, and in 2006, the prosecution dismissed the case. [219]				

2000S[\[edit\]](#)

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Feb 2000	Jane Dorotik	Murder	San Diego, California	25 years to life	20 years	Yes
		In February 2000, Jane Dorotik's husband, Robert, went out for a jog while she worked on their horse ranch. The next day, Robert was found bludgeoned to death on the side of the road. Despite the fact that four witnesses saw Robert out jogging, and one reported seeing him slumped over in a car between two men, police immediately zeroed in on Jane as the suspect. Just two days after the discovery of Robert's body, Jane was arrested and charged with first degree murder. The prosecution claimed that blood and DNA evidence demonstrated that Jane bludgeoned Robert to death in their bedroom, carried him down				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>the stairs, put him in the truck and dumped him on the side of the road. They cited her motive as an unwillingness to pay alimony in the event of a divorce, despite the fact that Jane and Robert had no plans of divorcing. In August 2001, Jane was convicted and sentenced to 25 years to life in prison.</p> <p>In 2015, a judge granted Jane's request for DNA testing. The testing later found foreign male DNA underneath Robert's fingertips and on the murder weapon, excluding Jane as a suspect. Her lawyers additionally discovered that the so-called blood evidence in the bedroom was never actually tested and that two of the lab workers involved in the case had a history of testing errors. In 2020, in light of the new evidence, Jane's murder conviction was overturned, and in 2022, prosecutors dismissed the case.^[220]</p>				
Jun 15, 2000	Paul Shane Garrett	Murder	Nashville, Tennessee	15 years in prison	10 years	Yes
		<p>Garrett was arrested for killing Velma Tharpe, a sex worker found dead in northern Nashville. Much of his 2003 conviction relied on unrecorded confessions, but Garrett stated that they were coerced and that he had told officers almost fifty times that he was not the killer. After being released in 2011, his conviction was vacated in 2021, and Garrett sued the city, receiving a \$1.2 million settlement. A different suspected was arrested for the murder, who DNA evidence tied to the scene.^{[221][222]}</p>				
Sep 28, 2000	David Camm	Murder	Georgetown, Indiana	Life in prison	13 years	Yes
		<p>David Camm was convicted twice for the murders of his wife Kim and two children, Brad and Jill. The key evidence against Camm was testimony regarding blood spatter patterns on his tee shirt. It was later discovered that one of the key prosecution witnesses, a blood spatter analyst whose findings had triggered the arrest, had falsified his credentials. He had testified at trial that he was a college professor in the process of getting his PhD. It was later uncovered that he had no affiliation to the university, had no training in blood spatter or crime scene analysis, and had never worked a single case prior to the Camm family murders. In 2013, he testified for the defense, explaining that he worked as an office assistant for a crime scene analyst and had been sent to the crime scene to take photos when he began voicing his opinions on the evidence. He claims the prosecutor, Stan Faith, fabricated the credentials for the trial.</p> <p>A new suspect emerged when the defense compelled the prosecution to run DNA evidence found on a sweatshirt on the floor of the crime scene through CODIS a second time. It was discovered that the DNA</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>was never run through CODIS despite the fact that Faith had assured Camm's defense team that it had been run and it returned no matches. The sweatshirt contained the DNA, prison nickname, and department of corrections number of Charles Boney, a convicted felon with a history of stalking and attacking women. He was on parole at the time for the attempted kidnapping of several college students from their apartment. Investigators had looked for Camm's DNA on the sweatshirt, but failed to investigate any other leads. A DNA analyst who worked on the case filed a complaint alleging that the prosecutor attempted to get her to testify that the foreign DNA sample was Camm's DNA. A fingerprint analyst who found Boney's prints testified to a similar interaction. The prosecutor was later discovered to be Boney's defense attorney as well as a personal family friend, and they admitted discussing the case prior to Boney becoming a suspect. Faith asserts this is coincidental and he did not know Boney was involved.^[223]</p>				
Jul 8, 2001	Kirstin Lobato	Murder	Las Vegas, Nevada	40–100 years in prison	16 years	Yes
		<p>In May 2001, Lobato, then 18, was staying at a residential motel in Las Vegas when she was allegedly attacked by a black man who "smelled like alcohol and dirty diapers." She was able to escape after she pulled out a knife and slashed the man's groin. Lobato was addicted to meth and had not slept for three days at the time of the attack, so she did not report the event to police, but she did tell friends. One of the friends who heard Lobato's story told a teacher who notified police. In July, a homeless man named Duran Bailey was found murdered on the other side of town. His penis had been severed. Although Lobato told friends about her attack prior to Bailey's murder and she had an alibi for the time of the murder, police suspected Lobato to be his killer. Police confronted her about the attack and she tearfully told them details. At the end of the interview, she was informed that she killed the man who attacked her and she was charged with murder. This "confession" would serve as key evidence against her. It wasn't until after her arrest that she discovered that the man whose murder she was charged with wasn't the man who attacked her. In 2017, her defense team convinced the appellate court that had the jury heard the strong entomological evidence pinpointing of Bailey's time of death coupled with her alibi witnesses placing her in Panaca, Nevada, they would have acquitted. Lobato's conviction was overturned. The district attorney took the further step of asking a judge to dismiss the case with prejudice, a move that bars her from ever being prosecuted for the crime.^{[224][225][226]}</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Nov 1, 2001	Ryan Ferguson	Murder	Columbia, Missouri	40 years	9 years, 8 months	Yes
		Ferguson, who was 17 at the time of the murder of Kent Heitholt, was convicted on the basis of a friend's confession to police claiming he and Ferguson killed Heitholt for drinking money. His friend, Charles Erickson, had mental health issues and substance abuse issues at the time and initially claimed to have no memory of the evening. Ferguson's conviction was overturned on November 5, 2013, after it was uncovered that the prosecution withheld exculpatory evidence and the witnesses who testified against him recanted their testimony. Erickson remains incarcerated, but Ferguson has vowed to work to get him released.				
