Promoting Excellence in Investigative Journalism

US OBSERVER
Vindicating the Innocent

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VICTORY SPOTLIGHT

Clatsop DA Forced to Drop False Charges

District Attorney Ron Brown's Attempt to Railroad Justin Simonson has Failed

By Edward Snook
Investigative Reporter

Justin Simonson

Clatsop County, OR – Pursued for 14-months as a criminal, Justin Simonson received word on July 22, 2021, that Clatsop County District Attorney (DA) Ron Brown officially dropped the false charges against him. Simonson now enters the ranks of other US~Observer clients who are victorious against a system that pursues charges against those who never committed the crimes. Now, Simonson must weigh whether or not he will seek to go after the county for all the damage they caused while Brown, his department, and the

Continued on page 13

INJUSTICE SPOTLIGHT

DA Ron Brown Wrongly Targets Another Innocent, Good Man

"Clatsop County [OR] citizens should unite against this out-of-control, corrupt district attorney"

By Edward Snook
Investigative Reporter

Clatsop County, OR – There is nothing worse than an elected prosecutor who is bent on getting convictions rather than serving justice. When evidence proves beyond measure there is more than a reasonable doubt, it should be the duty of these elected agents to immediately drop charges and not hold these innocent people in fear of legal jeopardy. It is abhorrent to do otherwise, and any prosecutor who routinely does so should be subject to removal – which is exactly what should happen with Ron Brown, the elected District Attorney (DA) of Clatsop County, Oregon.

As previously reported in the US~Observer, on September 28, 2019, Jewell Varsity Basketball Coach Dave Samuelson was cited by Clatsop County Deputy Sheriff Eric Dotson and Sergeant Chance Moore for Sexual Harassment and Telephonic Harassment of his assistant coach Shannon Wood. The Telephonic Harassment was later dropped for lack of phone calls. The Clatsop County Sheriff's Office failed to conduct any investigation before leveling these false and ludicrous charges at Samuelson.

On February 13, 2020, Samuelson was arraigned again for an additional

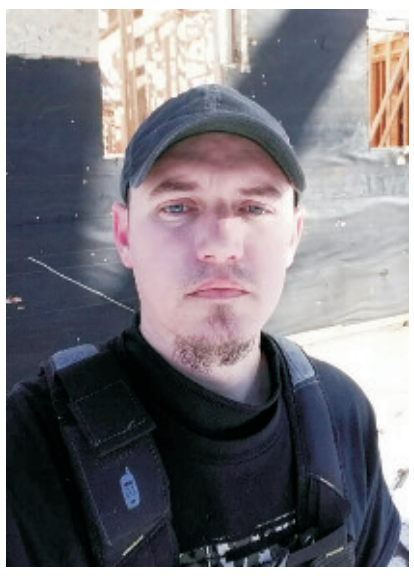
DA Ron Brown • *Photo by George Vetter*

Continued on page 10

Jailed WA Man Maintains Innocence

Information Sought in Okanogan County

By US~Observer Staff



David Sarazin

Twisp, WA - David Lee Sarazin, 36, formerly of Twisp, WA, is fighting for his freedom as he sits in the Okanogan County Jail. Sarazin had a new life when he was picked up in Anoka, MN on January 11, 2020, on a national felony warrant issued by the Okanogan Superior Court. David Sarazin maintains he is innocent and alleges the accusations of sex abuse of a minor are false and were a way to thwart his attempt at obtaining custody of his son in 2013.

There is no denying that Sarazin failed to appear in Court for a hearing on September 22, 2014. Why did he make the decision to jump bail? Afterall, Sarazin did not have a criminal history. Could there be underlying factors that led him to make that decision?

Sarazin may have been at wits end trying to defend himself. Upon his initial release from jail on January 14, 2014, he spent the next eight months attending court hearings. Sarazin claims he had major communication issues with his public defender, Attorney Melissa MacDougall. Sarazin claims that alleged victim, Kuirsten Pilkinton would

Continued on page 7

Dunn/Henley Trial Continued for 10th Time in Guardianship Nightmare Turned Criminal

By Edward Snook
Investigative Reporter

Jack Dunn and Rose Henley

Clackamas County, OR - On August 17, 2021, Jack Dunn and Rose Henley, husband and wife, appeared in Clackamas County Circuit Court on criminal charges stemming from their November 21, 2017, arrest. Henley and Dunn are being falsely accused of theft and criminal mistreatment of their longtime family friend and neighbor Wayne Faulk.

Henley and Dunn appeared in court anticipating a dismissal, based on emails that were sent to Henley from her current attorney Brian Schmonsees.

In an August 5, 2021, email Schmonsees states, "Deputy District Attorney Brooks said she is considering dismissal because she does not think she can prove the case at this point, either the mistreatment or the alleged theft." Schmonsees continues, "Brooks said she isn't calling Yela or Faulk because she thinks they were dirty." Clackamas County Assistant District Attorney (DDA) Kara Brooks is referring to Ann Yela and Linda Faulk.

The US~Observer has received very credible

Continued on page 11

WANTED

Please Help Us Help the Innocent.

Traveling to help people who are innocent of the crimes they are facing prosecution for is extremely expensive.

The US~Observer is asking supporters to assist us in finding good quality travel trailers or 5th wheel trailers. Having a self-contained trailer between 28' and 36' long would enable our investigators to travel to where the innocent desperately need our help – something they otherwise just could not afford. If possible, we ask that if you have a travel trailer you aren't using, please donate it to the US~Observer, or sell it to us at an affordable price.

If you don't have a trailer, then spread the word to your friends and relatives.

Call 541-474-7885 or email the US~Observer at editor@usobserver.com.

Florida Police Bend Entrapment Rules

Catfishing for Convictions

By US~Observer Staff

Peter Hill

Peter Hill, a St. Lucie County, Florida resident, is possibly facing years in prison for felony criminal sex abuse charges. They are crimes that Peter maintains he never committed, nor ever intended to commit. If convicted, he will also be required to register as a sex-offender.

You see, Peter went online to have a relationship with an adult woman on an adult site. The website stated you must be at least 18 to be on the site. An older lady police officer, who Peter thought was role-playing with him, deceived him by saying she was only 15 at one point in their conversation.

So much for, "innocent until proven guilty" in Florida - Peter lost his job without ever having been convicted of a crime.

Continued on page 2

Page 15

Page 16

Rachel Alexander
• Border Patrol's Failure to Protect
Page ... 7

John Whitehead
• T is for Tyranny
Page ... 8

Erick Erikson
• The United States of Contrarianism
Page ... 8

John Kramer
• SCOTUS Fed Police Above the Law?
Page ... 9

Billy Binion
• Police and Qualified Immunity Reform
Page ... 14

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Continued from page 1 • Florida Police Bend Entrapment Rules ...

If convicted, he will likely never find meaningful employment again - making him forever a burden on Florida taxpayers. Welfare and other government subsidized programs will be the end result for Peter. Does he deserve to be a strain on Florida taxpayers? Should Floridians think twice about convicting and paying to incarcerate people like Peter?

Here are some key points one should never forget while determining if Peter Hill is guilty or innocent.

FACT: Peter Hill NEVER sought to meet anyone under the age of 18.

FACT: Peter Hill SPECIFICALLY went onto a website that was for "adults" ONLY, in his attempt to communicate with people.

FACT: NEVER at any time did Peter Hill communicate with a person under the age of 18.

FACT: Peter Hill NEVER communicated, touched or had any dealings with anyone under the age of 18.

FACT: It is the Government's job to prove Peter is Guilty BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT. They will admit this.

FACT: It is not Peter's job to prove his innocence, although most people expect him to do so.

FACT: Can the Government prove that Peter does not role play online? NO. They had three years to search his electronic devices, etc. and do so. They never did. That is not Peter's fault.

FACT: The Government created an ad on an adult website (important) that claimed to be posted by an adult, then the adult (police officer), after making contact with Peter, pretended to be 15-years-old (entrapment by police, role-playing for Peter).

FACT: People role play on Craigslist. The first type of role playing when this reporter searched - was sex related role playing.

FACT: Role playing, whether online or in person, between two adults, IS NOT ILLEGAL.

FACT: Peter likes to role play online. He likes to role play with adults in person, too. None of which is criminal.

Simply put, there was never a "victim" at any time, yet the State of Florida is shown as the victim on Peter Hill's charging indictment. The State of Florida (Police) created a deceptive ad. They sought to make someone who had no intent of committing a crime, a criminal. Peter Hill has NEVER been arrested or convicted of any crime in his entire life.

Help send a message to Florida government. Let them know that there are serious criminals who commit serious crimes. Police should focus on those who seek to commit crimes, not those who do not (entrapment). Do not let Government spend your tax dollars incarcerating people who have NO INTENT to commit crimes.

"Could haves" come in many forms, but what happens when you're arrested for them, and a prosecutor is determined to convict you of serious and felonious crimes that never factually occurred? In fact, what if your "crime" was completely fabricated by the police, who utilized fraudulent means to entrap you? Are you guilty just because government says you could have committed that particular crime? Couldn't the government make us all criminals using underhanded tactics?

Peter Hill, and many other citizens who've been arrested in Florida are starting to fight back against what they consider a "government criminal entrapment ring."

What does criminal entrapment mean to you? As defined, *"In criminal law, entrapment is a practice whereby a law enforcement agent induces a person to commit a criminal offense that the person would have otherwise been unlikely or unwilling to commit."*

In Florida, thousands of people have been arrested and convicted for crimes which they were "persuaded" into committing by law enforcement officers. And entrapment is not solely limited to Floridians.

Of similar importance are juries; jurors determine if an entrapment defense is a valid criminal defense.

Are there crimes where you'd be okay with police using entrapment? The answer to that question poses a clear moral dilemma.

SUPREME COURT RULING QUASHES ENTRAPMENT

Lawyer Craig Klebanoff says, "One famous case where entrapment (defense) did work is *Sorrells v. United States*, 287 U.S. 435 (1932). Mr. Sorrells was a World War I veteran during alcohol prohibition. His probation officer asked him to buy some alcohol for a 'fellow soldier.' Sorrells declined, insisting that he 'did not fool with whiskey.' But the probation officer kept asking him over and over and eventually he relented. He was arrested, prosecuted and convicted, but the Supreme Court unanimously overturned his conviction on grounds of entrapment."

The Supreme Court held that, *"... decoys are not permissible to ensnare the innocent and law-abiding into the commission of crime. When the criminal design originates, not with the accused, but is conceived in the mind of the government officers, and the accused is by persuasion, deceitful representation, or inducement lured into the commission of a criminal act, the government is estopped by sound public policy from prosecution therefore."*

The Supreme Court overturned Sorrells's conviction stating, *"The judgment should be reversed and the cause remanded to the District Court with instructions to quash the indictment and discharge the defendant."*

DO JURORS PICK AND CHOOSE WHAT CRIME(S) ENTRAPMENT APPLIES TO?

What if an undercover officer approached an innocent person on the street, built a relationship with that person, then persuaded that same person to forge a signature? Would you find that person guilty? What if that person had not intended to commit the crime of forgery? What if that person never inquired about such crime? What if that person had no prior criminal history and was on the verge of retirement? What if the undercover officer never intended to maintain the relationship with that person beyond conviction?

Obviously, that person is not the smartest if they agreed to forge a signature. But should they be a criminal? Despite the obvious, wouldn't that scenario be considered entrapment? That is exactly what we asked in a US~Observer poll, in which we found that 40 out of 42 people polled would not convict someone under these circumstances.

But what happens when the "crime" is that of a more sensitive nature?

In a separate poll, based upon the arrest of Peter Hill, we asked:

"Would you convict an adult of a sex crime for role playing with someone online who said they were only 15 years old, even though it was an adult law enforcement officer they were communicating with?"

The 42 respondents came back with an astonishing 30 people wanting to convict. It appears that even though the set-up is the same if not even more egregious, the nature of the act makes people react with more persecution. But would more information change minds?

We followed up with the 30 respondents who wanted to convict:

"Would it change your mind to know Mr. Hill had gone onto a site where there shouldn't have been any underage people at all; that it was an adult's only site; that Mr. Hill answered a post which was presumed to have been put there by an adult (18-year-old); that there was never any intent to seek out a 15 year-old?

Would it also affect your decision to know Mr. Hill had no prior criminal history during his extensive life? And, most importantly, Mr. Hill NEVER communicated with a 15 year-old, it was always the adult law enforcement officer – there was never a real crime – and it amounts to nothing more than a thought crime created by a government agent. Would you still want to convict him?"

Fifteen of the thirty changed their mind but that still left 15 thinking it is okay for the government to entrap an individual as long as it is based upon a made-up sex crime.

This serves to show how so many innocent victims of false sex charges have found themselves behind bars; many jurors just can't get beyond their emotions to see that there was factually no crime committed when law enforcement prods a person through fraudulent means to comport themselves in a manner they would not have normally acted, especially when there was no intent at the outset.

Mr. Hill not only initially lost his freedom, he also lost his job of over 25 years. Mr. Hill lost his retirement. He lost his reputation. And, it was all because of an innocent "click" on an adult ad, on an adult only website, that specifically stated the advertiser was "18 years old." The presumption of innocent until proven guilty went out the door in this case. All of this happened before trial, with his mug shot published for the world to see.

Mr. Hill is not the only one to have been ensnared during the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department's "Operation Guardian Angel" sting. In fact, there are other stings across Florida and the U.S. with hundreds, if not thousands having been duped by law enforcement to participate in fraudulent criminal constructs designed to convict people, who most likely would have never committed a crime – and technically never did.

Here we are back to the age-old question; is it okay to convict the innocent if it means we get a few truly guilty people along the way? The US~Observer believes any innocent convicted is one too many.

Several people we polled responded to us with further questions; one great question was mirrored by several people: "whatever happened to catching someone in the act of a crime that wasn't solicited by law enforcement?" In short, the answer to that is simple. It's money.

There are many examples of why police use "stings" to secure convictions. As with most things that sound sketchy within government, we followed the money. It's no secret either. The amount of funds gained by law enforcement agencies across the U.S. can be, and often are, inspired by convictions.

Grant writers within police agencies gain funding for specific criminal convictions/arrests. Basically, if a law enforcement agency gains X amount of convictions for a particular crime, they will receive X amount of government funds to be used for that specific conviction/arrest. Some call this "filling quotas." Some call it "cash for convictions." Despite what it's called, it is real. And grant money isn't the only incentive. Asset forfeiture is another incentive. When police arrest someone, they often seize what property was deemed to be used during the commission of the crime. Initially intended to thwart drug dealers, asset forfeiture has become commonly used for other purposes. Vehicles are often seized, as is cash and other personal property. Law Enforcement in the United States earns an estimated 12 billion in asset forfeiture annually, according to Wikipedia.

OPERATION GUARDIAN ANGEL AND OTHERS…

It's no secret that law enforcement agencies across Florida conduct sex crime sting operations. They give these sex sting operations fancy titles like, "Operation Guardian Angel." And it works. The public often eats it up. One elected Sheriff who conducts sex stings, Sheriff Grady Judd of Polk County says his officers use social media sites to find alleged sex criminals. During a press conference Judd said, "but what we used was sites that children would be on." This, however, is not always the truth, which is proven by the fact that Peter Hill was on a site that specifically stated it was for use only by those 18 years of age or older – an "Adult Website".

ENTRAPMENT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT

What people are unaware of is many of those arrested thought they were going onto an adult only website, where they intended to meet other adults. In fact, Craigslist, which several of these stings have been conducted on, specifically stated, "By clicking on the link below you confirm that you are 18 or older and understand that personals may include adult content." Craigslist went even further by stating in their Terms of Use that the following was prohibited:

- Offers of solicitation
- False Content
- Misleading Content
- Deceptive Content
- Fraudulent Content
- Bait and Switch
- Postings… offering… unsolicited services or products
- Any… service… that violates the law or legal rights of others

Craigslist, and other "adult sites" eventually discontinued personals pages because cops were using them to entrap and arrest. Gaining public support was needed for the police to continue these operations. "We must stop human trafficking… We must end prostitution…" Yes, these issues are real, but the secret most do not know is police knowingly and willingly create criminals while fooling the general public into thinking otherwise.

Adding to the perception that entrapment could be refuted by the prosecution and juries are reports by mainstream media that condone unlawful police behavior. Mainstream media often enhances statements made by law enforcement. They warn parents of the predators that loom… And the relationship between mainstream media and police can and often does hinder the truth. Ratings and arrests drive both entities which makes for a cozy relationship.

Take NBC's show, *"To Catch a Predator"* for example. That show no longer exists. One would find it difficult to believe it was because of its high ratings. So why? Like many, I've seen the show. It would enrage me that an adult would meet or attempt to meet an underage person for sexual gratification. But how did this happen? One would believe it was simply adults looking for kids online and the rest is history. But what if that was not true? What if the producers of the show, entangled with police officers, created adult profiles online and then coerced those who responded to engage in behaviors that were not intended?

To Catch a Predator (NBC) was eventually sued for $105 million and settled just months after another lawsuit was filed against NBC. In that suit, the network fired Marsha Bartel, the shows former producer. She alleged the network fired her after she raised ethical

Continued on page 15

Free after a decade in prison, Philly man says police faked evidence in his case

By Samantha Melamed

(The Philadelphia Inquirer) - Without fanfare, in June, Jerome Loach joined the growing list of Philadelphians cleared of all charges after more than a decade in prison. He had been serving a 25 to 50-year sentence for a home-invasion robbery that took place while he was acting in a gospel play several miles away.

His homecoming came in the form of the unceremonious removal of a house-arrest ankle monitor about a year after his conviction was overturned.

Loach recently filed a civil lawsuit alleging "egregious misconduct" by Philadelphia police detectives, who he said had threatened him with the arrest of his son, hid information proving his codefendant had lied, and fabricated phone records to tie him to the crime.

In July 2020, the Philadelphia District Attorney's Conviction Integrity Unit agreed Loach had been wrongfully convicted — but did not concede his innocence. Instead, the DA offered a plea deal that would have made Loach eligible for immediate parole.

"He was adamant in regard to his innocence, and he rejected it," said Loach's lawyer, Michael Pileggi.

After Common Pleas Court Judge Tracy Brandeis-Roman vacated Loach's conviction, it took a full year for the DA to agree not to retry him. His case exemplifies how the already narrow road to exoneration can be even more perilous without unequivocal support from the District Attorney's Office's unit charged with reviewing cases for wrongful convictions.

Loach, 55, who had a serious criminal record, including convictions for armed robbery and aggravated assault when he was younger, said he had served his time and transformed his life in middle age.

He was running a barbershop before his arrest, he said, trying to provide job opportunities to those coming home from prison. He also helped out his sister, a minister, by performing in religious plays like one on the evening of Jan. 10, 2009, called "Clean Up Your Own Mess," at a church in South Philadelphia.

But detectives said a forensic cell phone analysis showed dozens of calls and texts placing him in West Philadelphia that night, colluding with two young men who forced their way into a home at gunpoint. One of the men, Sopheap Phat, who worked in his barbershop, also gave a statement against Loach — but recanted before the trial, saying he had lied because he was threatened with deportation.

After years of telling his lawyers the phone report was wrong, Loach finally filled out a subpoena himself and submitted it to Sprint.

Jerome Loach *Photo: TYGER WILLIAMS / Philadelphia Inquirer*

He was aware he didn't have subpoena power, he said. "For whatever reason, the phone company thought I may be part of the DA's Office, and they gave me the records."

The records conflicted with the evidence implicating Loach presented at trial by Detectives John Druding and Christopher Tankelewicz.

Druding is deceased; Tankelewicz did not respond to an interview request.

At a hearing last year, CIU supervisor Patricia Cummings agreed that there were "problems with his conviction" and that it should be overturned. However, she opposed his release on bail and his exoneration.

She offered a new sentence of nine to 18 years, by "demandatorializing" Loach's conviction. "That 'demando' is not likely to happen again if this office chooses to retry you," she advised, adding that, if retried, Loach "could get, again, 25 years to 50 years." She also noted that prosecutors could choose to pursue the theory that he was a coconspirator in the planning of the crime, rendering his alibi defense irrelevant.

The judge, Brandeis-Roman, found that Loach's lawyer was ineffective for failing to call what she said was a credible alibi witness. She also found that the failure to disclose the accurate phone records amounted to misconduct.

The District Attorney's Office, in dropping the case, did not affirm Loach's innocence. Instead, spokesperson Jane Roh said, "After they reviewed the case, they determined they had insufficient evidence to prosecute."

Loach, during his years at the State Correctional Institution Chester, worked with a team from Eastern State Penitentiary, creating animated films about incarceration to project on the prison museum's walls.

He lost his barbershop while he was locked up — but his collaboration in prison may have opened a new door. He recently applied to work for one of Eastern State's reentry programs.

"That would be everything coming full circle," he said. He recently stopped by to visit the mentors he'd met during the filmmaking process, to see the walls where his art had been projected.

Though it took years, and Loach had to overcome the DA's opposition, Loach said he's just grateful he had his day in court.

"What Patricia Cummings and DA Larry Krasner are doing, giving men the opportunity to be heard, is something unique. That wasn't done in Philadelphia in the past," he said, referring to the nearly two dozen exonerations during Krasner's tenure and the scores of other cases his office has agreed to review. "That's Philadelphia turning the page."

★★★

Wrongfully Accused Chicago Man Alleges Torture, Sues City, Prosecutor and Cops

Screenshot of Keith Walker

By TCR Staff

(The Crime Report) - In a recently filed lawsuit, Keith Walker, who claims he was tortured into confessing to the murder of Shawn Wicks 29 years ago, is demanding accountability from the city of Chicago, Cook County and Chicago police officers involved in his arrest, prosecution and conviction, reports the Chicago Sun-Times.

The lawsuit claims Walker was forced to sign a false confession to the murder of Shawn Wicks, a white teenager from Arlington Heights, after being physically and psychologically abused in 1991 by police officers who called him the N-word, beat him and connected a battery to his arm to jolt him with electricity, all while under the watch of former Chicago Police Cmdr. Jon Burge.

The suit also claims Chicago police officers and Cook County prosecutors fabricated and suppressed evidence, and city government officials concealed their knowledge of ongoing torture and abuse under Burge. Walker was 23 when he was arrested for the murder of Wicks. He was incarcerated until the Illinois Attorney General's Office dropped charges against him in August 2020. ★★★

Photo: John W. Iwanski/Flickr

'Literally in Hell': Man Exonerated in Queens Murder After 32 Years Behind Bars

Carlton Roman

By Sarah Wallace

Photo: PIX11/Darren McQuade

(NBC New York) - It was an emotional scene at a Queens courthouse Aug. 9th, as a man who served 32 years in prison for a fatal double shooting was exonerated at last.

Carlton Roman, now 59, walked out of the court building in the afternoon after what appears to have been a travesty and miscarriage of justice from the beginning, which included witnesses lying, a homicide file that disappeared and 911 tapes that suddenly surfaced.

But through it all, Roman believed that someday the truth would set him free. On Monday, it finally did.

"Everybody expects mistakes to be made, I'm not even angry that a mistake was made," Roman told the court. "But I'm not very pleased that it took 31 years to fix it. To me, that's despicable."

In response, the judge said Roman was correct.

"It's not just Queens that has to do better, we all have to do better. Because this shouldn't happen. This shouldn't happen to anyone," said Queens Supreme Court Justice Michelle Johnson.

Minutes prior, Queens District Attorney Melinda Katz said her recently formed conviction integrity unit had uncovered new evidence that raised questions about the only two witnesses in the case: Two known drug dealers, who said they were in a house in Jamaica, Queens, in March of 1989 when shooters barged in.

One of those witnesses said that he identified Roman because he did not want to identify the real shooters. There are also 911 calls from that night, as one victim died and the other survived to become one of the key witnesses.

Roman, who was a new father at the time, was arrested the next day. He would be convicted and sentenced to 43 years-to-life in prison, even though there was no physical or forensic evidence linking him to the crime.

"I've been saying the same thing my entire time, since I was arrested in March 1989 to now: I had nothing to do with it," Roman said.

Roman first talked with the NBC New York I-Team from Green Haven Prison in 2018 after 911 tapes surfaced about calls made by neighbors after gunfire erupted. At the time, Roman said he "had zero idea" such tapes existed connected to his case.

Residents in the area who spoke with the I-Team said that no one came to ask any questions of them regarding the shooting, and the 911 calls themselves raised questions about the timeline presented by police and prosecutors. But prosecutors in the district attorney's office dug in, and claimed that Roman's homicide file — along with everything in it — had been lost.

That's when the DA's new unit stepped in and apparently uncovered a key piece of evidence: The original case detective's notes about descriptions of the shooters provided by Paul Anderson, one of the eyewitnesses, who has since stated that Roman was not involved. None of the descriptions match him, either.

"Everybody here can imagine what it feels to be literally in hell, and this is my first 10 minutes," Roman said on the courthouse steps. "I'm not the only innocent person in there, there's dozens of people in there, and there's people in there who've been fighting for justice quite possibly longer than I have."

Roman said he now just wants to focus on his family, including his elderly mother and his only child — now 33 years old, but just 1 year old when her father was sent away. ★★★

In The News

WHAT THE?!

Oregon Gov Kate Brown scraps requirement for students to show they can read, write and do math

By Peter Belfiore

(DailyMail.com) - The state of Oregon will no longer require its students to demonstrate proficiency in math, reading and writing in order to earn a high school diploma in a bid to bolster minority students.

Gov. Kate Brown signed a bill late last month suspending the state's 'essential skills' requirement for graduation for the next three years while its Department of Education seeks alternative graduation requirements.

The bill extended a suspension of the requirements that was put in place during the coronavirus pandemic.

Proponents of the measure have said the state's proficiency specifications hurt disadvantaged students, while opponents say suspending them lowers the state's learning standards.

Charles Boyle, a spokesman for Brown, said the suspension will benefit 'Oregon's black, Latino, Latina, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, Tribal, and students of color'.

'Leaders from those communities have advocated time and again for equitable graduation standards, along with expanded learning opportunities and supports,' Boyle said.

The bill, SB744, passed both chambers of Oregon's Democrat-led Legislature in June, largely along party lines, with pushback from Republicans.

It came as the US education system has come to a crossroads over how it approaches issues of race and equity, with fierce conflict over the teaching of critical race theory - a divisive academic movement that has driven a wedge in the nation's education system in recent months.

'The approach for Senate Bill 744 is to, in fact, lower our expectations for our kids,' State Minority Leader Christine Drazan told KATU upon the legislature's vote in on the bill.

'This is the wrong time to do that, when we have had this year of social isolation and lost learning. It's the wrong thing to do in this moment.'

Education non-profit Foundations for a Better Oregon says the law opens the door for more 'equitable' graduation requirements.

'With SB 744, Oregon can ensure high school diplomas are rigorous, relevant, and truly reflect what every student needs to thrive in the 21st century,' the group said in a statement.

'Inclusive and equitable review of graduation and proficiency requirements, when guided by data and grounded in a commitment to every student's success, will promote shared accountability and foster a more just Oregon.'

Brown signed the bill into law with little fanfare, and it was not entered into the state's legislative database until July 29, 15 days after it was signed, the Oregonian noted.

According to the bill's language, the state's Department of Education is directed to develop its new graduation standards with input from representatives for 'historically underserved students,' such as those with disabilities, those who are from immigrant or refugee populations or 'racial or ethnic groups that have historically experienced academic disparities.'

The outlet had come out in opposition against the bill, saying that under it, students in the state might go five years without proper graduation standards.

It urged Brown to veto it in an editorial.

'Oregon schools were among the last in the country to reopen to in-person instruction during the pandemic,' the paper wrote. 'Our legislators should be focused on how to help students regain the ground they've lost after a year and a half of distance learning and hybrid instruction – not on lowering our standards.'

The outlet also noted that much of the criticism of Oregon's graduation standards centered around standardized testing.

'The testing that we've been doing in the past doesn't tell us what we want to know,' Oregon State Sen. Lew Frederick, a Democrat told KATU.

'We have been relying on tests that have been, frankly, very flawed and relying too much on them so that we aren't really helping the students or the teachers or the community.'

But passing a test has not been a requirement to graduate in the state since 2009, when its essential skills standards were initially put in place.

Students could demonstrate their abilities in math, reading and writing through five separate tests, or complete a classroom project judged by their individual teachers to prove their proficiency, the Oregonian reported.

In fact, only 11 states in the country require passing a test for high school students to graduate, according to Education Week.

And some states that do, such as New York states have proposed removing testing requirements for graduation, according to Chalk Beat.

So far, there haven't been reports of school districts in the state going against the directive.

Scott Depew, administrator for schools in the Oregon city of Hermiston said he was happy to see the essential skills requirement go, according to the East Oregonian.

Although he said he didn't find the requirements burdensome, he found them to be another hoop students would need to jump through to graduate.

Matt Yoshioka, director of curriculum, instruction and assessment in the city of Pendleton told the East Oregonian said he agreed the essential learning skills requirement sometimes created issues for students that struggled with tests.

The East Oregonian also came out against the bill in an editorial, writing: 'It's a laudable goal to improve Oregon's graduation requirements. High school diplomas should have relevance; they should ensure the students who receive one have, during the preceding years, learned enough to pursue a productive life as an adult.'

'But suspending such requirements, even for a few years, is more likely to hurt students, by awarding them diplomas that imply a level of education they haven't actually attained.' ★★★

'I Will Choke You. I Will Kill You.' Two Baltimore Police Officers Indicted Over Violent Arrest of Teenager

By Mike Hellgren

Maxwell Dundore (left) Brendan O'Learye (right)

(WJZ) Baltimore, MD - Baltimore police officer Maxwell Dundore faces 10 years in prison after a grand jury indicted him for assaulting a 17-year-old in the 2800-block of Mayfield Avenue.

The incident happened in April of 2020 when the officer saw the teen getting out of a car that had been reported stolen.

Here's how Baltimore City State's Attorney said the encounter unfolded: Officer Dundore slammed the teen face down on the concrete, wrapped his arm around his neck and told him, "I swear to god, I'll choke you out if you don't stop." As the teen tried to escape, the officer held him under his chin, and the 17-year-old struggled to breathe. He told him "I will choke you. I will kill you." Prosecutors said after the teen was restrained, Dundore kicked him in the head.

Several people in the community told WJZ Investigator Mike Hellgren that because of incidents like this, they no longer trust the police.

"There's a lot of work that needs to be done," said Jeffery Fellows. "As a Black dad with Black kids, it's frightening. A lot of times, I feel like police wake up on the wrong side of the bed. They bring their problems to work, and if they've got to subdue a person, they take their frustrations out on them."

Aaron Bell, who lives on the block, told Hellgren, "They literally have no credibility with me. There's no authority with them. They don't carry themselves professionally, and they don't treat people with the level of dignity and respect that they deserve. …Most of them walkthrough here and don't know any of us."

Body-worn cameras captured the entire encounter but police and prosecutors will not yet release the video though the incident happened 15 months ago.

Prosecutors also charged Sergeant Brendan O'Leary, who reviewed the video of the incident, with making a false statement.

They said the sergeant's report did not reflect what was seen on camera: O'Leary reportedly said the teen grabbed the officer's shoelaces causing Officer Dundore to trip and then inadvertently strike him in the face — when what prosecutors said the video really showed was a deliberate kick to the teenager's head.

Both of the officers have been suspended with pay and are currently on administrative duties. Sergeant O'Leary faces up to six months if convicted of making a false statement.

The police union has not commented on the incident, and we were unable to reach the officers.

Mayor Brandon Scott released a statement on the indictment:

"I am aware that two members of the Baltimore Police Department were indicted today for an incident involving the arrest of a teenager last April. I am disgusted by these allegations and remain committed to improving this culture and lack of humanity. Building a safer Baltimore is my top priority. Police can apprehend suspects without unduly harming or degrading them. Moreover, I will continue to advocate before the Maryland General Assembly for the necessary local authority to immediately terminate officers for clearly egregious conduct in the interest of public safety. I look forward to a swift and thorough judicial process."

4th District Councilman Mark Conway said the incident and the cover-up attempt are "appalling."

"There is no scenario in which brutalizing, degrading, and threatening the life of a teenager — or anyone — is an appropriate part of an arrest," said Conway. "It is situations like this that breed mistrust toward police in Baltimore's communities and frustrates city government's efforts to make our city safer."

Conway said he supports all measures to terminate the officers. ★★★

Former DEA agent sent to prison for more than 13 years for corruption

By Mark Hosenball

Chad Allan Scott
Photo: Max Becherer/the Advocate

(Reuters) - A former Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) agent was sentenced in August to more than 13 years in prison after being convicted of nine crimes including perjury, obstruction of justice, and theft.

Court documents said that Chad Allan Scott, 53, of Covington, Louisiana, had lied under oath and instructed others to commit perjury to convict an alleged drug dealer. Investigators also alleged that Allen falsified documents so that he could take possession of a truck bought for him by a drug dealer.

The Justice Department said that eventually, Scott and two other investigators began to worry that they might fall under scrutiny themselves, so they "conspired" to throw evidence of their activities into swamps near New Orleans.

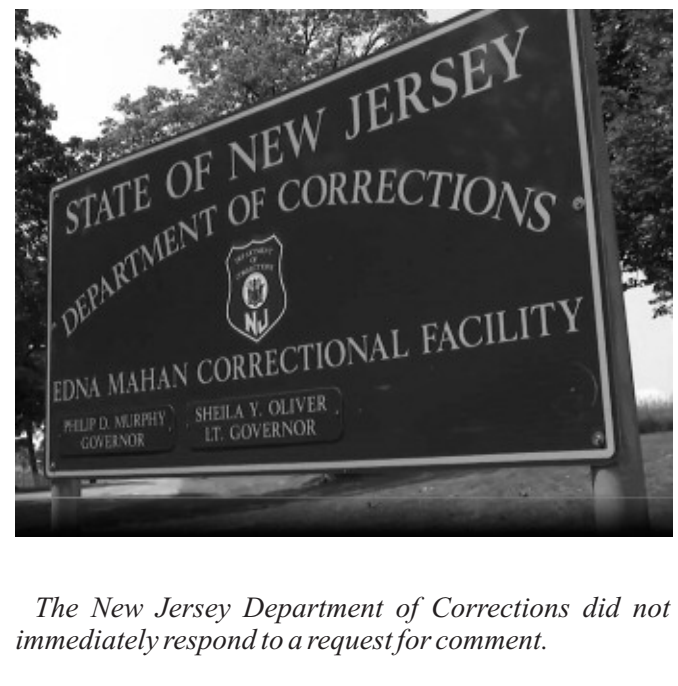
Prosecutors also alleged that Scott stole money and goods from defendants arrested by his DEA unit.

U.S. District Judge Jane Milazzo separated the Scott case into two trials, which produced guilty verdicts in August 2019 and June 2021.

"Chad Scott took an oath to serve his community with integrity, but rather than use his badge to protect his community, he used it to break the law," said DEA Administrator Anne Milgram. His total prison sentence is 160 months, the Justice Department said. ★★★

U.S. Justice Department probe found sexual abuse at New Jersey women's prison

By Jan Wolfe



The New Jersey Department of Corrections did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

US~Observer Editor's Note: What about criminal charges against the facility staff, or reduced sentences for those who were abused at the hands of those that are there to protect and care for them? If you know anyone abused at this facility, call 541-474-7885 immediately.

★★★

(Reuters) - A U.S. Justice Department investigation found that prisoners were subjected to sexual abuse at a women's prison in New Jersey, department lawyers said at a news conference to announce a settlement that calls for reforms at the facility.

Kristen Clarke

Kristen Clarke, head of the Justice Department's civil rights division, said the investigation found that the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women in Clinton, New Jersey failed to protect prisoners from sexual abuse by facility staff.

The settlement, known as a consent decree, must be approved by a federal judge.