2002	Melinda Bronson	Child sexual abuse	Queens, New York	Probation, lifetime on sex offender registry	9 years on registry	Yes
		After being placed into the custody of his alcoholic father, 11-year-old A.R. accused his mother, Melinda Bronson, of fondling him. Melinda was charged with sexual abuse and endangering the welfare of a child, and in February 2002, sentenced to probation and required to register as a sex offender. She was consequently unable to obtain any work as a teacher. After his father died in 2007, A.R., now an adult, revealed that his father constantly disparaged his mother in front of him and coerced him into falsely accusing her of sexual abuse. In light of his revelations, a court reversed Melinda's conviction, and the prosecution dismissed the case. ^[227]				
2002	Brian Banks	Rape*	Long Beach, California	6 years	5 years	Yes
		Brian Banks was a student at Long Beach Polytechnic High School when a fellow student, Wanetta Gibson, accused him of rape. He accepted a plea deal to avoid a lengthy sentence and ended up serving almost the entire sentence. The accuser was later recorded admitting that the sexual contact was consensual and that she made up the allegation so her mother wouldn't find out she was sexually active. Gibson's family had received a \$1.5 million settlement from the school following Banks' guilty plea for failing to keep Wanetta safe.				
April 17, 2003	Frances Choy	Murder, arson	Brockton, Massachusetts	Life in prison	17 years	Yes
		In 2003, a fire at a home in Massachusetts killed Anne and Jimmy Choy, the parents of 17-year-old Frances Choy. Frances and Kenneth Choy, her 16-year-old nephew, were charged with setting the fire.				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		Notes describing plans to set the house on fire were found near Kenneth's bed, but he claimed Frances had forced him to write them. He was found not guilty and left for Hong Kong before Frances's third trial began. Prosecutors alleged Frances Choy's sweatpants had traces of gasoline on them, but an analytical chemist hired by her legal team found that there was no gasoline residue on them. She was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison. In 2020, a judge vacated her conviction after Choy's lawyers found evidence that Kenneth had been the one who set the fire. The judge also ruled that emails written by prosecutors had shown "racial animus against Frances and her family." Choy and her family were Chinese American . ^[228]				
Oct 2003	Julie Baumer	Child abuse	Macomb, Michigan	10–15 years	5 years	Yes
		In October 2003, Julie Baumer took her ill 6-week-old nephew to the hospital. After doctors discovered a skull fracture, Julie was charged with first-degree murder. At her trial, one doctor identified the cause of death as blunt force trauma, while the other cited Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) caused by Julie violently shaking the baby. Julie was convicted of first-degree child abuse and sentenced to 10–15 years in prison. In 2009, Julie was granted a new trial due to ineffective legal counsel. At her second trial, defense experts testified that the baby was actually suffering from Venous Sinus Thrombosis. The jury acquitted Julie of all charges. ^[229]				
Mar 2004	Melonie Ware	Murder	DeKalb County, Georgia	Life without parole	4 years	Yes
		In March 2004, babysitter Melonie Ware called 911 to report that 9-month-old Jaden Paige was unresponsive. The infant was rushed to the hospital and died shortly thereafter. The police subjected Melonie to a lengthy interrogation, and that same night, charged her with murder. At her trial, medical examiner Gerald Gowitt attributed the death to Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) caused by Melonie violently shaking Jaden. In November 2005, Melonie was convicted of felony murder and sentenced to life in prison. In 2006, an appeals court vacated Melonie's conviction due to ineffective legal counsel and granted her a new trial. At Melonie's second trial, defense experts showed that Jaden actually died from sickle cell anemia and explained that his injuries were due to the disease and the hospital's failed resuscitation attempts. The jury acquitted Melonie of the charges. ^[230]				