New Jersey has agreed to change its training and policies and allow an independent monitor to oversee reforms at the women's prison, Clarke said.

Earlier policies at the facility deterred prisoners from reporting sexual abuse by staff due to the threat of retaliation, the Justice Department said in a court filing.

Former superior court judge sentenced for 2019 sex crime against a 14-year-old boy

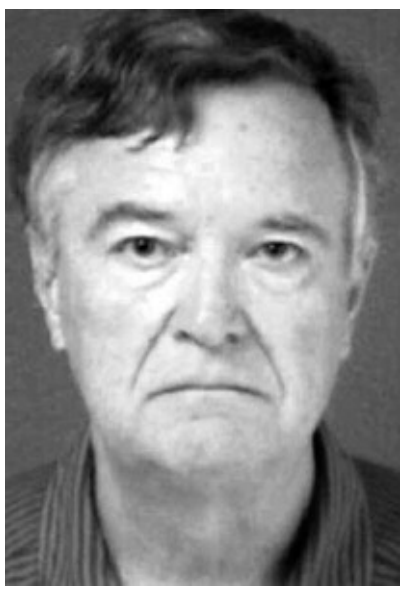
(WSOCTV.com) - Former Catawba County Superior Court Judge Daniel Ray Green, 67, was recently sentenced to serve nearly two years in prison to be followed by supervised probation after pleading guilty to felony indecent liberties with a minor and other crimes.

According to police reports, officers were called to the Baymont Inn, a hotel near Asheville, in March 2019 for a sexual assault of a 14-year-old child.

Investigators said Green gave alcohol to the child, showed him pornography, and performed a sex act. The child escaped by pretending he needed to get ice from the machine outside the hotel room. Once outside, he texted a close friend and called his mother, who then called the police.

Green was arrested and charged with indecent liberties with a minor, disseminating obscene material to a minor, and contributing to the delinquency of a minor along with providing alcohol to someone under 21.

He pleaded guilty and was



Daniel Ray Green

sentenced to a 20-33 month active sentence, a 6-8 month sentence suspended for 36 months, 45 days active sentence (consecutive) and another 45 days active sentence (consecutive) respectively.

"The outcome of this case demonstrates that Judge Daniel Ray Green was not protected by his privilege," said District Attorney Todd Williams. "He is being held accountable for his acts thanks foremost to the courage of the survivor in disclosing these traumatic crimes. I wish the young survivor peace and healing. Further, I commend the survivor's family for supporting him throughout the prosecution and applaud APD's coordinated and effective investigatory work in tandem with partners at the Mountain Child Advocacy Center, which was indispensable."

After Green's prison sentence is complete, he is also sentenced to serve an additional 6-8 months on supervised probation. As part of his probation, Green will pay restitution of $3,715 for the victim's medical expenses. He will also be required to register as a sex offender for 30 years.

A judge also ordered that Green be permanently disbarred from practicing law.

According to the district attorney, the victim's parents and other family were present in court in support of the victim during the sentencing hearing and approved of the result.

★★★

U.S. Justice Dept clashes with inmates over credits to shave prison time

By Sarah N. Lynch

(Reuters) Washington - The U.S. Justice Department asked a judge on Tuesday, August 10th to deny a bid by four low-level federal inmates to qualify for early release under a new criminal justice reform law that allows shortened prison terms through recidivism-reduction programs.

In the U.S. District Court in Oregon, federal prosecutors said no program or activity the inmates took part in qualify for earned time credits.

The inmates' public defender and some lawmakers have said the Bureau of Prisons' (BOP) criteria are too strict.

The rift could increase pressure on the Justice Department, which is under fire from civil rights advocates for its inaction to prevent BOP from sending thousands of federal inmates back to prison once the pandemic emergency is lifted.

At issue is a provision from the 2018 First Step Act, which aims to ease harsh sentencing for non-violent offenders and reduce recidivism. The BOP may award 10 or 15 days' credit for every 30 days of participation in recidivism-reduction or activities such as academic classes or certain prison jobs.

In a January 2020 proposal, the BOP defined a day of participation as 8 hours and limited the menu of qualifying programs.

"The math speaks for itself," federal defenders wrote in a January 2021 letter to BOP. "It would take 219 weeks, or over 4 years to earn a full year of credit under the BOP's proposed rule."

In Tuesday's case, lead plaintiff Adrian Cazares is serving a 71-month sentence for cocaine importation. He has held prison jobs such as a painter and an HVAC worker, and completed courses such as anger management, entrepreneurship, and a residential drug abuse program.

None of those are on the BOP's approved list, prosecutors said.

Judge John Acosta

"If HVAC work doesn't qualify, what kinds of jobs do?" asked Magistrate Judge John Acosta, noting the program's goal of reducing recidivism and facilitating reintegration into society.

"The ones that are identified by the Bureau of Prisons," federal prosecutor Jared Hager replied, noting the inmates have "not shown entitlement to any credit."

The list of qualifying programs and activities will be updated by Attorney General Merrick Garland, he added. ★★★

Pennsylvania Gun Range Court Victory

(SAF.org) - Bellevue, WA – The Second Amendment Foundation is celebrating a victory in Pennsylvania involving a long-existing gun club in the Pittsburgh area, as a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit has unanimously remanded the case back to the lower court for a second time. The case is known as *Drummond v. Robinson Township*.

At issue is an effort by officials in Robinson Township to write and enforce restrictive zoning laws against the 265-acre Greater Pittsburgh Gun Club, now operated by plaintiff William Drummond. SAF filed the legal action on his behalf. They are represented by veteran civil rights attorney Alan Gura, who argued both the Heller and the Second Amendment Foundation's McDonald landmark U.S. Supreme Court case victories.

The Township has been at odds with the range since the early 1990s, and the range was even closed for about ten years until Drummond leased the property in 2017 with the intent to sell firearms and operate the shooting range. The Township amended its zoning rules and in 2018, Drummond and SAF filed suit. While the District court sided with the Township, the Appeals Court reversed and remanded. Drummond's motion for a preliminary injunction did not receive a substantive ruling before the District Court dismissed his action, the so he again appealed.

"Assuming (Drummond's) motion is renewed on remand," wrote Circuit Judge Cheryl Ann Krause, "we trust the District Court will address it promptly."

She was joined by Judges Kent A. Jordan and Luis Felipe Restrepo.

SAF founder and Executive Vice President Alan M. Gottlieb is delighted that the Appeals Court "has ruled in our favor both times." He is confident of a favorable ruling in the case on remand. ★★★

Family Farm wins court victory against out-of-control fines and fees

By Andrew Wimer
Director of Media Relations

(Institute for Justice) Milwaukee - A small, veteran-owned farm in the Town of Eagle won an early court victory in its legal challenge against fines and fees that were issued after the owners criticized local officials. In December 2020, Erica and Zach Mallory, owners of Mallory Meadows, teamed up with the Institute for Justice (IJ) to protect their home and business after town officials threatened them with more than $20,000 in fines and fees as punishment for the Mallorys' speech.

"We're thrilled that the federal court granted our request for a preliminary injunction, protecting Erica and Zach from continued harassment by the town while they seek to vindicate their constitutional rights," said IJ Attorney Kirby West. "We'll continue to fight alongside Erica and Zach as this lawsuit moves forward."

The Town of Eagle in Waukesha County, Wisconsin, looks like many other places in the Badger State, with its rural homes and small farms. But, as Erica learned, this town has a dark side. After Erica began speaking out in support of neighbors, and against the town's leadership, she quickly found her own small farm in the crosshairs. The farm was subjected to numerous inspections, threatened with tens of thousands in fees, and forced to make unwanted and unnecessary changes. Now, with the order that U.S. District Court Judge Stadtmueller issued late Friday, the Mallorys are protected from further inspections and enforcement actions while their lawsuit continues.

"Wisconsin's state motto is 'Forward' and our family is thrilled to see our case against the Town of Eagle moving forward," said Erica. "Our hope is that the progress continues as we continue to speak up for what is right for our family and the citizens of the town."

The town's enforcement against the Mallorys raises many red flags. First, the government cannot punish individuals for speaking out, regardless of whether code violations exist. When Erica asked one of the board members about the board's decision to pursue ordinance enforcement against the Mallorys, Erica was told that she had "ticked off all the board members with [her] meeting comments and on Facebook," and so "the board members voted with emotion." As the federal court observed, this email provides strong evidence of the town's improper motivations and a First Amendment violation.

Second, the town's code enforcement is handled by a private law firm that, due to its hourly pay, directly benefits from initiating enforcement actions and drawing them out. When the Mallorys tried to resolve their enforcement action

IJ Attorney Kirby West

out of court, the firm explained that it would only agree to not pursue more than $20,000 in fines if the Mallorys agreed to cover all costs and fees—including the firm's bills—related to the enforcement. The town asked the federal court to dismiss the Mallorys' claim related to this improper profit incentive, but the court declined. Instead, Friday's court order sends these legal claims back to state court for further consideration.

IJ also represents fellow Town of Eagle residents Joe and Annalyse Victor in a separate suit to protect them from abusive fines and fees. The Victors' case is currently before the Wisconsin Court of Appeals, where the Victors have asked the court to reverse an $87,900 judgment that was entered against them for parking their tractor-trailers on their own 8.5-acre property. In addition to being unconstitutionally excessive, the judgment was entered in violation of Wisconsin law and the procedures required by the U.S. Constitution. ★★★

What's Wrong with Forensic Science? Everything, Says Paper

By Emily Riley

(The Crime Report) - Forensic science is badly in need of a "system overhaul" that is less weighted towards bolstering prosecution, according to a forthcoming paper in the Alabama Law Review.

Most experts now agree that much of the forensic evidence presented in modern courtrooms has been "junk dressed up as scientific analysis" and would greatly benefit from a series of abolitionist-framed reforms, writes Maneka Sinha, an assistant professor of law at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, the author of the paper.

It's also subject to racial bias, Sinha argued.

According to the paper, 24 percent of wrongful convictions were due to faulty forensic evidence, and 54 percent of those convictions involved Black or Latinx defendants.

This means that communities which are already more at risk of being involved in the criminal justice system are put at an even worse disadvantage by the forensic science community, argues the paper, entitled "Radically Reimagining Forensic Evidence."

"Real change requires scaling back and divesting from carceral institutions that create harm and replacing them with institutions designed to value Black, Brown, and other marginalized lives."

But, Sinha notes, forensic science is so deeply resistant to change that it is "'beyond 'reform' in the sense that tweaks around the edges cannot fix it."

"Rather, to root out the problems that prevent the forensic science system from performing in the ways that it purports to—as a system that provides reliable, objective evidence that can aid in the pursuit of justice—systemic overhaul is needed," Sinha writes.

Even though extensive research has proved that many reforms are needed for forensic evidence to be consistently reliable in court, such reforms provide a "veneer of reform" and little action has actually been done, the report argues.

"Ironically, the extent to which lay people without scientific training tend to trust forensic science evidence and mistakenly believe that it brings neutrality, fairness, accuracy, and certainty to the criminal process has allowed forensic evidence to do just the opposite," Sinha writes.

Because forensic evidence is most influential in the courtroom, the science itself closely aligns with the prosecution

Photo: jon crel/Flickr

side of the criminal justice system, said Sinha. Evidence that, because of vague national standards, isn't completely valid or verifiable, can still be used to sway a jury.

That's one reason why prosecutors have been resistant to genuine change, Sinha argued.

Two reports that focused on major reforms and upheavals of the forensic science system, the NAS and PCAST, were both largely undermined and discredited by prosecutors, as a way to "exert influence over the forensic science landscape," said Sinha.

"The latest effort, riddled with scientific inaccuracies, mischaracterizations and wholly false claims, appeared to be no more than a last-ditch effort by the Department of Justice under former President Donald Trump to discredit the PCAST Report before judges give it greater consideration in admissibility determinations," said Sinha.

"These reactions to and attempts to undermine the PCAST and NAS Reports are among the most prominent collective efforts by prosecutors to exert influence over the forensic science landscape but are by no means the only ones."

Unlike other forms of science, which thrive on peer review, rigorous controls for error and continued research, forensic science primarily exists to close a criminal case, putting more emphasis on timeliness rather than scientific research.

While there is forensic science research that resembles other standards of science, such feedback is less common and less widespread than in other fields, according to the report.

"Once a conviction is obtained, there is little incentive for prosecutors to encourage further research that might result in findings that undermine the forensic evidence that has proven persuasive to judges and juries," said the report.

"Instead, forensic scientists often receive positive feedback for their work, regardless of the accuracy of their findings."

Reforms arising from past studies have failed to make a significant impact on the justice community, claimed Sinha. For example, accreditation of forensic scientists who testify at trials, was meant to establish common standards across different forensic labs.

But the effort proved "weak" and "inadequate" to the need, the report said.

The lack of guidance on ensuring quality forensic evidence prevents assurance that what was submitted is accurate, said Sinha. Peer review, adequate testing, and reliability are all lacking when considering forensic evidence.

"Commonly used forensic techniques can be made admissible by wrapping them up in the trappings of science—as laid out by relevant admissibility standards—even when what lies beneath has hardly been established as reliable," wrote Sinha.

Because forensic evidence is portrayed as strict science in the courtroom, faulty or invalid evidence can cause an innocent person to spend time within the criminal justice system that they wouldn't have to otherwise -— leading to significant harm to their mental health, finances, as well as job, family life or housing status.

"Not only do forensic methods enable carceral harm; they also launder and legitimize it by cloaking surveillance, policing and prosecution with the allegedly neutral and objective aura of 'science.'"

Sinha applied what she called an "abolitionist lens" to the future of forensic science, citing that much like the movement to defund police, the forensic science system also needs to be completely rebuilt and restructured in order to function adequately.

"Forensics might still be used to identify those who cause harm, so long as such methods are not used to funnel people into the carceral system and so long as communities are empowered to determine how, and for what purposes, forensic method may be used in achieving accountability," said Sinha.

★★★

What Is Cognitive Bias and How Does It Contribute to Wrongful Conviction

Everyday people and law enforcement professionals alike are vulnerable to cognitive biases.

By Vanessa Meterko

(Innocence Project) - When a crime is committed, police investigators are tasked with developing a suspect based on evidence. But, too often, their cognitive biases — unconscious beliefs they hold and inadvertent mental tendencies they have — influence this process, and this can lead to wrongful convictions. To learn more, the Innocence Project's science and research team recently reviewed the existing social science research on cognitive biases in criminal case evaluations, with our clients' cases in mind.

For example, Levon Brooks was wrongfully convicted of assaulting and killing his ex-girlfriend's 3-year-old daughter in Noxubee County, Miss., in 1992. That same year, in a remarkably similar case, a man named Kennedy Brewer was accused of assaulting and killing his girlfriend's 3-year-old daughter in the same county. Mr. Brewer was also wrongfully convicted.

Despite the striking similarities in their cases, police honed in on Mr. Brooks and Mr. Brewer because they were the "usual suspects" — the boyfriends. They did not consider all the evidence and did not critically evaluate all possible leads. Nearly two decades later, DNA evidence identified the person who had actually committed both crimes and who had been a person of interest in the original investigations, resulting in the exonerations of both men.

Our research found that everyday people and law enforcement professionals alike are vulnerable to cognitive biases and that the biases can contribute to wrongful convictions.

WHAT ARE COGNITIVE BIASES?

In this context, "bias" doesn't mean prejudice or favoritism. "Cognitive bias" refers to a wide variety of inadvertent mental tendencies that can impact perception, memory, reasoning, and behavior. These tendencies are universal, meaning everyone has them. They are the human brain's way of adapting to a complex world. These biases are developed because our minds naturally identify patterns based on our experiences, environment, and the information we consume. They are like mental "shortcuts" we develop over time to help us process information and situations more quickly based on past experiences.

These mental shortcuts help us operate efficiently, but they also have the potential to skew our perceptions and, therefore, can undermine the search for truth in a criminal investigation.

For instance, a common type of cognitive bias known as the fundamental attribution error could lead law enforcement to focus on the wrong suspect. This phenomenon occurs when people readily and quickly attribute someone's actions to their character or personality, rather than considering situational or external factors that might explain the behavior.

This was the case for Innocence Project client Huwe Burton, who was a teenager when he returned home from school to find his mother murdered. After hours of interrogation during which officers intimidated and pressured him, he falsely confessed and later recanted. Rather than recognizing the power and influence of the situation (e.g., shock, grief, isolation, and threats during interrogation), when considering Mr. Burton's confession, police, prosecutors, and ultimately a jury believed that the confession reflected his character and he was wrongly convicted.

Photo: Thomas Hawk/Flickr

Their perceptions of him could also have been influenced by implicit racial biases associating Black people with criminality. Though he had no criminal history, Mr. Burton was portrayed as a drug user who killed his mother for money. He was finally exonerated in 2019, after nearly 30 years.

The fundamental attribution error is just one of many types of cognitive biases, including anchoring, the availability heuristic, hindsight bias, and confirmation bias.

HOW COGNITIVE BIASES CONTRIBUTE TO WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS

A type of cognitive bias that is commonly seen in wrongful conviction cases is confirmation bias — when a person selectively seeks, recalls, weights, or interprets information in ways that support their existing beliefs, expectations, or hypotheses. When initial impressions become firm conclusions based on selective information and without a critical evaluation of all the evidence, innocent people get wrongly convicted.

Bladimil Arroyo's case is a clear example of this. In 2001, Mr. Arroyo was questioned about a murder in Brooklyn. At the time he was interrogated, police believed the victim had been stabbed and Mr. Arroyo ultimately provided a detailed confession in which he said he had stabbed the victim. However, the medical examiner later determined that the man had been shot, not stabbed, proving Mr. Arroyo's confession to be false.

As in many instances of false confessions, it appeared that Mr. Arroyo had learned facts about the crime (and what police believed at the time) during his interrogation and incorporated them into his statement. As a result, his confession matched law enforcement's initial, but incorrect, theory of how the crime occurred, yet the State pressed on with the case.

Rather than reevaluating why Mr. Arroyo had confessed to something demonstrably false, the State changed its explanation of the evidence to fit the suspect they'd already built a case around. At trial, the prosecution explained the erroneous details of Mr. Arroyo's confession to the jury by saying that Mr. Arroyo claimed to have stabbed the victim in an attempt to minimize his involvement in the crime. Mr. Arroyo was convicted. In 2019, after an extensive reinvestigation by the Kings County Conviction Review Unit, his convictions were vacated and Mr. Arroyo was finally freed.

RACIAL BIAS

Social science research has demonstrated repeatedly what many already know from personal experience: Both individual and structural racial biases (particularly anti-Black bias) are woven throughout our criminal legal system. And these biases increase the risk of wrongful convictions and make the system unjust for all.

At an individual level, for example, such biases mean that Black men are perceived as more threatening than white men and are treated accordingly by law enforcement. According to the National Registry of Exonerations, Black people imprisoned for sexual assault are 3.5 times more likely to be innocent than white people. Black exonerees were also 60% more likely to be sentenced to life imprisonment than their white peers, and spent an average of 4.4 years longer in prison before being exonerated.

At a systems level, Black and brown neighborhoods are more heavily policed because they are perceived as more dangerous. This means that the people who live there have disproportionate contact with the criminal legal system and so their photos are more likely to be included in books of mugshots that are used to identify potential suspects. This ultimately increases their risk of being mistakenly picked out by an eyewitness for a crime they didn't commit.

A WAY FORWARD

Taken together, the 30 studies reviewed by the Innocence Project's team makes clear the vulnerabilities in criminal investigations. The existing research shows that members of the general public and law enforcement professionals alike are vulnerable to confirmation bias and other forms of cognitive bias and that additional environmental, individual, and case-specific factors may exacerbate these biases.

Various solutions to protect investigators from their own biases (e.g., instituting a "devil's advocate" role within police departments) have been proposed, but few have been tested. Evaluating the impacts and effectiveness of potential remedies is an important prerequisite for any policy advocacy efforts because theoretically sound interventions may not, in fact, produce their intended effect. For example, one study found that encouraging study participants to focus on taking the right steps in the investigation process versus focusing on producing the right answer had no impact on confirmation bias. It also found that when participants anticipated needing to persuade someone of their hypothesis, their bias actually worsened.

An approach that showed promising results when tested involved prompting people to consider the potential innocence of their selected suspect and asking them to generate arguments that would support their innocence. In another encouraging study, investigators were asked to consider how well the same evidence could be used to support different hypotheses.

One of the most notable findings from our review was the dearth of studies testing various strategies like these to see if they work in practice; more real-world research is needed to identify effective solutions.

Of course, evidence evaluation and synthesis are just one part of a larger legal process. In addition to police, forensic examiners, defense attorneys, prosecutors, and judges also have powerful roles in determining case outcomes. Critically addressing the potential influence of cognitive biases throughout this system and promoting and implementing proven, practical protections against these tendencies will advance accuracy and justice, and prevent future wrongful convictions.

About the author: Vanessa Meterko is the Research Manager at the Innocence Project. She earned her M.A. in forensic psychology from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, part of the City University of New York. ★★★

The Border Patrol's Failure to Protect Our Border Exposed

By Rachel Alexander

(Intellectual Conservative) - Longtime Arizona cowboy Ed Ashurst has published a book about what it's like living near the U.S.-Mexico border as a rancher, Kidnapped: Mystery and Collusion in the Bootheel of New Mexico. It's based on his real life experiences. There are a couple of counties in the Southwest known for high levels of drug cartel activity, Cochise County in Arizona, where he lives, and Hidalgo County in New Mexico, known as the Bootheel of New Mexico. Mexican narcos passing through burglarize, vandalize and commit murder in the area. He says the Border Patrol does what it wants, despite the complaints of ranchers or politicians. The agency tightened security in border towns, pushing the illegal activity out into the countryside.

The book tells the story of a rancher he calls Ben Moody, who was kidnapped by narcos within the last few years after their main truck carrying marijuana breaks down 12 miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border, seizing his truck in order to continue transporting their load. Ranchers want the Border Patrol to monitor that border area, but they don't. The narcos took Moody on a long drive, telling him they will eventually release him, but they made him sit in the back bed of a truck blindfolded and handcuffed much of the time, driving with no headlights. His friends went searching for him, reporting him missing to the Border Patrol, but a day later when encountering a Border Patrol agent in the field, the agent said he hadn't even been informed about it.

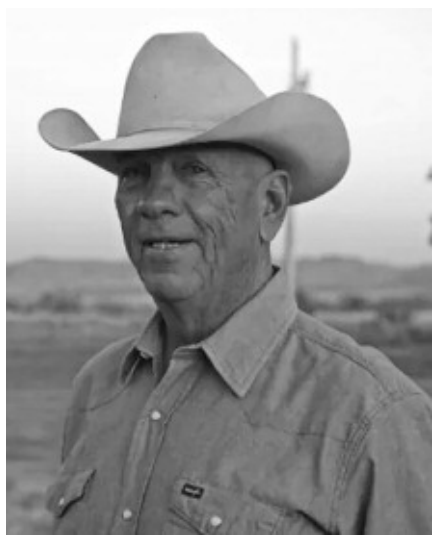
The Border Patrol never bothered to tell his wife that they'd found his belongings scattered in an area near a truck with Mexican plates that was stuck in the mud. The county sheriff finally told her. Moody escaped 26 hours later at a gas station when one of the narcos stopped to get gas.

The investigators made him feel like he was a suspect, not a victim. When he offered to show them the crime scene, located within a vast area owned by one family known as the Las Animas Ranch, law enforcement told him they would not go into the area because it was too dangerous.

Jim Yarbrough, a fellow rancher in Cochise County who speaks out about the Border Patrol's failure to protect Americans, decided to go find the narcos. Yarbrough had no confidence in the Border Patrol. He'd uncovered evidence with the help of a reporter of how the Border Patrol allegedly tried to cover up the murder of an agent by saying it was friendly fire. The reporter wrote a book about it, *Who Shot Nick Ivie?* Yarbrough said the Border Patrol once tried to frame him by sending an agent disguised as a Mexican to his ranch offering to sell him drugs.

A Border Patrol agent asked to meet with Yarbrough, and told him that he should stop telling people that Moody was kidnapped, claiming Moody was in on the drug smuggling. Another agent said to him, "We know all of you ranchers south of I-10 are dirty." Yarbrough demanded that the agent name one "dirty rancher" in the area and the agent could not. The FBI was also investigating and treated Moody as if he was guilty.

As Moody continued to talk to investigators, he discovered things that didn't add up. They knew that he had escaped from the narcos at a truck stop — but he'd never told them where he'd escaped. When he was with the kidnappers, they drove by a spot where the Border Patrol was supposed to be but they weren't there.



Ed Ashurst • *Photo: Matt Kwong/CBC*

Incredibly, the kidnapping never got any local or national media coverage on TV or in newspapers. But Yarbrough and the New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association got together and put on a forum to reveal to the public the truth about how dangerous the narcos are and the government's failure to protect people. Yarbrough told the crowd there is a 60-mile stretch of road along the border where agents will not enter at night due to the danger. He said even though the Border Patrol has a new $20 million station and 200 agents in the area, 90% of them were all north of the area where Moody was kidnapped. A New Mexico congressman who spoke at the event, appropriately named Earnest Dolittle, gave a speech about how terrible the situation was and how he was going to do something about it.

Investigators insisted that Moody take a lie detector test. All along, he'd never had an attorney. After he took it, the agent doing the test said it came out 98% lying and told him he was going to be arrested. The threats continued, but he was never arrested. He discovered they were secretly listening to his cell phone conversations.

Two of the women cattle ranchers in the area were invited to testify to a congressional committee by Dolittle. But when they got to Washington D.C., they discovered parts of their speeches were blacked out; they were not allowed to give key testimony. One of them still went ahead with the unwatered down version, and they cut her mic. But not before she was able to get across her point; that the government doesn't have a good idea of who or what is coming over the border. When she talked to Dolittle about it later, he said the committee doesn't care about the ranchers on the border and they already have their minds made up. He admitted he thought Moody was guilty.

The book concludes telling the story of how low-level Mexican drug dealers are used by the cartels as decoys, in order to distract the Border Patrol and keep them busy arresting them while the cartels transfer serious amounts of drugs.

Moody never received any follow up from investigators when he asked, not even a case number. He suffered PTSD. His gun was never returned to him. They destroyed his cell phone after examining it. And the media never covered his story. ★★★

Cont. from page 1 • Jailed WA Man Maintains Innocence ...

see his vehicle around town and follow it, laughing. He was fearful that she would cause the No Contact Order in place against him to be violated which would send him back to jail. Sarazin concluded that he was being railroaded into spending the rest of his life in prison.

This realization combined with his family's history with the criminal justice system may have led him to make the most difficult decision in his life; he failed to appear for the September 22, 2014, hearing which caused Judge Christopher Culp to issue a bench warrant. This decision also forced Sarazin to reconcile with the fact that he was leaving his son behind; the son he was reportedly trying so hard to protect from his "mother's mental health issues, violent tendencies and substance abuse." Sarazin rolled the dice and was on the run with a felony warrant hanging over his head. According to an Okanogan County Investigative Report, an expanded nationwide felony arrest warrant was issued for David Lee Sarazin from Okanogan Superior Court on December 2, 2014.

CASE HISTORY

Cindy Pilkinton-Hicks

According to a police report by Twisp Police Officer Ty Sheehan dated May 24, 2011, Cindy Pilkinton, now Hicks, made a complaint alleging her daughter, Kuirsten Louise Pilkinton, was communicating with Sarazin via social media, text and phone. At the time, Kuirsten Pilkinton was 13 and Sarazin was 26 years old. Officer Sheehan reported that Cindy Pilkinton stated, "she was having issues with her daughter lying, coming home late, leaving without permission and going places without permission." Officer Sheehan reported that he spoke with Sarazin on May 19, 2011, and "warned him not to contact or receive communication from Kuirsten Pilkinton." Sarazin was advised of Kuirsten's age and was informed that if communication continued, Cindy would seek a protection order on behalf of her daughter. Officer Sheehan wrote in the report that "There does not appear to be any criminal activity at this point." The US~Observer did not find that an anti-harassment/protection order was ever granted in the court. Officer Sheehan called the phone number that Cindy Pilkinton provided but found the number disconnected.

There is no law enforcement activity, either by the Twisp Police Department or the Okanogan County Sheriff, with the original complaint made to the Twisp Police Department from May 20, 2011, until two years later when Okanogan County Sheriff's Deputy Laura Wright spoke with Chief Paul Budrow about interviewing a victim of a sexual assault. According to her report dated July 9, 2013, Deputy Wright states the mother of the alleged victim, Cindy [Pilkinton] Hicks, had previously requested that Deputy Wright interview her daughter, Kuirsten Pilkinton. Chief Budrow set up a date and time of July 17, 2013, shortly after Kuirsten Pilkinton's 16th birthday.

Former Deputy Laura Wright

Why did Deputy Wright decide to open this issue up after it sat dormant for two years? In August of 2007, Deputy Laura Wright made a declaration on behalf of Cindy Pilkinton in her divorce case that Michael Pilkinton initiated in June of 2007. It has been reported to the US~Observer that Cindy Pilkinton was the Deputy Clerk for the town of Winthrop. Additionally, there are key people in Kuirsten Pilkinton's life that hold positions of power.

Sarazin was originally arrested by Okanogan County Sheriff Deputy Laura Wright on November 22, 2013. Then Deputy Prosecuting Attorney (DPA) Brandon Platter charged Sarazin with eight counts of child rape in the 2nd degree, each count having a maximum penalty of possible life imprisonment and/or $50,000 fine. DPA Platter also charged Sarazin with 5 counts of child molestation in the 2nd degree, each count has a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment and/or a $20,000 fine. According to the information filed in the court, the alleged acts occurred between September 1, 2010, and June 30, 2011. Judge Christopher Culp found probable cause and set bail at $100,000.00.

Since his return to Okanogan County, Sarazin states his 6th Amendment rights are being violated. Court records reveal that Sarazin's defense attorneys are providing the bare minimum interaction with him. Simply put, the public defender assigned to his case extracts his signature from him on court documents. Sarazin has written numerous letters to the court expressing the fact that his public defender, Attorney Randy Thies, does not return his phone calls and will not talk to him. Furthermore, Sarazin has requested discovery in his case every month since January and to date, does not have it. Sarazin's letters have consistently requested counsel outside the Okanogan Public Defender pool. During a status conference held on Monday, August 16, 2021, Attorney Randy Theis was removed and Attorney Michael Haas was appointed to this case.

Kuirsten Louise Pilkinton

EX-WIFE'S ALLEGED MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

David Sarazin and Korrin Oosterhof were married on July 14, 2007. According to court documents filed on February 11, 2011, Korrin petitioned the court for divorce. The marriage produced one son who was born in June of 2008. The parenting plan initially called for Sarazin and Oosterhof to have joint custody (50/50). The divorce decree and parenting plan ordered were filed on November 11, 2011.

In May of 2013, Korrin Oosterhof married Jeremy Welborn. By September 2013, Sarazin was concerned about Oosterhof's mental health and stability. Oosterhof's behavior prompted him to make a complaint to the Okanogan County Sheriff's Office (Investigative Report for Incident S13-06278). According to a report filed by Deputy Michael Blake dated September 18, 2013, Sarazin said Oosterhof was living in a van in Shelton, WA and threatened him and his children in two separate text messages. Sarazin told Deputy Blake, "He was afraid that she was going to come back [to Twisp] and pick up their son and take him with her." Deputy Blake informed Sarazin that he could not pursue charges based on text messages alone and that he would contact Korrin's husband, Jeremy Welborn and get more information. Deputy Blake advised Sarazin to contact Mental Health and CPS and provide them with the information he had. Deputy Blake also advised Sarazin to contact the district court if he wanted to pursue a restraining order.

Former Detective Rob Heyen

The next day, according to the report of Deputy Laura Wright dated September 19, 2013, Jeremy Welborn confirmed that Korrin had been emotionally up and down for a while. Welborn informed Deputy Wright that a while ago Korrin "up and left with her son unexpectedly and called him several hours later. She returned home and then about a week ago she left by herself." He said Korrin's former husband and father of two children, Emil Arndt, was killed in a truck crash in Shelton, WA." Welborn believed Korrin was triggered because Sarazin threatened to get full custody of their child.

According to Deputy Michael Blake's report dated September 19, 2013, Jeremy Welborn called and said Korrin had made two threats to him. Welborn said she was upset that Sarazin was attempting to get custody of their child. Welborn told Deputy Blake "Korrin stated she was going to kill his kids in front of him." When asked if Korrin was violent and if Welborn thought she could do that, he said she had been bi-polar and that she had hit him and damaged items in the past. Welborn stated that Korrin threatened his mother because she was unhappy their child was staying with his mother (Korrin and Jeremy have a child together). Welborn told Deputy Blake that Korrin told him "If he values his mother's life, he would not have him stay there anymore." Welborn petitioned the court for divorce on October 3, 2013.

CHILD CUSTODY

Sarazin heeded the advice of Deputy Blake and on September 26, 2013, he filed a series of documents in the Okanogan Superior Court including a Declaration for Temporary Order. On October 7, 2013, visiting Chelan Superior Court Judge T.W. "Chip" Small signed the temporary order giving Sarazin temporary custody of his five-year-old son. The order provided that Korrin would have supervised visitation three times a week for three hours each visit, supervised by Jessica Reece, David's girlfriend at the time.

On the same day of the filings, Detective Rob Heyen arranged to meet with Sarazin at the Twisp Police Department. Detective Heyen asked Sarazin if he could record the conversation. Assuming he was there to discuss the issues he was having with his ex-wife, Korrin, David agreed. Detective Heyen then read David his Miranda rights without disclosing why he wanted to talk to him. Once mirandized, Detective Heyen began his interview with Sarazin about the 2011 complaint made by Cindy Hicks on behalf of her daughter, Kuirsten Pilkinton. During the interview, Detective Heyen asked Sarazin if he was willing to take a polygraph test. Sarazin agreed to this, however the polygraph test was never arranged.

At the end of the day, Sarazin, strongly claiming his innocence, left Okanogan County believing he would not receive competent legal representation. He is now back in an Okanogan jail cell, still proclaiming his innocence, and his worst fears of not being represented have come true. If Kuirsten Pilkinton's accusations against David Sarazin are false she needs to call us and clear her conscience which will certainly haunt her for life if she is lying. If she is telling the truth we need to hear from her as well.

Editor's Note: Family and supporters of David Sarazin want to know the truth surrounding Kuirsten's sex abuse allegations against him and ask that anyone with information pertaining to this story contact the US~Observer at 541-474-7885 or by email to editor@usobserver.com.

★★★

The views expressed herein are the author's own.

COMMENTARY

Your Right to Speak Out

T is for Tyranny: *How Freedom Dies from A to Z*

"Plays, farces, spectacles, gladiators, strange beasts, medals, pictures, and other such opiates, these were for ancient peoples the bait toward slavery, the price of their liberty, the instruments of tyranny. By these practices and enticements the ancient dictators so successfully lulled their subjects under the yoke, that the stupefied peoples, fascinated by the pastimes and vain pleasures flashed before their eyes, learned subservience as naively, but not so creditably, as little children learn to read by looking at bright picture books." — French philosopher Etienne de La Boétie

By John & Nisha Whitehead
The Rutherford Institute

(rutherford.org) - The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a convenient, traumatic, devastating distraction.

The American people, the permanent underclass in America, have allowed themselves to be so distracted and divided that they have failed to notice the building blocks of tyranny being laid down right under their noses by the architects of the Deep State.

Biden, Trump, Obama, Bush, Clinton: they have all been complicit in carrying out the Deep State's agenda.

Frankly, it really doesn't matter who occupies the White House, because it is a profit-driven, unelected bureaucracy—call it whatever you will: the Deep State, the Controllers, the masterminds, the shadow government, the corporate elite, the police state, the surveillance state, the military industrial complex—that is actually calling the shots

Our losses are mounting with every passing day, part of a calculated siege intended to ensure our defeat at the hands of a totalitarian regime.