Aug 2004	Richard and Megan Winfrey	Murder	San Jacinto County, Texas	Life in prison	2–5 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>In August 2004, high school custodian Murray Burr was found stabbed to death in his trailer. Police set their sights on Richard Winfrey Sr. and his two children, 16-year-old Megan and 17-year-old Richard Jr., after a neighbor said that they frequently visited Burr's trailer. Absent any physical evidence, police brought in self-trained dog handler Keith Pickett, who claimed that his bloodhounds could identify suspects through scent lineups. In one such lineup, Pickett claimed that his dogs identified all three Winfreys as suspects, who were subsequently arrested and charged with first-degree murder. At Megan's trial, prosecutors alleged that she shaved her pubic hair to destroy evidence, and some of her teachers even testified against her. Megan was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison, while Richard Sr. was sentenced to 75 years and Richard Jr. was acquitted. In 2010, The Texas Court of Criminal Appeals declared the dog scent evidence to be insufficient and acquitted Richard Sr. The appeals court acquitted Megan in 2013.^[231]</p>				
Apr 2005	Richard Gagnon	Murder	Conway, South Carolina	Life in prison	8 years	No
		<p>Convicted of murder in the deaths of Diane and Charles Parker Sr., both found shot to death April 12, 2005. In 2009 DNA evidence showed Bruce Antwain Hill was guilty.</p>				
2005	Lamar Johnson	Murder	Baltimore, Maryland	Life in prison	13 years	Yes
		<p>Lamar Johnson was potentially wrongly identified as the suspect in the murder of Carlos Sawyer following a 911 tip that the assailant had a particular nickname: "Boo Boo."^[232] This tip came hours after the fatal attack. Police followed the lead and found Lamar Johnson, who at the time was incorrectly identified by this nickname. At the end of the trial in 2005, Johnson was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison. There was no physical evidence that connected Johnson nor a clear motive for the crime provided by the prosecution. Eyewitnesses testified that Johnson "looked like" the gunman.^[233] In 2008, Lamar Johnson began filing with the court of appeals to overturn his conviction. The Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project (MAIP), a subset of the Innocence Network, picked up Johnson's case and began re-investigating.^[234] This process found new eyewitnesses that had originally not been interviewed or seen as important. The MAIP team also re-tested physical evidence used in the original case and visited the crime scene multiple times.^[234] On September 19, 2017, Lamar Johnson's case was reviewed in a writ of actual innocence hearing.^[235]</p>				
May 2005	Nicole Harris	Murder	Chicago, Illinois	30 years	8 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>In May 2005, 23-year-old Nicole Harris and her husband, Sta-Von Dancy, called 911 to report that their 4-year-old son Jaquari Dancy accidentally suffocated himself with an elastic band from his bedsheet. The boy was later pronounced dead, and the medical examiner ruled the death accidental. However, police zeroed in on Nicole as the culprit and subjected her to a lengthy and aggressive 27-hour interrogation, after which she confessed to strangling the boy. At her trial, Nicole testified that her confession was coerced but was ultimately found guilty and sentenced to 30 years in prison. In 2012, an appeals court reversed Harris's conviction, primarily due to the judge improperly barring the testimony of Jaquari's brother, who said that Jaquari liked to play Spider-Man by wrapping the band around his neck and jumping off the bed. In February 2013, Nicole was released, and in June, prosecutors dismissed the case.^[236]</p>				
Jan 2006	Tammy Smith	Child abuse	Humboldt, Iowa	10 years	4 years	Yes
		<p>In January 2006, 32-year-old Tammy Smith discovered that her 4-year-old son Gabriel had broken his arm and took him to the hospital. Gabriel was developmentally disabled and unable to talk, but Tammy believed that he stuck his arm in the washing machine, which was in poor condition and did not stop when opened. However, police believed that Tammy deliberately broke his arm and charged her with child endangerment causing serious injury. In June 2007, Tammy was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison. After her appeal was denied, Tammy filed a motion for a new trial due to ineffective legal counsel, claiming that her attorney failed to pursue the washing machine theory out of fear that the broken washing machine would constitute evidence of neglect. In addition, Gabriel, now a 9-year-old with improved verbal skills, testified that he did in fact break his arm in the washing machine. The judge denied the motion, but an appeals court reversed the lower court's decision and ordered a new trial, and in September 2011, prosecutors dismissed the case.^[237]</p>				
Apr 2007	Susan King	Manslaughter	Spencer County, Kentucky	10 years	6 years	Yes