Free speech, the right to protest, the right to challenge government wrongdoing, due process, a presumption of innocence, the right to self-defense, accountability and transparency in government, privacy, media, sovereignty, assembly, bodily integrity, representative government: all of these and more are casualties in the government's war on the American people.

Set against a backdrop of government surveillance, militarized federal police, SWAT team raids, asset forfeiture, overcriminalization, armed surveillance drones, whole body scanners, stop and frisk searches, and the like—all of which have been sanctioned by Congress, the White House and the courts—our constitutional freedoms are being steadily chipped away at, undermined, eroded, whittled down, and generally discarded.

As a result, the American people continue to be treated like enemy combatants, to be spied on, tracked, scanned, frisked, searched, subjected to all manner of intrusions, intimidated, invaded, raided, manhandled, censored, silenced, shot at, locked up, and denied due process.

None of these dangers have dissipated in any way.

They have merely disappeared from our televised news streams.

Thus, in the interest of liberty and truth, here's an A-to-Z primer that spells out the grim realities of life in the American Police State that no one seems to be talking about anymore.

A is for the AMERICAN POLICE STATE. A police state "is characterized by bureaucracy, secrecy, perpetual wars, a nation of suspects, militarization, surveillance, widespread police presence, and a citizenry with little recourse against police actions."

B is for our battered BILL OF RIGHTS. In the militarized police culture that is America today, where you can be kicked, punched, tasered, shot, intimidated, harassed, stripped, searched, brutalized, terrorized, wrongfully arrested, and even killed by a police officer, and that officer is rarely held accountable for violating your rights, the Bill of Rights doesn't amount to much.

C is for CIVIL ASSET FORFEITURE. This governmental scheme to deprive Americans of their liberties—namely, the right to property—is being carried out under the guise of civil asset forfeiture, a government practice wherein government agents (usually the police and now TSA agents) seize private property they "suspect" may be connected to criminal activity. Then, whether or not any crime is actually proven to have taken place, the government keeps the citizen's property and it's virtually impossible to get it back.

D is for DRONES. It was estimated that at least 30,000 drones are now airborne in American airspace, part of an $80 billion industry. Although some drones may be used for benevolent purposes, many are also being equipped with lasers, tasers and scanning devices, among other weapons—all aimed at "we the people."

E is for EMERGENCY STATE. From 9/11 to COVID-19, we have been the subjected to an "emergency state" that justifies all manner of government tyranny and power grabs in the so-called name of national security. The government's ongoing attempts to declare so-called national emergencies in order to circumvent the Constitution's system of checks and balances constitutes yet another expansion of presidential power that exposes the nation to further constitutional peril.

F is for FASCISM. A study conducted by Princeton and Northwestern University concluded that the U.S. government does not represent the majority of American citizens. Instead, the study found that the government is ruled by the rich and powerful, or the so-called "economic elite." Moreover, the researchers concluded that policies enacted by this governmental elite nearly always favor special interests and lobbying groups. In other words, we are being ruled by an oligarchy disguised as a democracy, and arguably on our way towards fascism—a form of government where private corporate interests rule, money calls the shots, and the people are seen as mere economic units or databits.

G is for GRENADE LAUNCHERS and GLOBAL POLICE. The federal government has distributed more than $18 billion worth of battlefield-appropriate military weapons, vehicles and equipment such as drones, tanks, and grenade launchers to domestic police departments across the country. As a result, most small-town police forces now have enough firepower to render any citizen resistance futile. Now take those small-town police forces, train them to look and act like the military, and then enlist them to be part of the United Nations' Strong Cities Network program, and you not only have a standing army that operates beyond the reach of the Constitution but one that is part of a global police force.

H is for HOLLOW-POINT BULLETS. The government's efforts to militarize and weaponize its agencies and employees is reaching epic proportions, with federal agencies as varied as the Department of Homeland Security and the Social Security Administration stockpiling millions of lethal hollow-point bullets, which violate international law. Ironically, while the government continues to push for stricter gun laws for the general populace, the U.S. military's arsenal of weapons makes the average American's handgun look like a Tinker Toy.

I is for the INTERNET OF THINGS, in which internet-connected "things" monitor your home, your health and your habits in order to keep your pantry stocked, your utilities regulated and your life under control and relatively worry-free. The key word here, however, is control. This "connected" industry propels us closer to a future where police agencies apprehend virtually anyone if the government "thinks" they may commit a crime, driverless cars populate the highways, and a person's biometrics are constantly scanned and used to track their movements, target them for advertising, and keep them under perpetual surveillance.

J is for JAILING FOR PROFIT. Having outsourced their inmate population to private prisons run by private corporations, this profit-driven form of mass punishment has given rise to a $70 billion private prison industry that relies on the complicity of state governments to keep their privately run prisons full by jailing large numbers of Americans for petty crimes.

K is for *KENTUCKY V. KING.* In an 8-1 ruling, the Supreme Court ruled that police officers can break into homes, without a warrant, even if it's the wrong home as long as they think they may have a reason to do so. Despite the fact that the police in question ended up pursuing the wrong suspect, invaded the wrong apartment and violated just about every tenet that stands between the citizenry and a police state, the Court sanctioned the warrantless raid, leaving Americans with little real protection in the face of all manner of abuses by law enforcement officials.

L is for LICENSE PLATE READERS, which enable law enforcement and private agencies to track the whereabouts of vehicles, and their occupants, all across the country. This data collected on tens of thousands of innocent people is also being shared between police agencies, as well as with government fusion centers and private companies. This puts Big Brother in the driver's seat.

M is for MAIN CORE. Since the 1980s, the U.S. government has acquired and maintained, without warrant or court order, a database of names and information on Americans considered to be threats to the nation. As Salon reports, this database, reportedly dubbed "Main Core," is to be used by the Army and FEMA in times of national emergency or under martial law to locate and round up Americans seen as threats to national security. There are at least 8 million Americans in the Main Core database.

N is for NO-KNOCK RAIDS. Owing to the militarization of the nation's police forces, SWAT teams are now increasingly being deployed for routine police matters. In fact, more than 80,000 of these paramilitary raids are carried out every year. That translates to more than 200 SWAT team raids every day in which police crash through doors, damage private property, terrorize adults and children alike, kill family pets, assault or shoot anyone that is perceived as threatening—and all in the pursuit of someone merely suspected of a crime, usually possession of some small amount of drugs.

O is for our OVER-CRIMINALIZATION and OVERREGULATION. Thanks to an overabundance of 4500-plus federal crimes and 400,000 plus rules and regulations, it's estimated that the average American actually commits three felonies a day without knowing it. As a result of this overcriminalization, we're seeing an uptick in Americans being arrested and jailed for such absurd "violations" as letting their kids play at a park unsupervised, collecting rainwater and snow runoff on their own property, growing vegetables in their yard, and holding Bible studies in their living room.

P is for PATHOCRACY and PRECRIME. When our own government treats us as things to be manipulated, maneuvered, mined for data, manhandled by police and other government agents, mistreated, and then jailed in profit-driven private prisons if we dare step out of line, we are no longer operating under a constitutional republic. Instead, what we are experiencing is a pathocracy: tyranny at the hands of a psychopathic government, which "operates against the interests of its own people except for favoring certain groups." Couple that with the government's burgeoning precrime programs, which will use fusion centers, data collection agencies,

Continued on page 12

The United States of Contrarianism

By Erick Erickson

(Townhall.com) - Contrarianism has run amok in the United States. It is a byproduct of moving into postmodernism. Instead of focusing on what is true, we now all focus on our personal truths with no regard to actual truth. If we believe it is true, then by God in heaven it is true!

Combine that with our increasing divisions as a society, and many people's truth is now based on being exactly opposite their opposing tribe. Everyone prides themselves on their individual thought when really their thoughts are not individual but based on tribal consent. No one sees it that way, but it is that way. People gauge what they think is true based on what everyone else in their tribe says is true and decide they too have, independently and uniquely, arrived at the exact same conclusion.

Each person, a master of his own destiny, does not even realize he is in a herd. One could reasonably conclude that if buffaloes or lemmings could speak, each one would claim it chose to go in that direction all by itself -- the direction in which literally every member of the herd is going. There is, after all, safety in numbers and if everyone else in the herd is headed in a direction, you will probably head that way too.

The United States is now fairly evenly divided, and no one trusts institutions. The media has destroyed its own credibility. The bureaucracy can be bullied by special interests. People are too cynical to trust politicians. So, they trust their friends and the communities that they have increasingly built, online or through political interaction, to look and think just like themselves. The result is now a handful of groups that claim independent thought, expert input and political power at different levels, but remarkably stake out positions exactly opposite the other groups.

The actual independent thinker tends to be increasingly isolated and, as everyone wants to belong to a community, often must make compromises to fit in. But most people do not want to ride in turbulent seas, so they go along to get along within their tribe. That is an important distinction because there are those, on both sides of the political aisle, who rock the boat. If your tribe is committed to rocking the boat, calm seas are your turbulence.

Photo: Vic/Flickr

Unfortunately for the country, this has left us largely without good ideas and sound public policy. Each tribe wishes to be contrary to the other tribe. Not too long ago, if one of America's political tribes staked out position X, the other tribe most assuredly would stake out X plus 1 or Y. In other words, they would call for something more fully than the other side or different from the other side, claiming their different way was a better way.

Now, each side has chosen to be an opposite. Instead of pushing Y to challenge X, the opposing tribe pushes minus X, the exact opposite. One side has embraced vaccines, so the other side refuses to get them. When former President Donald Trump was in office, Democrats cast doubt and aspersions on the vaccine and Operation Warp Speed. As soon as President Joe Biden was elected, Trump supporters became the loudest skeptics of the vaccine.

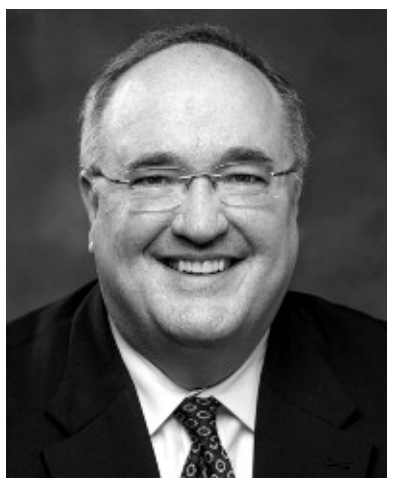
As Republicans showed sound science that children are not the spreaders of the coronavirus and should be able to go to school without masks, Democrats rushed to do the exact opposite and insist on masks for children, even outdoors. What one side advocates, the other side must repudiate. There can be no nuance and damn the person who charts a middle or alternate path.

This will not last. X plus minus X equals X minus X, which equals zero. Both sides cancel each other out. It is basic math. The side that ultimately wins is going to be the side that charts a different path, not a contrary path. We need some alternatives now. Both sides seem to be out of any ideas except: Whatever one side is for, the other is against. That provides no path forward for any of us.

★★★

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." --Martin Luther King, Jr.

COMMENTARY



Supreme Court Must Decide: Will Federal Police Remain Above the Law?

By John Kramer

(Institute for Justice) Nearly 60 million Americans now live in states where federal police can escape accountability even when they clearly violate someone's constitutional rights. But two cases appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court by the Institute for Justice (IJ) seek to change that.

On August 6, 2021, IJ filed two petitions with the U.S. Supreme Court asking it to reverse appeals court rulings that granted absolute immunity to federal law-enforcement officers who violated the constitutional rights of ordinary Americans.

Hamdi Mohamud

The first appeal seeks to overturn an 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruling that granted immunity to a federally deputized St. Paul, Minnesota, police officer whose well-documented lies and deception cost Hamdi Mohamud—who was a teenage Somali refugee—two years of her life unjustly spent behind bars.

The second IJ appeal, filed on behalf of Kevin Byrd, seeks to reverse a 5th Circuit decision that also granted immunity to an officer with a federal badge—a Department of Homeland Security agent who tried to smash Kevin's car window with a gun, and unlawfully detained him at gunpoint (even unsuccessfully pulling the trigger), all to prevent him from investigating the involvement of the agent's son in a drunk-driving accident. After seeing the video recording of the incident, officers released Kevin and arrested the agent.

Kevin Byrd

Earlier this year, the Institute for Justice also asked the High Court to take the case of José Oliva, a 70-year-old Vietnam veteran who was brutally choked and beaten by federal police in a Veterans Affairs hospital in an unprovoked attack caught on camera. As with Hamdi's and Kevin's cases, José sought to reaffirm that federal police officers are not above the Constitution, but the Court recently declined to review his case.

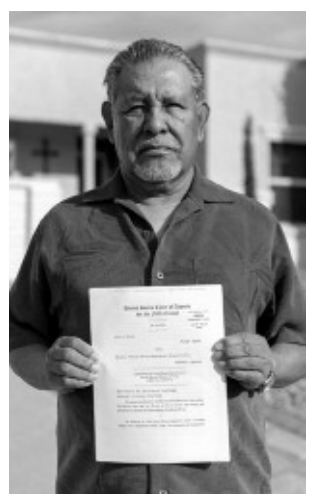
In all three cases, the actions of federal police were so egregious that they were denied qualified immunity by lower courts. But in all three cases, the appeals courts threw out the constitutional claims, effectively granting the officers absolute immunity because they worked for the federal government.

"If state or local police officers took the same actions as the officers in Hamdi's, Kevin's or José's cases, they could be held accountable in a court of law by their victims for clearly violating their constitutional rights; but the courts have turned a federal badge into a shield against the Constitution, and that needs to change," said Institute for Justice Attorney Patrick Jaicomo. "This absolute immunity for federal police officers makes no sense and violates this country's founding principle that where there is a right, there must be a remedy."

"Right now, if you live in the heartland of America—from Minnesota to Louisiana and Texas to North Dakota—anyone who carries a federal badge can violate your constitutional rights with absolute impunity," said Institute for Justice Attorney Anya Bidwell. "There is a federal statute that allows state and local officers to be held accountable when they violate someone's constitutional rights, and the courts have leaned on the fact that there is no analogous law doing the same for federal officers, thereby allowing them to escape accountability. But this groundless legal theory ignores the first 200 years of this nation's history and the limits on federal officials imposed by the Constitution itself. Federal appeals courts will continue to advance this legal fiction with horrific consequences for ordinary Americans like Hamdi, Kevin and José until the U.S. Supreme Court fixes this once and for all."

Institute for Justice Attorney Marie Miller explained, "All Hamdi, Kevin and José have been seeking from the U.S. Supreme Court is their day in court—to go back down to the trial court and make these officers have to answer in a court of law for what they did, then allow the judge or a jury to decide if these officers violated their constitutional rights. That isn't too much to ask for in this country. In fact, that's what the Constitution demands."

As a federal judge in Kevin's case lamented, "Private citizens who are brutalized—even killed—by rogue federal officers can find little solace" in the current accountability framework. "[R]edress for a federal officer's unconstitutional acts is either extremely limited or wholly nonexistent, allowing federal officials to operate in something resembling a Constitution-free zone."



José Oliva

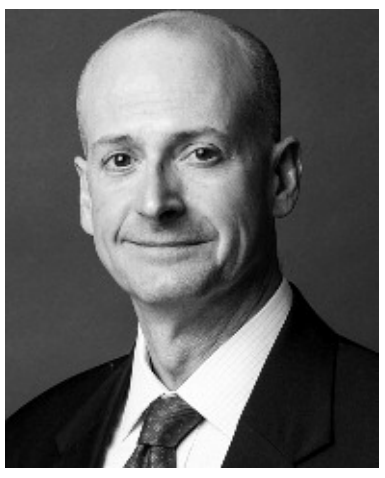
IJ Attorneys Jaicomo and Bidwell recently wrote in an op-ed about how surprising it is that conservatives are often the jurists expanding government immunities, especially when it comes to federal police. They wrote, "Conservatives have traditionally recognized even the best-intentioned civil servants can overstep their bounds and violate someone's constitutional rights. That is why they have for generations voiced support for constitutional limits on government, and especially the federal government, which was designed to have limited, enumerated powers. But there has long been a glaring exception to conservative wariness of federal power: Law-enforcement officers. Over decades, conservative judges and policymakers have effectively placed federal law-enforcement officers above the law, freeing them from the consequences of their human frailties. As a result, good cops have found it harder to do their jobs, and law-abiding citizens across the nation have been assaulted, robbed, falsely imprisoned, and even killed by those who carry a federal badge and a gun, adding insult to their physical injuries."

Jaicomo and Bidwell continued, "Increasingly, America's predictable rule of law is being replaced with the arbitrary and irrational rule of man, with a federal badge providing a shield of absolute immunity from accountability in cases where citizens' constitutional rights are violated. This is true not only for federal law-enforcement officials, but also for the large number of state and local police officers deputized each year as members of joint state-federal task forces."

Although many don't want to second-guess the split-second judgment of law-enforcement officers, cases like the one involving the federally deputized officer in Hamdi Mohamud's case—who repeatedly lied over a period of years, causing Hamdi to be arrested and forcing her to remain behind bars—demonstrate that even officers who scheme over time to violate someone's rights are not held to account. The officer who lied in Hamdi's case remains on the job to this day.

IJ President Scott Bullock said, "IJ, through our Project on Immunity and Accountability, seeks to ensure that the Constitution serves to limit the government in fact, not just in theory, and that promises enshrined in its Bill of Rights are not empty words but enforced guarantees. IJ does all this because we believe that if citizens must follow the law, then government and its officials must follow the Constitution."

★★★



Free Society Dwindles as Permission Requirements Grow

By J.D. Tuccille

(Reason) - The COVID-19 pandemic has been a bonanza for government officials, allowing them to extend authority that they then exercise with relatively little oversight or restraint in ways that would have been inconceivable in the past. It has accelerated the transformation of previously free societies into permission-based states, where things once done as a matter of right are now considered privileges to be dispensed or withheld by those in power. Case in point: the Biden administration reportedly discussed making travel within the United States conditional on vaccination status but is holding back out of fear that the public has yet to be sufficiently softened-up for such an intrusive restriction.