		<p>In April 2007, Susan King was charged with the unsolved murder of her ex-boyfriend, Kyle Breeden, who was found shot to death in the Kentucky River several years prior. Despite the fact that Susan was a 97-pound amputee, state police officer Todd Harwood believed that she carried his 200-pound body to the Kentucky River, hoisted it over the railing and threw him into the river. In September 2008, King entered an Alford plea to second-degree manslaughter and was sentenced to 10 years in prison. But in May 2012, a man named Richard Jarrell confessed to murdering Breeden after the latter stole</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		money from him, in exchange for leniency for his brother who was facing federal drug charges. Despite Jarrell's confession, a court denied Susan's motion to vacate her guilty plea. However, in July 2014, an appeals court reversed the lower court's decision, and in October, the prosecution dismissed the case. ^[238]				
Nov 8, 2007	Raymond McCann	Perjury	Constantine, Michigan	22 months to 22 years	1 year, 8 months	Yes
		Ray McCann, a former reserve police officer, had been implicated in the abduction, rape and murder of Jodi Parrack , an 11-year-old girl and fifth-grade student at Riverside Elementary School. Following Jodi's disappearance, an intensive search was launched to find her, and McCann suggested searching in a local cemetery, where Parrack was found. McCann insisted that his suggestion was based on his intuition and experience as a law enforcement official, and his deductions about the probable locations where a kidnapper might have deposited her after a violent crime. However, officials were surprised at the accuracy of McCann's directions and began to suspect that he might have been responsible himself. They later claimed inconsistencies from McCann's police interrogations , and an apparent contradiction in McCann's own claim that he had walked near a creamery while searching for Jodi, an image that was not captured by local CCTV cameras. But McCann later stated that the interrogations were aggressive and incorporated known deceptions, including claims of forensic evidence in the form of matching DNA, a practice allowed by the United States Supreme Court in its ruling in Frazier v. Cupp , and that the camera angle could not have detected whether he was present at the location near the creamery. McCann was nonetheless charged with 5 counts of perjury , and fearing his ability to defend against them, he pleaded no contest to one of them. The key break in the case came in 2015 when the actual perpetrator of the crime, Daniel K. Furlong , was arrested following an attempt on another local girl. He confessed to the abduction, sexual assault and murder of Jodi Parrack. McCann then pressed his case for dismissal of his charges and overturning of his perjury conviction, and he was fully exonerated by a subsequent court upon review. ^{[239][240][241][242]}				
Aug 21, 2008	Stephanie Spurgeon	Manslaughter	Palm Harbor, Florida	20 years	8.5 years	Yes
		In August 2008, 37-year-old Stephanie Spurgeon, a long-time home daycare provider, received a new 1-year-old child, Maria Harris. After Maria was picked up from daycare, she fell ill and later died from a brain hemorrhage. Despite the fact that Maria had no external injuries, doctors claimed the hemorrhage was caused by abuse. Stephanie was promptly arrested and charged with first-degree murder. At the trial, prosecutors attempted to explain away the absence of visible injuries				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		by claiming that Stephanie threw the child against a mattress. Stephanie was convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 20 years in prison. In 2018, Stephanie was granted an evidentiary hearing, in which her defense attorneys presented medical evidence that Maria was suffering from undiagnosed diabetes. Tests showed that Maria's blood glucose was more than four times the normal level and that she had developed a blood clot in her brain. Additionally, an expert testified that her brain injuries could not have been caused by falling onto a mattress. In light of the evidence presented, the judge overturned Stephanie's conviction and granted her a new trial. Prosecutors later dismissed the charges. ^[243]				
Sep 21, 2008	Adrian P. Thomas	Murder*	Troy, New York	25 years to life in prison	6 years	Yes
		Four-month-old Matthew Thomas was rushed to the hospital by his father, Adrian Thomas, after finding him unresponsive. During the interrogation, investigators told him that it had been proven the child died from blunt force trauma and that they knew someone in the household had done it. They threatened to arrest his wife if he did not confess. He was convicted on the basis of his confession. It was later determined that the cause of death was sepsis . ^[244]				
Jan 2009	Melissa Calusinski	Murder	Lincolnshire, Illinois	31 years	Present	No
		State attorneys contended that Calusinski forcibly threw 16-month-old Benjamin Kingan to the ground—aided by a disputed confession. New findings from Lake County Coroner Thomas Rudd, show that Benjamin had an abnormal head shape and had suffered a prior brain injury months before the child died.				

2010S^[edit]

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
2010	Deron Parks ^[245]	Child sex abuse	Vancouver, Washington	Life in prison	8 years, 8 months	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
2010	Patrick McAllister ^[246]	Sexual assault	Brinnon, Washington	20 years, 10 months	5 years, 6 months	Yes
2010	Aisha McClinton ^[247]	Weapon possession or sale	Joliet, Illinois	5 months	5 months	Yes
		<p>Aisha McClinton was arrested March 14, 2010 outside the Stateville Correctional Center in Joliet, Illinois. She was visiting an inmate and initially refused to allow guards to search her car. When she ultimately consented, officers found a small amount of marijuana. During a second search, officers found a 9-millimeter gun in the waistband of McClinton's pants. She was charged with aggravated unlawful use of a weapon, taking a firearm into a penal institution, and taking cannabis into a penal institution. The latter two charges were dropped, and McClinton was convicted on April 14, 2011 after a bench trial in Will County Circuit Court of the aggravated weapons charge. Judge Sarah Jones sentenced McClinton to three years on probation and 156 days in jail. In 2013, the Illinois Supreme Court declared the charge of aggravated unlawful use of a weapon to be unconstitutional, vacating all convictions under that statute. McClinton's conviction was vacated on February 19, 2014. She filed for a certificate of innocence in early 2016. It was denied on June 15, 2016 by Judge Jones, who said McClinton was not entitled to the certificate because she had not established factual innocence. McClinton appealed. Her attorneys argued that McClinton had no need to prove factual innocence, because the statute under which McClinton was convicted had been declared unconstitutional, giving her a valid pathway to receiving a certificate of innocence under Illinois law. The Third District of the Illinois Court of Appeals ruled in McClinton's favor on May 10, 2018, stating that Jones had abused her discretion and ordering the trial court to grant McClinton her certificate of innocence. She received it on Nov. 27, 2018.</p>				
2010	Eric Anderson	Robbery, assault, illegal use of a weapon	Detroit, Michigan	15 to 22 years	8 years and 6 months	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
2011	Otis Boone	Robbery	Brooklyn, New York	25 years	7 years	Yes
2011	Livingston Broomes	Sexual assault	Brooklyn, New York	4 years	2 years	Yes
2011	Jennifer Weathington	Murder, assault, illegal use of a weapon	Dallas, Georgia	Life in prison	5 years, 6 months	Yes
2011	Elgerie Cash	Murder, assault, illegal use of a weapon	Dallas, Georgia	Life in prison	5 years, 6 months	Yes
2011	Matthew Ngov	Murder	Los Angeles, California	57 years to life	5 years, 9 months	Yes
Jul 2011	Heidi Haischer	Fraud	Las Vegas, Nevada	1 year, 3 months	1 year, 3 months	Yes
Jul 2011	Heidi Haischer	In July 2011, Heidi Haischer was indicted for allegedly perpetrating a mortgage fraud scheme. Kelly Nunes, Heidi's boyfriend, had concocted the scheme and filled out the documents but forced Heidi to sign them, refusing to take her to the doctor to treat her severe leg injury until she complied. However, the judge blocked evidence of Nunes's abusive and threatening behavior, and in November 2012, Heidi was convicted of conspiracy and wire fraud and sentenced to 15 months in prison. But in March 2015, an appeals court ruled that				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		the evidence was wrongfully barred and vacated Heidi's conviction. At her second trial, the jury acquitted Heidi of all charges. ^[248]				
Aug 2011	Lydia Salce	Attempted murder of her husband	Saratoga, New York	16 years	3 months	Yes
		In August 2011, Michael McKee returned home intoxicated from a night out with his motorcycle club and quickly became violent towards his wife, Lydia Salce, hurling a jar at her, grabbing her hair, yanking her head back, holding a knife to her throat and punching her repeatedly. During the beating, Michael accidentally dropped the knife, prompting Lydia to pick it up and stab him in self-defense. Michael, however, asserted that Lydia initiated the assault and he had acted in self-defense. The police sided with Michael and charged Lydia with attempted murder and first-degree assault, and in July 2012, Lydia was convicted and sentenced to 16 years in prison. In January 2015, an appeals court granted Lydia a new trial, ruling that the judge improperly barred a defense expert from testifying, and in May 2015, Lydia was acquitted of the charges. ^[249]				
December 27, 2011	Russ Faria	Murder	Troy, Missouri	Life in prison	3 years	Yes
		Faria discovered his wife Betsy Faria dead from knife wounds and called 911, believing she had committed suicide. After an autopsy found 55 stab wounds, Russ Faria was charged with Betsy's murder. Although four people said Faria had been with them at a regular game night when Betsy was killed, which was backed by cellphone data, the prosecutor accused them of conspiring with Faria. Faria was convicted, largely based on the testimony of Betsy's friend Pamela Hupp. In 2016, Hupp was charged with and later convicted of killing Louis Gumpenberger as part of a plot to make it seem as if Faria sent a hitman after her. She was charged with killing Betsy Faria in 2021. The case was depicted in the TV series The Thing About Pam . ^{[250][251]}				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
Sep 2012	Jasmine Eskew	Felony assault of a child	Great Falls, Montana	5 years	3 years	Yes