"While more severe measures — such as mandating vaccines for interstate travel or changing how the federal government reimburses treatment for those who are unvaccinated and become ill with COVID-19 — have been discussed, the administration worried that they would be too polarizing for the moment," the Associated Press reported last week after discussions with administration insiders. "That's not to say they won't be implemented in the future, as public opinion continues to shift toward requiring vaccinations as a means to restore normalcy."

The AP emphasizes that "White House officials say Biden wanted to initially operate with restraint to ensure that Americans were ready for the strong-arming from the federal government." The piece is unusually blunt in the glimpse it offers of an administration that embraces coercive measures to achieve its goals but is trying to co-opt businesses and localities as its proxies until Americans are more ready to do as they're told.

This isn't the first time that conditions have been imposed on travel and other activities in the name of public health during the pandemic. The administration had already announced that it plans to require foreigners traveling to the United States to be vaccinated, a restriction likely to excite little opposition in an age when border controls are popular and other countries have similar rules. Before that, states and localities imposed testing and quarantine rules on visitors and even travel bans, though most were haphazardly enforced. Hawaii, surrounded as it is by a natural moat, has most successfully imposed a masked-and-gowned version of the iron curtain. But that's just evidence of how far we've already gone down the path of turning travel from the right it once was into a privilege.

"As a general rule, until 1941, U.S. citizens were not required to have a passport for travel abroad," reports the National Archives.

"Airline travel in the early 1960s was still fairly carefree: If you had a ticket, you could board a plane," the Los Angeles Times noted in 2014.

Invoking security concerns, officialdom imposed documentation requirements and subjected people and their luggage to the extensive screenings with which we're now all too familiar. Starting in 2009, Americans had to show passports to be readmitted to the United States on their return from journeys beyond the border. So, the federal government making interstate travel a privilege granted only to those in its good graces would be just one more step down a path traveled before—but a big one.

Note that this isn't about the wisdom of getting vaccinated; let's stipulate that vaccination for COVID-19 is effective and generally a good idea. But traveling within the country has historically been treated as a right to be freely exercised without the need to seek permission from the government, no matter how wisely (improbable though that is) officials exercise their discretion.

"Freedom of movement within and between states is constitutionally protected," Georgetown Law's Meryl Justin Chertoff noted last year after states and localities began imposing travel restrictions. "The right of Americans to travel interstate in the U.S. has never been substantially judicially questioned or limited."

But Chertoff acknowledged that governments tend to enjoy more leeway in exercising authority when they invoke the words "public health," and civil liberties advocates often let them get away with it.

It's not just the freedom of travel at risk of becoming a conditional privilege.

"Through vaccination requirements, employers have the power to help end the pandemic," Jeff Zients, the White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator, said last Thursday as part of the effort to get employers, businesses, and local governments to impose rules that Americans aren't yet prepared to accept from Washington, D.C. Localities including New York City and San Francisco have obliged by making many indoors activities, such as dining in restaurants, attending performances, and exercising in gyms, conditional on vaccination.

Again, the issue isn't the effectiveness of vaccination or of other public health measures. The concern is the conversion of everyday activities like travel, work, and shopping into privileges to be permitted only to those who please the powers that be.

To be certain, the permission society isn't new. Roughly 30 percent of workers in the United States now need a license—permission from the government—to do their jobs. That permission can be revoked for reasons having nothing to do with work responsibilities, meaning that it becomes just another tool for controlling people by denying them the ability to make a living unless they submit.

"States must adopt laws that allow them to suspend driver's, professional, occupational, and recreational licenses of individuals who owe overdue support," according to the Department of Health and Human Services, citing the requirements of a law intended to ensure payment of child support. And who could object to making parents meet their obligations to their kids? But that's how rights become privileges, one ostensibly well-intentioned incursion at a time.

If the Biden administration does eventually require proof of vaccination as a condition for traveling within the United States, it will be moving just a little bit further down the path to making this country one based not on individual rights exercised at will, but on permission dispensed from above. With every step, we lose a little more of our freedom to do as we please and find ourselves stuck with the crumbs of whatever we're allowed.

★★★

Continued from page 1 • DA Ron Brown Wrongly Targets Another Innocent, Good Man

9 counts of Sexual Harassment/Abuse. The allegations are that Samuelson "touched her [Shannon Wood] butt with yoga pants on & annoyed her" a total of 10 times over a 2-year period (between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2019) with no specific dates or times. There are no witnesses to this alleged Sexual Harassment/Abuse and, like the original charges placed on Samuelson, there was no investigation conducted. There is, however, strong evidence that Samuelson did absolutely nothing wrong.

The additional charges were filed (stacked) by DA Brown for the simple purpose of forcing Samuelson into a plea bargain. Ron Brown has used this exact corrupted practice countless times during his time in office. He recently attempted to use this tactic with Justin Simonson, who is also featured in this edition as having had his charges dismissed!

According to highly credible sources, during the time that Wood claims Samuelson "touched her butt with yoga pants on and annoyed her", she took part in the following acts or arranged for them to occur:

Wood coached little kids' basketball with Dave Samuelson. The Wood and Samuelson families went clam digging together. Wood asked Dave Samuelson to haul her husband's truck to a shop on his trailer. After he moved it, she tried to put $50.00 in Samuelson's back pocket and touched his butt. Samuelson was not wearing yoga pants he was wearing Carhart pants! Wood asked Samuelson to move her chicken coop with his trailer to Wood's new house and he moved it for her.

The Samuelson's allowed Wood to use their Home Depot credit card to get new flooring for her house with the understanding she would pay it back. Shannon Wood then reportedly continued to use it and didn't pay. The Samuelson's were notified by Home Depot that $1,300.00 was owed and no payment had been made in 3 months. They put a stop to Wood's use of the card and demanded she pay the balance. Wood finally paid the debt approximately two weeks before she accused Dave Samuelson of multiple counts of Sexual Harassment/Abuse.

Brown answers to no one except the voters at election time, if someone were to run against him. This despicable human hides in the shadows like a venomous spider, striking his victims at will. He is literally the most powerful individual in Clatsop County government – he poses the greatest threat to liberty and justice to all its citizens. No matter who you are, I assure you, you are not safe when DA Ron Brown can take your freedom from you whenever he chooses to. If you haven't committed a crime, this dangerous human being can and often will make one up.

SAMUELSON CASE HISTORY

Having concluded our in-depth investigation into this case, I find conclusively that the only shred of evidence existing in this case is the accusation by Shannon Wood that Samuelson patted her on the outside of her yoga pants. Wood obviously made her accusation in retaliation for Samuelson turning her into Jewell School Superintendent Steve Phillips for sexual improprieties brought to his attention by a parent of one of the players on his basketball team. On September 24, 2019, just one day after a student's parent told Samuelson about their concern regarding Shannon Wood's possible indiscretion with Brian Meier, Samuelson informed Steve Phillips, Jewell's School Superintendent. Then, on September 27, 2019, just three days later, Shannon Wood, "retaliated against Dave" and contacted the sheriff's department with allegations that he had sexually harassed her. According to the police report, Wood claimed Dave Samuelson had, "repeatedly grabbed her butt and made lewd comments to her." Wood's criminal report also mentioned that Samuelson was allegedly stalking her, and Wood made the claim he had "attempted to kiss" her around August of 2018 – which is over a full year before she brought the allegations to the police.

JUST A BIT MORE PROOF OF SAMUELSON'S INNOCENCE

In a letter Wood delivered to Samuelson on February 8, 2019, just seven months prior to her accusing him, Wood told Samuelson she loved him. This letter was written after the date Wood claimed Samuelson "grabbed" her butt and tried to kiss her (in her police report filed later). Shannon Wood's letter stated, "The undoubted support I receive from you is priceless and I would not be who I am today without it. I cannot thank you enough for the love and support you have shown me since October 31, 2017. That will always be the date I will remember that changed my life… I appreciate you more than words can say… I sincerely appreciate you taking me on this wild journey and welcoming not only me but my family into yours… Love Shannon."

Shannon Wood and Dave Samuelson

In August of 2019 at the Clatsop County Fair, Samuelson attended the livestock auction to purchase a 4-H animal. Wood reportedly came and sat with him several times, was very friendly and also asked him to take one of her children home with him from the fair, to spend the night at his house.

All of the above occurred within the period of time that Shannon Wood claimed Samuelson was committing crimes against her. This writer finds it absurd to believe Samuelson did anything other than show love and kindness to a woman (Wood) who others have claimed is extremely dangerous.

Superintendent Phillips reportedly told one witness, after the initial allegations were made against Dave Samuelson, that he had discussed it with his Principal Jon Wood and neither of them would ever be in a room alone with Shannon Wood. So, why did Phillips team-up with his reported "buddy" DA Ron Brown and attempt to destroy Samuelson, especially when it was obvious that Wood made up her "false allegations" in retaliation for Samuelson reporting her alleged improprieties with Meier?

One witness has stated that Phillips had it out for Samuelson because Samuelson was opposed to the School Board hiring him in the first place. Another witness confirmed this when they stated, "Phillips thinks his _ _ _ _ doesn't stink. He is good friends with Ron Brown, and they act like they can do whatever they want in Clatsop County. Dave Samuelson is an ethical man who has no problem speaking his mind and when he opposed Phillips, he created an enemy. It's that simple."

Despite Phillips knowing full well that Wood had to be retaliating against Samuelson he placed all kinds of sanctions on Samuelson and stripped him of the coaching job that he held for many years.

On November 18, 2019, the Jewell School Board met and affirmed Superintendent Steve Phillips sanctions against Samuelson, limiting his access to the school, terminating him as the varsity basketball coach and requiring his spouse or a person over the age of 40 to supervise him if he was ever on school property. These sanctions and others remain in effect to this day. Phillips reportedly told Samuelson, it's the #meetoo movement so you're guilty. The boards document states if Samuelson applies for the basketball coaching job in the future he will not be considered. Phillips reportedly told Samuelson that he could not have a 62-year-old guy in the school that grabbed young women by the ass. He also told Samuelson that he was a predator.

This was all accomplished by Phillips and his lap-dog school board prior to the US~Observer publishing our initial article regarding this case wherein we exposed that Shannon Wood falsely accused another person in the past of rape and much, much more.

It appears that since we forced Phillips out into the light of day he is making every effort to return to the shadows he is used to.

We are informed that Superintendent Phillips has shared with his staff that he wants nothing to do with the Samuelson trial. However, it really isn't up to Phillips as we are told the defense plans to call him as a witness. If this happens, Phillips will find that he is not nearly as powerful as he thinks he is!

On October 21, 2020, a Settlement Hearing was held in the Samuelson case. At this hearing it was determined by DA Ron Brown and his alleged victim Shannon Wood that if Dave Samuelson would just pay Wood $20,000.00, the criminal case against him would be dismissed – need I say more about DA Ron Brown's brand of "Justice"?

A second Settlement Hearing was scheduled for July 15, 2021, and Samuelson declined to take part in it. Samuelson stated, "I refuse to take part in this act of extortion for a crime I am completely innocent of."

During a June 24, 2021, pre-trial hearing Samuelson's Attorney Rich Cohen submitted the defense witness list which included 5-pages of statements from just one witness. This witness clearly stated in the deposition given to the investigator that Dave Samuelson was an honest, trustworthy person. Further this witness stated that his accuser Shannon Wood was known to be dishonest, and that Ms. Wood has filed complaints against several other staff members at Jewell School and she has concerning behaviors.

This hearing was scheduled as the pre-trial hearing to make sure the defense and the prosecution were ready for trial. The defense was ready, witnesses had been interviewed, and subpoenas and mileage checks delivered in preparation for the trial that had previously been delayed to July 6, 2021.

A Clatsop County Assistant District Attorney informed the judge that the witness list was new evidence, and he would need to vet the list so the trial would need to be delayed. The trial was re-scheduled for November 2021. We are informed that the trial will be re-scheduled again, and it is likely to occur in January of 2022.

DAMAGE TO DAVE SAMUELSON

Stress has taken a toll on Samuelson's health - he had a near death cardiac event April 20, 2020, followed by open heart surgery April 24, 2020.

Dave and his wife Ann Samuelson are concerned about the costs of almost 2 years of being trafficked through criminal court. They have been forced to spend tens of thousands defending Dave. The cost of 5 trial delays, trial prep, investigators, etc. is certainly mounting. The Samuelson's are also concerned from the standpoint of taxpayer dollars being spent.

They have received calls from others who made plea deals with DA Ron Brown, even if they were innocent like Samuelson simply because the cost was too much, and the threats and intimidation made them feel they had no choice. Dave Samuelson refuses to admit to something he didn't do, and he will not bend to extortion.

Editor's Note: If you have any information of wrongdoing by DA Ron Brown, his wife Tiffany or any other corrupted players in this article, call us at 541-474-7885 or send an email to editor@usobserver.com. You just might be DA Ron Brown's next victim and if you aren't concerned now, you will be then. ★★★

Continued from page 1 • Dunn/Henley Trial Continued for 10th Time ...

evidence that Yela made false allegations against Henley and Dunn to aid in the cover-up of the illegal activity that her employer Linda Faulk allegedly committed against Wayne Faulk.

Instead of a dismissal, their trial date was continued to January 11, 2022, making this the 10th time their trial has been postponed.

On August 8, 2021, Henley was told by Schmonsees, "I am OBJECTING to any continuance of the trial date". Yet in court Schmonesses did not raise any objection to the continuance. When questioned by Henley, Schmonsees stated that DDA Kara Brooks had requested an ex parte hearing, so the defense would not be present to object to a continuance, leading Henley to believe there was some sort of back room dealing to keep the case going.

DDA Kara Brooks

Over the last four years since their arrest, Henley and Dunn have been through eight attorneys, both private and public defenders. All but one, have provided ineffective assistance of counsel. The couple have spent $50,000 of their own money, getting them no closer to a resolution. They are now flat broke!

This laundry list of attorneys shows just how the just-us system operates in Clackamas County.

Henley had retained John E. Storkel while Dunn was appointed public defender Linda G. Beloof.

Beloof resigned in disgrace after having failed to inform her client of a status hearing that he needed to attend. Dunn first met Beloof the day before the hearing. Beloof never told Dunn that they had to attend a status hearing the next morning. The following day Beloof calls Dunn and told him to turn himself in, because he has a warrant for failing to appear, yet Beloof hadn't appeared either. As a result, Dunn was rearrested and had to post another $6,000.00 bond on top the $10,000.00 he and Henley already paid in order to be released from custody pending trial. Beloof resigned and was replaced with public defender Bruce Tarbox.


Ann Yela

Months passed by with no progress, Dunn was asked to check in weekly with Tarbox, but beyond that Dunn had no idea what was being done to prepare for trial. By late 2018, Dunn had only briefly met with Tarbox once, he had not reviewed discovery, discussed witnesses or done any of the required preparation to be ready for trial. Alarmed by this Dunn borrowed money to hire William Bruce Shepley. Dunn hoped the change to a private attorney meant that work would be done on his case. Shepley started off well confirming to Dunn that the state did not have a case against him and that they would either easily win, or obtain a dismissal. Shepley stated to Dunn that the discovery was a mess, the worst he'd seen in over 30 years. Shepley filed several motions attempting to get crucial evidence confirmed as having been seized by the Clackamas County Sherriff's Office while executing a search warrant at Dunn's home, without success.

During this time, Henley was having the same issues with lack of progress on her case. With charges racking up, Henley was forced to go with a public defender and was subsequently appointed Ruben Medina.

Medina only met with Henley once and had done little to nothing to prepare for their upcoming trial. When questioned by Henley on the lack of work on her case, Medina tried to pawn off his lack of effort on Dunn's Attorney Bruce Shepley. Medina told Henley she should consider him Shepley's assistant, putting the burden on Shepley to do the trial preparation for both defendants.

Henley promptly alerted the court that Medina was not preparing for trial and that they were nowhere near ready to go in front of a jury. This led to Medina's dismissal. Henley again had to ask the court for assistance.

Medina's replacement was Leonard Kovak Jr. Shepley was not happy about having to work with Kovak and Henley soon found out why. According to Henley, "Kovak proved to be worthless and a liar". Henley had been told for weeks that crucial evidence for the case had been subpoenaed and Henley found out it hadn't. Henley fired Kovak immediately for having lied and for not preparing for trial. Henley drafted a detailed letter about the lies, alerting the court about what had happened and the fact that they were still not even close to being ready for a jury trial that was days away.

Dunn states, to make matters worse Shepley began behaving oddly and started interviewing witnesses, which should be the job of our private investigator and Shepley also did not alert the court of the state's failure to produce crucial discovery needed to prepare for trial."

Then suddenly without alerting Dunn, Shepley withdraws from the case days before trial keeping the bulk of Dunn's retainer. Shepley did not perform as agreed and blindsided Dunn. While in court Shepley stated he did not want to put on the record why he withdrew.

Shepley's sudden departure and Kovacs firing caused the trial to be postponed. Henley was then appointed Brian Schmonsees and Dunn hired Attorney James Luenberger (recently passed away). The couple states Leuenberger was the first attorney on the case to put it to the DDA, that her case was horrible, and that she would not be able to prove intent on any of the charges. Leuenberger told DDA Brooks she should consider dropping the case and start looking into the crooks that did commit crimes against Wayne, who were the same people that made up the allegations against Dunn and Henley in the first place.

Henley and Dunn did not fair any better with their accounting experts. In 2018, Dunn was provided a CPA by the state named Lisa Douglass to defend against the state's allegations. In July of 2020, Douglass was reportedly fired by Leuenberger for not having produced anything for the defense to use at trial even though Douglass billed the state thousands of dollars for over 100 hours of work. Douglass's excuse was reportedly in part related to the state not turning over discovery. Douglass stated, "Rose & Jack – Best of luck to you in your cases. After waiting 2 years to start really receiving any substantial records to assist in your case, I am disappointed that I was unable to establish a professional relationship with Mr. Leuenberger and continue to work on your behalf to resolve this matter".