		<p>In September 2012, 21-year-old Jasmine Eskew called 911 to report that her daughter, Brooklynn, was unresponsive. Her boyfriend, Greg Robey, had been taking care of Brooklynn and was seen leaving the scene as paramedics arrived. However, police zeroed in on Jasmine as the prime suspect and took her to the station for a 4-hour interrogation. They promised a sobbing Jasmine that she could see her daughter if she answered their questions correctly and proceeded to accuse her of violently shaking her daughter and demand that she demonstrate her actions on a doll. Jasmine repeatedly denied hurting Brooklynn, but after four hours, she relented and confessed. Jasmine was then arrested and charged with deliberate homicide and felony assault on a minor. The defense argued that Jasmine's confession was coerced and that Robey had in fact struck Brooklynn, noting that his ring matched the hole in Brooklynn's skull. They also attempted to present an expert on false confessions but were denied. In April 2014, Jasmine was convicted of felony assault of a child and sentenced to five years in prison. In February 2017, the Montana Supreme Court reversed Jasmine's conviction and granted her a new trial, holding that the judge improperly blocked testimony from the defense expert, while improperly admitting Jasmine's coerced confession. The next month, prosecutors dismissed the case.^[252]</p>				
2012	Michael Winston	Attempted murder, robbery, assault, kidnapping	Milwaukee, Wisconsin	26 years	5 years	Yes
2013	James Frazier ^[253]	Murder, other violent felony, conspiracy	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Life without parole	5 years, 8 months	Yes
		<p>Shortly before 8:30 p.m. on May 14, 2012, 21-old Rodney Ramseur and his 21-year-old girlfriend, Latia Jones, were gunned down as</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>they sat on the front porch of the Ramseur home on West Sparks Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Witnesses said a man approached the house and asked if Ramseur was there. When Ramseur came to the railing, the man opened fire, striking Jones three times and hitting Ramseur as well. He tried to run away, but having already been hit eight times, he fell to the ground. The gunman then walked over and fired another shot into the back of Ramseur's head. The shooter was described as a young black man in a gray hooded sweatshirt and dark blue jeans who fled on foot. Police also said they were seeking an older-model gray Ford Taurus with a black hood that may have brought the gunman to the scene. Police quickly theorized that Ramseur had been targeted because six days earlier, he had testified for the prosecution in a murder involving a childhood friend. The murder suspect, Garland Doughty, later pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter. On June 19, 2012, Philadelphia police detective Philip Nordo, later saying he acted on a tip from an informant named "Nubile," took in 19-year-old James Frazier for questioning. Frazier later said that Nordo sought to cultivate Frazier as a source and to engage in sexual activity. Frazier said that Nordo threatened and intimidated him, including threatening to sexually assault him. These threats resulted in a false confession, Frazier claimed. According to the statement, Tevon Robison, a friend of Doughty—against whom Ramseur had testified—learned of Ramseur's testimony. On the evening of the shooting, Robison was at a restaurant with Frazier and Frazier's half-brother, Taunzelle Garner. During their conversation, Robison said Ramseur was a "rat" and that he wanted to kill him. In the confession, Frazier said he and Garner drove Robison to Ramseur's house looking for him. When they did not see him, Robison made a telephone call and asked, "Is he out there now?" He ended the call and got out of the car, telling Frazier to wait for him. Robison then walked to Ramseur's house and began shooting. After the shooting stopped, Robison ran back to the car, saying, "Let's go Let's go." Frazier initially was charged with two counts of first-degree murder as well aggravated assault and weapons violations. On September 9, 2013, following a preliminary hearing, he went to trial in Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas on two counts of third-degree murder, aggravated assault, and illegal possession of a firearm. No physical or forensic evidence linked Frazier to the crime—the prosecution's case against him consisted of his confession. Although detectives obtained search warrants for the telephone records of "Nubile," Frazier, Garner, and Robison, there were no records of any calls among any of them. On September 13, 2013, he was convicted of two counts of third-degree murder, conspiracy, and retaliation. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole. Robison and Garner were never prosecuted in the case. Frazier appealed and in July 2015, the Pennsylvania Superior</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>Court upheld the convictions. In June 2016, Gerald Camp was convicted in Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas of illegal possession of firearm and possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number. The conviction was based on the testimony of Detective Nordo, who said an informant named Rhaheem Friend had provided the tip that Camp was in possession of the weapon. In early 2017, while Camp was awaiting sentencing, his defense attorney subpoenaed the records of prison phone calls of Friend. An examination of the calls showed that Friend and Nordo were communicating frequently. Nordo promised he would intervene in another criminal case against Friend. Nordo and Friend also made comments suggesting they had a sexual relationship. Prison records also showed that Nordo had deposited at least \$400 into Friend's prison commissary account. After Camp's lawyer presented this evidence to the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, the prosecution re-investigated the case and agreed to seek to vacate Camp's conviction on April 11, 2017. In November 2017, Detective Nordo was suspended with intent to dismiss after an investigation showed he paid a witness in another case. A Philadelphia police spokesman said Nordo was the subject of a criminal investigation and that federal authorities were involved as well. On December 6, 2018, following an investigation by the Philadelphia County District Attorney's Office Conviction Integrity Unit, the prosecution asked that the