Schmonsees next hired fraud investigator Jeff Cone of Morones Analytics to review the report that led to the couple's arrest, which had been created by Wayne Faulks former guardian Ann Yela. According to Brian Schmonsees statements to the Oregon Public Defense Services (OPDS), requesting more hours for Morones Analytics expert services, he verifies the experts have been working on several reports, completed at least two, with yet another report to be ready in advance of trial.

On May 21, 2020, Schmonsees reports to OPDS, "the state did not use an accountant and the accounting that was done was done by a legal guardian who was not qualified. Mr. Cone will detail the errors the guardian made." Then on October 5, 2020, Schmonees told OPDS services, "Mr. Cone has done extensive work on this sloppily investigated case which includes recreating the states civilian witnesses forensic accounting as well as creating our own simplest explanation document that indicates our clients are innocent. Mr. Cone now needs an authorization to create a new report." And on November 5, 2020, Schmonsees states to the OPDS that Mr. Cone "has completed the simplest explanation and special procedure report and he is finalizing his findings, and finally on June 5, 2021, Schmonsees reports to OPDS, "Mr. Cone is reviewing documents from "the alleged victims guardian to determine any claims of fraud" and "he is completing a report on expenditures for the named victim in advance of trial and examining the guardians account work." Schmonsees provided these updates to get the funding for the defense expert.


Brian Schmonsees

As of August 17, 2021, Jeff Cone of Morones Analytics has reportedly only produced one "preliminary" report of the several that was claimed to have been done. According to information received, Morones Analytics was paid $53,000 by the state for 242 hours of work. Morones Analytics had Jeff Cone, Kevin Marold and Brent Boutwell with a combined 56 years of experience working on these reports. According to a US~Observer source, the one and only preliminary report produced by Morones Analytics has so many errors that it was "worthless to the defense," with no mention of the other reports that they had 18 months to complete and that they were paid handsomely for. "Not a single final report was correctly finalized in advance of Henley and Dunn's recent trial date, leaving them defenseless and the public footing the bill."

NOW GET THIS!

On August 19, 2021, one day after the Henley and Dunn trial had been reset for the 10th time Dunn received a Motion and Affidavit filed by ADA Kara Brooks on August 12, 2021. Brook's Affidavit states in part: "Just last Monday, August 2, 2021, Brian Schmonsees, who represents co-defendant Rosemarie Henley, provided the State with a forensic accounting of the evidence and records in this case. On Thursday August 5, 2021, Mr. Schmonsees provided substantial additional documentation, either in the form of spreadsheets and further analysis conducted by his forensic accountant on witness attestations and records. The newly provided evidence is quite voluminous and will require additional analysis by the State."

Now compare Brooks' statements above with an email sent from Attorney Brian Schmonsees to Rose Henley on August 12, 2021, which is written on the very same day Brook's filed her Motion and Affidavit. Keep in mind that Schmonsees had already sent the accounting that he tells Henley to edit 10 days prior.

From: Brian Schmonsees <oregondefender@gmail.com>
To: rose_____@aol.com
Sent: Thu, Aug 12, 2021 2:05 pm
Subject: Update

OK, so the DA is asking the Court for more time to allow a financial crimes expert to review the case. She pitched a dismissal to her boss but he wants their expert to take a look at this. I am OBJECTING to any continuance of the trial date.

In the event the case is not continued, it will be dismissed (for now). The statute of limitations on this type of case is 6 years, but we should still preserve our speedy trial objections to hopefully get this dismissed without a trial. Bottom line: no trial next week.

It is still possible the case gets dismissed without trial or risk of incarceration, probation and restitution.

I invite you to send me, A. your proposed narrative for trial testimony; B. your proposed edits to Cone's work by exhibit. As I said before, I found your earlier emails confusing on touching on multiple topics. You've said in essence his work is bad, his conclusions are wrong and they need to be fixed. You can show me how he is wrong by pointing to the exhibits and I'll propose edits based on that.

Thanks
Brian
Brian Schmonsees
Attorney At Law

Attorney Schmonsees doesn't say one word in his email about already having provided the accounting to ADA Brooks. He does, however, inform Henley she can "edit Cone's work." This is unbelievable deception at its best and it is certainly no surprise that Henley and Dunn have been 100% unable to find an Attorney to represent them in Clackamas County Circuit Court.

So much for Justice in Clackamas County, Oregon!

Editor's Note: I should note that this case started with Dunn and Henley filing a report with the State of Oregon regarding Linda Faulk (Wayne Faulk's sister-in-law) allegedly stealing the assets of Wayne Faulk. Go to usobserver.com and search for Wayne Faulk to view a complete reporting of the history on this case.

The US~Observer has reviewed all the accounting provided by Henley and Dunn and even though we are not "expert accountants" we easily determined that Henley and Dunn spent far more on their friend and neighbor Wayne Faulk than they were reimbursed for. So, how in the world can accounting experts get away with charging the State of Oregon tens of thousands to conduct such a simple audit?

DDA Kara Brooks should be commended for realizing she doesn't have enough evidence to prove the state's ridiculous charges. Clackamas County District Attorney John Wentworth should be chastised for continuing his false prosecution of Jack Dunn and Rose Henley. If there isn't enough evidence to prosecute Dunn and Henley today there surely wasn't enough evidence to charge them in the first place.


Clackamas County DA John Wentworth

Anyone with information of wrongdoing on the part of anyone mentioned in this article are urged to contact the US~Observer at 541-474-7885 or by sending an email to editor@usobserver.com. ★★★

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Innocent Americans Are Pleading Guilty to Save Themselves

The plea bargain is our hidden force of authoritarianism

By Chris Beck

(Splice Today) - Many Americans are aware that their criminal justice system imprisons a higher percentage of its population than any other nation. But the systemic malaise, which begins with the first contact between police and a suspect, runs much deeper than that. The public knows little about the behind-the-scenes crudeness of the American justice system because the media present a fantasy version of it resembling the old Perry Mason show in which criminals were caught and then put on trial. But putting felons on trial in present-day America has become as outdated as bell-bottom jeans.

One appalling byproduct of almost all jury trials getting phased out is how many innocent people facing felony convictions are pleading guilty and taking a deal because they don't trust the system and want to avoid the worst-case scenario.

About 11 percent of the DNA exonerees recorded by the Innocence Project since it was founded in 1989 pleaded guilty to crimes they didn't commit. Overzealous prosecutors may have put them behind bars, not because they were certain of their guilt, but because they wanted to beef up their conviction rate—in other words, "because they could." There's substantial data indicating that black men and other minorities are the biggest victims.

An analysis of what's gone wrong starts with the fact that the plea deals now used to resolve around 97 percent of felony indictments have conferred tremendous power upon prosecutors. The Founding Fathers believed that the jury trial was a strong defense against government tyranny. Without jury trials, the government finds it much easier to run roughshod over the principles of the Constitution that it's charged with protecting. While the media and Hollywood portray a government that adheres to the Sixth Amendment's guarantee of a "speedy trial" by jury—the televised trial of Derek Chauvin will boost that misunderstanding—in reality agents of the government have become the dominant power in both determining guilt or innocence and the length of the sentence.

Prior to the Civil War, plea bargains were rare, meaning judges were determining

Photo: Nick Youngson CC BY-SA 3.0 Alpha Stock Images

sentences, and defense lawyers had more input. The Supreme Court was initially skeptical about the introduction of the plea bargain, but that didn't last long. As defendants began to see the diminished power of both their defense counsel and the judge, they felt less confidence in avoiding the long prison term that prosecutors now use as a bargaining chip. The stage has been set that it's rational for an innocent person to plead guilty in some cases.

Inhuman legislation such as the Rockefeller laws of 1973 in New York State, which imposed a minimum sentence of 15 years for selling two ounces of marijuana, provided prosecutors major weapons in extracting plea bargains. Federal mandatory sentencing laws contributed to the power shift. Moreover, while a prosecutor has access to information on a felony case, even before an arrest is made, a defense attorney's information-starved when they take on a client, often because it's hard to get access to the client in jail. The prosecutor, who may already have a mandatory sentence bludgeon, goes into the initial meeting with the defense attorney with confidence and bargaining power, usually demanding a fast plea deal, which ups the pressure on the defense. Prosecutorial leeway in setting the charges tips the scales even more. A prosecutor can offer a guilty plea to a personal drug sale charge that carries no mandatory sentence, backing it with a threat that a refusal means they'll bump it up to a "conspiracy" drug distribution charge that carries a stiff mandatory sentence.

Prosecutors, who are judged on how "tough on crime" they are, have no incentive to offer compassion and leniency, and they realize the judge no longer presents much of a defense against their zealotry. The plea bargaining process is carried out in secret, rendering it unreviewable. It's the polar opposite of a public trial. Defendants with few resources and a checkered past often have substantial insight into a justice system they know they can't trust. Sometimes this pushes them into lying to their own lawyer in the interest of self-preservation.

The state has plenty of reasons to avoid jury trials, such as saving victims from having to testify, clearing judges' dockets, keeping police on patrol instead of waiting to testify, sparing the high cost of a trial, and reducing the need for more judges.

You'll notice that all the above reasons are aligned with the interests of the state, not the rights of citizens. To get a glimpse at what this one-sided approach has produced, do some conservative calculating and cut the Innocence project's exoneree figure in half, meaning around five percent of all innocent felony convicts plead guilty. Even such a low-ball estimate would mean that approximately 100,000 innocent people helped put themselves behind bars, serving long sentences. That's shamefully high for the nation of "American exceptionalism" that's already imprisoning too many for non-violent crimes. ★★★

Continued from page 8 • T is for Tyranny: How Freedom Dies from A to Z

behavioral scientists, corporations, social media, and community organizers and by relying on cutting-edge technology for surveillance, facial recognition, predictive policing, biometrics, and behavioral epigenetics in order to identify and deter so-called potential "extremists," dissidents or rabble-rousers. Bear in mind that anyone seen as opposing the government—whether they're Left, Right or somewhere in between—is now viewed as an extremist.

Q is for QUALIFIED IMMUNITY. Qualified immunity allows police officers to walk away without paying a dime for their wrongdoing. Conveniently, those deciding whether a cop should be immune from having to personally pay for misbehavior on the job all belong to the same system, all cronies with a vested interest in protecting the police and their infamous code of silence: city and county attorneys, police commissioners, city councils and judges.

R is for ROADSIDE STRIP SEARCHES and BLOOD DRAWS. The courts have increasingly erred on the side of giving government officials—especially the police—vast discretion in carrying out strip searches, blood draws and even anal and vaginal probes for a broad range of violations, no matter how minor the offense. In the past, strip searches were resorted to only in exceptional circumstances where police were confident that a serious crime was in progress. In recent years, however, strip searches have become routine operating procedures in which everyone is rendered a suspect and, as such, is subjected to treatment once reserved for only the most serious of criminals.

S is for the SURVEILLANCE STATE. On any given day, the average American going about his daily business will be monitored, surveilled, spied on and tracked in more than 20 different ways, by both government and corporate eyes and ears. A byproduct of the electronic concentration camp in which we live, whether you're walking through a store, driving your car, checking email, or talking to friends and family on the phone, you can be sure that some government agency, whether the NSA or some other entity, is listening in and tracking your behavior. This doesn't even begin to touch on the corporate trackers that monitor your purchases, web browsing, Facebook posts and other activities taking place in the cyber sphere.

T is for TASERS. Nonlethal weapons such as tasers, stun guns, rubber pellets and the like have been used by police as weapons of compliance more often and with less restraint—even against women and children—and in some instances, even causing death. These "nonlethal" weapons also enable police to aggress with the push of a button, making the potential for overblown confrontations over minor incidents that much more likely. A Taser Shockwave, for instance, can electrocute a crowd of people at the touch of a button.

U is for UNARMED CITIZENS SHOT BY POLICE. No longer is it unusual to hear about incidents in which police shoot unarmed individuals first and ask questions later, often attributed to a fear for their safety. Yet the fatality rate of on-duty patrol officers is reportedly far lower than many other professions, including construction, logging, fishing, truck driving, and even trash collection.

V is for VIRUSES and VACCINE PASSPORTS. What started out as an apparent effort to prevent a novel coronavirus from sickening the nation (and the world) has become yet another means by which world governments (including the U.S.) can expand their powers, abuse their authority, and further oppress their constituents. The road we are traveling is paved with lockdowns, SWAT team raids, mass surveillance, forced vaccinations, contact tracing, vaccine passports, and heavy fines and jail time for those who dare to venture out without a mask, congregate in worship without the government's blessing, or re-open their businesses without the government's say-so.

W is for WHOLE-BODY SCANNERS. Using either x-ray radiation or radio waves, scanning devices and government mobile units are being used not only to "see" through your clothes but to spy on you within the privacy of your home. While these mobile scanners are being sold to the American public as necessary security and safety measures, we can ill afford to forget that such systems are rife with the potential for abuse, not only by government bureaucrats but by the technicians employed to operate them.

X is for X-KEYSCORE, one of the many spying programs carried out by the National Security Agency that targets every person in the United States who uses a computer or phone. This top-secret program "allows analysts to search with no prior authorization through vast databases containing emails, online chats and the browsing histories of millions of individuals."

Y is for YOU-NESS. Using your face, mannerisms, social media and "you-ness" against you, you are now be tracked based on what you buy, where you go, what you do in public, and how you do what you do. Facial recognition software promises to create a society in which every individual who steps out into public is tracked and recorded as they go about their daily business. The goal is for government agents to be able to scan a crowd of people and instantaneously identify all of the individuals present. Facial recognition programs are being rolled out in states all across the country.

Z is for ZERO TOLERANCE. We have moved into a new paradigm in which young people are increasingly viewed as suspects and treated as criminals by school officials and law enforcement alike, often for engaging in little more than childish behavior or for saying the "wrong" word. In some jurisdictions, students have also been penalized under school zero tolerance policies for such inane "crimes" as carrying cough drops, wearing black lipstick, bringing nail clippers to school, using Listerine or Scope, and carrying fold-out combs that resemble switchblades. The lesson being taught to our youngest—and most impressionable—citizens is this: in the American police state, you're either a prisoner (shackled, controlled, monitored, ordered about, limited in what you can do and say, your life not your own) or a prison bureaucrat (politician, police officer, judge, jailer, spy, profiteer, etc.).

As I make clear in my book *Battlefield America: The War on the American People*, the reality we must come to terms with is that in the post-9/11 America we live in today, the government does whatever it wants, freedom be damned.

We have moved beyond the era of representative government and entered a new age.

You can call it the age of authoritarianism. Or fascism. Or oligarchy. Or the American police state.

Whatever label you want to put on it, the end result is the same: tyranny. ★★★

Articles and Opinions

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The goal of *US~Observer* is to ensure "due process" and "equal protection under the law."

Citizens who have founded and support it believe in the Bill of Rights and Article 1, Section 1, of the Oregon Constitution which states:

"We declare that all men, when they form a social compact are equal in right; that all power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their peace, safety, and happiness and they have at all times a right to alter, reform, or abolish the government in such a manner they think proper. This enumeration of rights and privileges shall not be construed to impair or deny others retained by the people."

Get involved & send YOUR comments or concerns to the Editor
editor@usobserver.com

One in five scientists report pressure to delay or dump public health research

By Jason Sandefur

(Courthouse News) - One in five health researchers report being pressured to change how they conduct or report their research, according to a new study published in the journal PLOS ONE. Some say they've been asked to delay releasing their results and even manipulated by funders to not release their studies at all.

"Knowing how often and in what circumstances the suppression of public health research occurs is important because of the potential impact of withholding, delaying, or misrepresenting findings," lead study author Sam McCrabb and his team wrote. "This is acutely apparent in the Covid-19 pandemic, where delays in releasing early research findings in China allowed significant outbreaks to occur in other countries."

McCrabb, a faculty member at the University of Newcastle in Australia, and his team surveyed 104 researchers around the world for their study, which found that the most common form of suppression was a funder "expressing reluctance to publish because they considered the results 'unfavorable.'"

The researchers' work focused on health behavioral intervention — nutrition, physical activity, sexual health and substance abuse prevention. Such research is typically funded by governments through national agencies such as the National Institutes of Health in the U.S. and the National Health and Medical Research Council in Australia.

The notion of academic freedom is that researchers are free to conduct their work without interference or the threat of professional disadvantage. according to the study. But this academic integrity is increasingly undermined by "the influence of vested interests on research… calling into question whether public research institutions actually serve the public interest," according to the study.

Tasked with implementing intervention programs based on study findings, many funding agencies have a stake in the outcomes, which often leads to pressure on those conducting the research. Such pressure ranges from subtly expressed hopes for positive findings to "total suppression or censorship of reports for political advantage," McCrabb and his team found.

The type and extent of the pressure varied by country, according to the study. Australian ecologists indicated those conducting research for government and industry faced higher rates of suppression than those working at universities. In Canada, one in four scientists reported being asked to omit certain findings from their reports, while 37% said they were prevented from responding to media inquiries. And researchers working in Europe had higher odds of reporting a suppression even than those working in the U.S., according to the study.

Surprisingly, the type of political system governing a country had little effect on whether research was restricted.

"Whether the publication came from a democratic country or not did not seem to change the odds of reporting suppression," study authors found.

The study had limits. By relying entirely on published work, researchers whose findings were suppressed were excluded, while others may have been to scared to report pressure from funders. As a result, McCrabb and his team concluded the true prevalence of suppression is higher than what their results indicate.

"It is… likely that some authors would not disclose suppression events, even in the confidential context of a research study, fearing repercussions from the funder," the authors wrote.

They urged funding agencies to protect academic freedom by no longer requiring researchers to get approval before publishing their findings. Other suggestions included establishing a registry of studies and their funding sources and independent audits of research practices.

"Attention is urgently needed to protect the integrity of public health research from the influence of vested interests," the study authors wrote.

★★★

Continued from page 1 • Clatsop DA Forced to Drop False Charges

extremely negligent law enforcement agencies all engaged in their willful miscarriage of justice against him.