murder conviction of Jamaal Simmons be vacated and the charges were dismissed. In January 2019, the Philadelphia Inquirer and Philadelphia Daily News reported that several weeks before the dismissal, the primary witness against Simmons told the prosecution, including Patricia Cummings, the head of the Conviction Integrity Unit, that after being held in the homicide unit for a day, Nordo had pressured him to falsely implicate Simmons. In February 2019, Nordo was indicted on charges of sexually assaulting witnesses and suspects, including once in an interrogation room. On March 5, 2019, Common Pleas Court Judge J. Scott O'Keefe vacated Frazier's convictions. On April 4, 2019, Conviction Integrity Unit chief Patricia Cummings dismissed the charges and Frazier was released. On April 18, 2019, Frazier filed a federal civil rights lawsuit against the city of Philadelphia and Nordo. The lawsuit said that "as early as 2005," the department "was aware of credible complaints that...Nordor, in his role as a Philadelphia police detective, groomed suspects for future sexual relationships. In grooming these suspects...Nordor promised leniency or reward money, used threats and coercion, and engaged in sexual assault." The lawsuit claimed that Nordo "used his position to cause witnesses to sign false or inaccurate interview statements and confessions." In May 2019, Cummings dismissed the 2016 murder conviction of Sherman McCoy, who falsely confessed during an interrogation by Nordo.</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s))	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
2013	Clarens Desrouleaux	Theft	Miami, Florida	5 years	4 years	Yes
		<p>Clarens Desrouleaux was arrested on January 23, 2013 and charged with three burglaries that had happened about two weeks earlier in Biscayne Park, Florida, a suburb of Miami. Police had said they focused on him after he was found to have forged and cashed a check stolen from one of the houses. There was no evidence linking him to the other two houses, but officers falsified an arrest affidavit and arrested Desrouleaux, a 35-year-old native of Haiti who had permanent resident status in the United States. He was interrogated, and the officers said he confessed to the three burglaries. The confession was neither written down nor recorded, but the officers would give sworn depositions confirming Desrouleaux's confession. Desrouleaux had previous convictions for drug-dealing and other non-violent crimes. If convicted at trial, he faced being sentenced as a habitual felon and serving 30 years in prison. Instead of taking that risk, he pled guilty on May 23, 2013 to three counts of burglary and three counts of grand theft. He was sentenced to five years in prison. He served four years and was released in 2017, then quickly deported to Haiti. In 2014, Biscayne Park began investigating its police force, after the town manager received a series of anonymous letters complaining about the tactics of Police Chief Raimundo Atesiano. The investigation revealed that the chief told his officers to make false arrests in order to improve the department's closure rate. A few months after Desrouleaux's arrest, Atesiano had boasted to the town council that there were no unsolved property crimes in Biscayne Park. Atesiano and three other police officers were indicted in 2018 and charged with violating the civil rights of Desrouleaux and two other men who had also been falsely arrested. Unlike Desrouleaux, the other two men had their charges dropped before trial. After pleading guilty in U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida, each officer received a prison sentence. Atesiano received the longest sentence, three years in prison. "Will somebody please explain to me how Mr. Desrouleaux gets five years, but the guy who framed him for those crimes that he never committed gets less of a sentence?" asked Carlos Martinez, Miami-Dade County's public defender. Desrouleaux's charges were dismissed by the Miami-Dade State Attorney's office on August 10, 2018. On September 18, 2018, Desrouleaux filed suit in U.S. District Court in Miami against Biscayne Park, Atesiano, and the two officers involved with his arrest. Since being deported, he has been unable to return to the United States.</p>				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
2013	Jesus Sanchez ^[254]	Murder	Wheeling, Illinois	45 years	4 years	Yes
2013	Sherman McCoy ^[255]	Murder, gun possession or sale, and conspiracy	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Life without parole	2 years, 8 months	Yes
2013	Greg Kelley	Child sex abuse	Leander, Texas	25 years	6 years	Yes
		Kelley was the subject of the Outcry , a 2020 Showtime documentary mini-series covering the case.				
May 18, 2013	Shamel Capers	Murder	Queens, New York	15 years to life	8 years	Yes
		14-year-old D'aja Robinson was killed by a stray bullet from a gang dispute while leaving a party in Jamaica, Queens by bus. Capers was convicted largely by a witness who said he saw Capers fire at the bus, but the witness later told his mother while imprisoned at Rikers Island that he had never actually seen Capers shoot at the bus. In November 2022 Capers's conviction was overturned. ^[256]				
Apr 2014	Courtney Hayden	Murder	Corpus Christi, Texas	40 years	1 year	Yes
		In April 2014, 24-year-old Courtney Hayden shot 33-year-old Anthony Macias in self-defense after he broke into her home and attempted to rob her. Courtney was already suspected of helping Macias orchestrate a recent robbery, prompting police to believe that she killed him in an argument over the proceeds. Courtney was subsequently charged with first-degree murder and aggravated				

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
		<p>robbery. She pled guilty to aggravated robbery and was sentenced to 10 years in prison. During her murder trial, medical examiner Dr. Adel Shaker testified that Macias was shot from a distance of three feet, which prosecutors claimed disputed Courtney's self-defense claim. Courtney was convicted and sentenced to 40 years in prison. In 2017, a judge vacated Courtney's murder and aggravated robbery convictions after it was revealed that Shaker initially concluded that Macias was shot at close-range, corroborating Courtney's self-defense claim, but changed his opinion under pressure from the prosecutors. In 2018, Courtney pled guilty to aggravated robbery and was sentenced to 12 years in prison.^[257]</p>				
2014	Maurice Hopkins ^[258]	Sexual assault	Pine Bluff, Arkansas	12 years, 6 months	3 years	Yes
Sep 2014	Arthur Morris and Jeanie Becerra	Assault	Topeka, Kansas	Not sentenced		Yes
		<p>In September 2014, police responded to a 911 call from the home of 34-year-old Arthur Morris and 21-year-old Jeanie Becerra, who denied making a call. Police officer Jeremy Carlisle-Simons proceeded to wrestle Morris to the ground and begin beating him severely. But Carlisle-Simons claimed that Morris and Becerra assaulted him, and both were arrested and charged with assaulting a police officer, disobeying a police order, interfering with law enforcement and disorderly conduct. Based solely on the testimony of the officers, the judge convicted Becerra and Morris of all charges. The very next day, the prosecutor watched body camera footage of the incident, revealing that Carlisle-Simons lied about the assault, prompting him to vacate and dismiss the charges against Morris and Becerra.^[259]</p>				
2016	Tazell Cash ^[260]	Robbery, other violent felony	Detroit, Michigan	10–20 years	2 years	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
May 2017	Alex Heineman	Sexual assault	Hudson, Wisconsin	Unknown	2 years, 2 months	Partially (Original conviction vacated)
		<p>In May 2017, 16-year-old Alex Heineman was accused of sexually assaulting a 15-year-old girl after both attended an event at the local YMCA. Heineman denied that he assaulted the girl and she refused an exam. The Hudson Police Department charged Heineman with second-degree sexual assault and Heineman pled guilty to third-degree sexual assault on the advice of his public defender. As Heineman was a juvenile at the time, he was required to stay at Eau Claire Academy. Due to incidents there involving an attempted suicide and a fight, Heineman was transferred to the controversial Lincoln Hills School, a juvenile prison. Within a month of entering Lincoln Hills, he was transferred to the Mendota Mental Health Institute after multiple suicide attempts and later ended up in the Eau Claire County Jail. Heineman was later charged with escaping from the Jail due to not returning from work release and instead was found in Virginia, Minnesota. In July, a mentor to the 15-year-old girl (now 17) reported to the Hudson Police Department that the girl confessed to her that she had lied to police about being assaulted after Heineman was charged. The following month, Heineman's sexual assault conviction was vacated and Heineman was removed from the sex offender registry. In February 2020, WQOW took down a story on Heineman after he threatened to sue the news corporation. WQOW had published an article on their website calling him a sex offender without updating it upon his removal from the registry. The story was removed. In April 2020, it was reported that Heineman was still convicted of violating the sex offender registry due to fleeing to Virginia, Minnesota. The Assistant District Attorney in charge of the case stated that they felt the conviction was valid and appropriate due to Heineman not returning to the jail and failure to update the registry while convicted of third-degree sexual assault. ^[261]</p>				
2017	Michael Hickingbottom	Assault	Miami, Indiana	6 years	1 years, 9 months	Yes
2017	Joshua Horner ^[262]	Child sex abuse	Redmond, Oregon	50 years	1 year, 5 months	Yes

Date of crime	Defendant(s)	Crime	Location	Sentence	Time served	Legally exonerated
2017	Brenda Jones	Arson	Friendship, Wisconsin	9 months, 7 years probation	Not sentenced	Yes
		<p>In February 2017, a fire destroyed the home of 49-year-old Brenda Jones. Brenda's home had extensive electrical problems, and she had spent the night with her sister after the electrician failed to show. The insurance company declared that the fire was electrical in nature. But after the fire, Jones's former roommate, Alan Onopa, approached Brenda, grabbed her by the throat and threatened to tell the police that she burned the house down unless she gave him a piece of the insurance money. Brenda refused and reported the assault to the police. Alan then went to the police and accused Brenda of arson, presenting audio tapes in which a female voice said she “lit a match” and burned the house down. Based on Alan's report, Brenda was arrested and charged with arson.</p> <p>At the trial, the police denied knowledge of the assault. Brenda testified that the voice on the tape was not hers, while her defense attorney highlighted Alan's extensive criminal background and argued that Alan had fabricated the tape to get back at Brenda for refusing to pay him. Brenda was convicted of arson and sentenced to nine months in jail and seven years of probation. However, before sentencing, Brenda was granted a new trial on the grounds of ineffective public counsel and the failure to disclose the assault report against Alan. The prosecution subsequently dismissed the charges against her.^[263]</p>				
February 14, 2018	Aaron Culbertson	Aggravated robbery	Canton, Ohio	8 years in prison	4 years in prison	Yes
		<p>16-year-old Culbertson was charged with aggravated robbery. Evidence showed that two other individuals committed the robbery. In December 2022 the state dismissed the charge, and Culbertson was released.^[264]</p>				

See also [\[edit\]](#)

- [Capital punishment debate in the United States](#)
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- [Wrongful executions in the United States](#)
- [Maurice Hastings](#)

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Further reading^[edit]

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