The US~Observer had provided Ron Brown with conclusive evidence of Simonson's innocence in December of 2020, yet this corrupt DA chose to keep pursuing the patently false charges against Simonson for over a year. Brown's recent all-out effort to extort a plea-bargain from Simonson was most assuredly done as an attempt to protect law enforcement from civil liability for falsely arresting him in the first place and was a last-ditch effort to salvage a failed conviction effort.

On May 23, 2020, career criminal Corey Jones had called police and reported that Justin Simonson was shooting at the trailer she was living in. It was a trailer that had been previously moved onto Simonson's property without permission. Nor was permission given for Jones and her boyfriend Andrew Bue to live on the property – creating a dispute between Simonson, Bue and Jones. On top of attempting to get Clatsop County law enforcement to get Andrew Bue, Corey Jones and their trailer off his property for trespassing, Simonson had been calling Deputy Chance Moore for weeks telling him that the alleged heroin dealers (Bue and Jones) sometimes had Bue's 6-year-old boy on the property, and that he was concerned about the child's safety. Yet, Deputy Moore did nothing, and as a result it allowed Jones time to concoct her made-up shooting narrative, which according to some, was just a scheme of Bue and Jones' to steal Simonson's property.

After Jones called the authorities, Clatsop County Sheriff's Deputies and other police officers arrived at Simonson's Trust property. They reportedly found Jones, who was watching Andrw Bue's young child at the time, on a "drug crazed high". Even still, they took her at her word and went after Simonson – or did they simply have an ulterior motive?

Simonson's arresting officer was Deputy Tom Phillips, who is described as "badge heavy" by others in law enforcement. He was certainly badge heavy the night he arrested Simonson and helped create a false story about him. Simonson kept asking why they were on his property, what was he being arrested for, and if they had a warrant....

According to one witness, Deputy Phillips was caught on bodycam footage that night calling Simonson a constitutionalist, a possible hit man, a drug dealer and an addict. Phillips stated that Simonson was probably f***ing Corey Jones, the heroin addict who made the false 911 call. While Phillips led the narrative, the gang of cops followed.

Astoria Police also assisted in the "take down" of Simonson. With Officer Nicki Riley charging across Simonson's property pointing a gun directly at him while yelling expletives, Simonson justifiably thought he was going to be killed that night by law enforcement.

Clatsop County Sheriff's Sergeant Eric Dotson subsequently cuffed Justin and took him to jail.

Justin Simonson's case began with a violent arrest for multiple felony counts. He arrived at the jail bleeding from overly tight handcuffs and was placed in solitary confinement for 6 days. His treatment while there was inhumane - he lost 25 lbs. The sheriff deputies took Simonson's purebred German Shepherd and gave it up for adoption while he was in solitary. The dog was a gift from his wife who had recently died of cancer.

Following Simonson's arrest, he was banned from his property from May 2020 to Dec 2020 (7 months). During this time his property was ransacked, and he was robbed of over $15,000.00 of tools and equipment. When he complained to law enforcement he was told, "without video they couldn't help him."

Simonson was also warned that his complaints could be viewed as harassment of the alleged victim. According to witnesses, during this time the cops allowed Andrew Bue and Corey Jones to remain on Simonson's property where they were allegedly selling drugs, thus abusing Bue's child. Eventually things got so out of control that the six-year-old boy's biological mom would not allow him to visit his father. Jones became pregnant and allegedly continued to shoot up every day. When the child was born the state reportedly took the baby into custody. According to information gathered, Corey Jones had already had at least one other child taken from her by the state.

According to one expert on police procedures and practices, the police would have looked up both Corey Jones and Justin Simonson on their computer to see who they were dealing with prior to arresting Simonson. The officers obviously knew that Jones' rap sheet included possession and delivery of heroin, possession of methamphetamine, robbery, burglary, trespassing, etc., etc. They would or should have known that Simonson didn't have any criminal history. Instead of blindly going after Justin Simonson, these officers should have searched Jones' trailer for drugs and arrested her for filing a false police report.

Sources in the community and from law enforcement have shared that former Sheriff Tom Bergin was absent for the last three years of his position as Sheriff. He was away 3 weeks out of every month for 3 years and received a 30K raise during that time. Sources say the root cause of the haphazard police work in the Simonson case was the absence of leadership in the Clatsop County Sheriff's Department. I believe the problem goes much deeper than the absence of a Sheriff – the acts of these officers clearly shows a complete lack of ethics as well as morality, character, empathy, etc.

The actions and lack of actions on the part of Officers Chance Moore, Nathan Baldwin and others begs the question:

Dave Samuelson with Justin Simonson on the steps of the courthouse

Apart from being bad individuals, were the officers simply incompetent or were they protecting Corey Jones because she reportedly works for the police as a confidential informant (CI).

In an attempt to find out, Simonson's former attorney James Leuenberger (now deceased) filed a Motion with the court to force Clatsop County District Attorney Ron Brown to turn over evidence that Jones was a CI. Brown's office strenuously fought the Motion. However, Judge Beau Peterson sided with Leuenberger and gave the DA's office 2 weeks (until April 12, 2021) to turn over the evidence. Brown blatantly ignored Peterson's order - Simonson never received anything from DA Brown.

DA BROWN'S REPEATED ATTEMPTS TO EXTORT

Beginning in June of 2021, DA Brown started making repeated attempts to extort a plea from Simonson - which can be read in the online version of this article. Keep in mind, corrupted DA Brown made these offers knowing full well that he did not have one shred of evidence to prove that Justin Simonson committed a crime. This is not pursing justice as Brown is sworn to do, it is the work of a dangerous individual, capable of charging anyone he chooses at any time.

And get this, on July 27, 2021, Justin Simonson went to the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office to pick up his confiscated gun collection but was informed that they were going to keep them until DA Brown gave his okay to release. It obviously makes no difference to Clatsop County officials what judges say anymore. Remember, Judge Beau Peterson ordered DA Brown to turn over evidence to Simonson's defense and he ignored the order – Simonson's charges were dismissed in open court on July 22, 2021, and the Sheriff's Office ignores the dismissal by illegally retaining Simonson's gun collection. The statutes call this act "Conversion", however, there is clearly no one to enforce the law in Clatsop County, Oregon!

Editor's Note: In a related Clatsop County false prosecution case being conducted by DA Ron Brown we find that two Sheriff's Deputies involved in the Simonson case are also involved in Dave Samuelson's false prosecution.

Deputy Sheriff Chance Moore was the supervising officer when Dave Samuelson was falsely arrested. We have received accusations that Moore assisted Shannon Wood (alleged victim) in writing a stalking/restraining order, that was rejected on its face the next day by Judge Paula Brownhill.

Also, Sheriff's Sergeant Eric Dotson allegedly had Samuelson's citation made out prior to meeting with him. He and Chance Moore spoke with Samuelson for a very short time and handed him his citation for not only an obviously manufactured sexual harassment charge, but a ridiculous one as well.

Closely comparing the Justin Simonson case with the Dave Samuelson case, any prudent person will conclude that in Clatsop County, Oregon, it is just fine to trespass, "dope it up", and then falsely accuse an innocent person like Corey Jones did to Simonson. But, if you are a stellar example of a human being, over 60 years of age, without any criminal record like Dave Samuelson you had better watch out – you might just have your life ruined at any time without any reason whatsoever.

Anyone with information on Ron Brown or any of the police officers or individuals mentioned in this article should contact the US~Observer at 541-474-7885 or by email: editor@usobserver.com.

Further, the US~Observer has received a very serious complaint against DA Ron Brown's wife Tiffany Brown. We are currently investigating this allegation.

★★★

Police Reform Without Qualified Immunity Reform is Worthless

By Billy Binion

(Reason) - The bulk of the American public supports qualified immunity reform. It's not hard to see why: The legal doctrine allows state officials to violate your constitutional rights without fear of being sued. It has emboldened cops to commit some shocking misdeeds: killing innocent people, shooting children, beating people needlessly, and outright stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is at the very foundation of our culture of police un-accountability, which destroys trust and makes it more difficult for good officers to do their jobs.

So, naturally, the Senate has reportedly taken reform off the table, according to three people familiar with the discussions.

The proposal was part of the Justice in Policing Act, the legislation in the works since the death of George Floyd. Outright abolishing the doctrine was always a tough sell among Republicans. But Sen Tim Scott (R–S.C.), who is leading GOP negotiations, floated a compromise that would make law enforcement departments, not individual officers, liable for misconduct claims.

Though his proposal frustrated advocates who want to see more individual accountability, others thought it might be a decent middle ground, as many cities already indemnify officers against having to pay damages: out of $730 million in judgments awarded to police conduct plaintiffs between 2006 to 2011, individual officers paid a grand total of 0.02 percent, according to Joanna Schwartz, a law professor at UCLA, who surveyed 44 of the largest police agencies across the U.S.

But last month, we learned the National Sheriffs' Association met with Scott and Sen. Lindsey Graham (R–S.C.); they objected to the idea that their departments would have to take the heat for the actions of supposed rogue officers. Shortly thereafter, the National Association of Police Organizations sent its members a message headlined "Urgent, Action Needed! Senator Booker Proposes Horrible Police Reform Bill."

Law enforcement groups claim that abolishing or even limiting qualified immunity in any meaningful way would spur an avalanche of frivolous misconduct lawsuits. But without qualified immunity, plaintiffs would still need to prove before a judge that their constitutional rights were violated by a police officer or other government official. Qualified immunity doesn't determine the outcome of a civil suit, it simply allows government officials to avoid being sued altogether. Abolishing it won't make government officials liable if plaintiffs fail to prove that their rights were violated.

The legal principle of qualified immunity says that, in order to sue most state actors in civil court, the alleged misbehavior and the circumstances surrounding it must have previously been ruled unconstitutional in a prior court precedent. That means that cops can, for example, throw explosives into an innocent person's home and not have to pay for the damages if there is no prior ruling discussing such behavior. (That actually happened.) It also means that had the city of Minneapolis chosen to not settle with George Floyd's family, Derek Chauvin—the former Minneapolis Police Department officer convicted of murdering him—could have skirted the impending lawsuits if the Floyd family failed to present a perfectly identical precedent.

The latter speaks to the heart of why so many argue qualified immunity reform is an imperative: Chauvin is the exception, not the rule. As I wrote after his conviction, misbehaving police officers are almost never prosecuted; when they are, a conviction is even rarer. That leaves victims with one final road to justice—civil court—which they often find blocked off before they can state their case to a jury.

"Ending qualified immunity would simply allow more victims or their families to receive restitution," writes Evan Johnson, a former Washington, D.C., police officer, in The Hill, "and give agencies more financial incentive to ensure the officers they put on the street respect the rights of those they serve." On the latter point, perhaps an insurance market would make sense, where departments assess the risk of repeat offenders—like, for instance, Derek Chauvin.

"The bottom line is that policing reform without qualified immunity reform is going to be mostly hollow and ineffective," says Jay Schweikert, a research fellow with the Cato Institute's Project on Criminal Justice. "If you don't have accountability in place, then in some sense it doesn't matter what other rules Congress implements." In the context of the Justice in Policing Act, legislators also hope to address things like no-knock warrants and racial profiling. "If those rules can be violated with impunity," adds Schweikert, "then they're not actually protecting anyone." ★★★

Did archaeologists find the Trojan Horse?

Mykonos vase, one of the oldest known depictions of the Trojan Horse

(The Jerusalem Post) - Archaeologists who claimed they had unearthed remnants of the legendary Trojan Horse in Turkey have now found significant evidence that further supports their claim, according to an article by the Greek Reporter.

Turkish archaeologists excavating the site of the city of Troy on the hills of Hisarlik have discovered a large wooden structure that they believe are the remains of the Trojan Horse. These excavations include dozens of fir planks and beams up to 15 meters (49 feet) long, assembled in a strange form.

The wooden structure was found inside the walls of the ancient city of Troy.

Now, Boston University professors Christine Morris and Chris Wilson believe that "the carbon dating tests and other analyses have all suggested that the wooden pieces and other artifacts date from the 12th or 11th centuries BC."

Morris and Wilson believe with a "high level of confidence" that the structure is linked to the iconic horse. They say that tests have only confirmed their theory.

"This matches the dates cited for the Trojan War, by many ancient historians like Eratosthenes or Proclus. The assembly of the work also matches the description made by many sources. I don't want to sound overconfident, but I'm pretty certain that we found the real thing!"

The Trojan Horse is associated with the Trojan War, written about by Homer in his epic poems the Iliad and the Odyssey. The Iliad closes right before the war ends, so it does not feature the legendary horse.

The Trojan Horse was used to seize Troy and win the war. The story was prominently featured in the Aeneid by Virgil. Historians have suggested that the horse was an analogy for a war machine or natural disaster.

Archaeologists also discovered a damaged bronze plate with the inscription, "For their return home, the Greeks dedicate this offering to Athena." Quintus Smyrnaeus refers to this plate in his epis poem "Posthomerica." ★★★

A Former College Professor Accused of Serial Arson in Over a Half Dozen Wildfires is Denied Bail in California

By Bill Chappell

(NPR) - Firefighters battling the Dixie Fire have also been facing a second enemy: a serial arsonist who went on a spree of setting fires in July and August — and who sought to trap fire crews with his fires, according to agents from the U.S. Forest Service. They allege former college professor Gary Maynard is the culprit, citing their tracking of his movements and other evidence.

"Where Maynard went, fires started. Not just once, but over and over again," the government said in a court memorandum arguing for Maynard to be denied bail.

A judge agreed to that request during a brief hearing Wednesday, saying there are no "conditions or combination of conditions that would provide the necessary level of safety to this community should the defendant be released."

He added: "Based on that finding, the defendant will be detained as a risk of non-appearance and a danger to the community."

Gary Maynard

While court documents allege that Maynard is connected to more than a half-dozen dangerous fires in Northern California, he is currently charged with starting only the Ranch Fire. That blaze broke out on Saturday morning in a remote area where, according to court records, Maynard had just camped for the night. It's one of three fires that officials said Maynard set in recent days — all of them close to the Dixie Fire's northeastern footprint.

"He entered the evacuation zone and began setting fires behind the first responders fighting the Dixie fire," the U.S. attorney's office in Sacramento said in court papers. It added, "Maynard's fires were placed in the perfect position to increase the risk of firefighters being trapped between fires."

Maynard's alleged offenses "show that he is particularly dangerous, even among arsonists," the federal prosecutors said.

If it weren't for the surveillance federal agents were conducting on Maynard, the fires would have been much worse and the risk to firefighters would have been greater, the document said.

MAYNARD WAS IDENTIFIED AFTER HIS CAR GOT STUCK NEAR A FIRE, COURT RECORDS SAY

Maynard, 47, is a former professor who has taught at colleges in New York and California, according to online records. Last fall, he taught in the criminology and criminal justice department at Sonoma State University, which says in its official bio for Maynard that he has a doctorate in sociology and three master's degrees.

His teaching and research, the school said, focuses on topics that include the "sociology of health, deviance and crime" and environmental sociology. Maynard also has connections to other schools, from Stony Brook University in New York (where he received his doctorate) to Santa Clara University, where he also taught.

On July 20, Maynard was spotted near the scene of the Cascade Fire, on the western slopes of Mount Shasta. A mountain biker in those remote woods had noticed signs of a fire, called 911 and then worked to limit the fire's spread.

A Forest Service fire investigator determined the Cascade Fire was likely the result of arson. He also noticed that on a dirt road 150 to 200 yards from the fire, a man was struggling to free his car, a black Kia Soul, after the vehicle's rear had failed to clear a partially buried boulder.

A witness told investigators that the man, later identified as Maynard, had arrived several hours before the fire started, court records show. The witness said the man had walked off in the direction of where the fire eventually ignited, returning around 10 minutes later. After the man returned, the witness recalled, smoke from the Cascade Fire became visible.

The investigator kept his distance from Maynard, citing the man's "uncooperative and agitated behavior." But he took a picture of his car, and the license plate number led to Maynard. Forest Service agents also measured and recorded data about the tire tread pattern left by Maynard's car — evidence that they say ties him to a string of arson wildfires.

TRACKING AN ARSON SUSPECT

In an affidavit requesting an arrest warrant for Maynard, U.S. Forest Service Special Agent Tyler Bolen said he used a variety of means to learn more about the arson suspect, from internet searches that turned up his ties to colleges to inquiries with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The USDA, Bolen says, confirmed that Maynard had an Electronic Benefits Transfer account. Tracing his use of the card at grocery stores, the Forest Service was able to place Maynard close to the time and place where a number of fires were set, according to Bolen's affidavit.

The EBT account showed Maynard made purchases at a Safeway in Fortuna, along California's coast, on July 18, and then, a week later, at a Safeway store in Susanville — some 260 miles inland across the state, just east of the Lassen National Forest where the Dixie Fire erupted in mid-July, the affidavit said.

Since Maynard's car was registered in San Jose, Bolen also contacted the San Jose Police Department, which passed along a 2020 warning from a colleague who had reported her concern for Maynard's well-being, citing a severe mental health crisis. Crucially, the police agency shared Maynard's cellphone number, which was later confirmed to be linked to his EBT account, according to the affidavit.

PART OF "AN ARSON-SETTING SPREE"

Investigators said they've connected Maynard to a string of fires in Northern California, as early as the Bradley Fire that destroyed over 300 acres on July 11, and possibly as early as the Sweetbriar Fire on July 6. Both of those blazes struck in the Mount Shasta area, northwest of the Lassen National Forest where the Dixie Fire is still raging.

In recent days, authorities said, Maynard set numerous fires in the Lassen area — part of "an arson-setting spree," Bolen said.

In late July, Forest Service agents grew so concerned about Maynard's actions that they also asked Verizon Wireless for 15-minute updates on his location, 24 hours a day. Eventually, an agent also installed a tracker on Maynard's car, according to Bolen's affidavit.

Agents used that data to follow along behind Maynard, putting out several fires and gathering evidence that could link him to the blazes. Investigators also obtained warrants requiring Verizon Wireless to preserve evidence from Maynard's cellphone account that could show his movements and activity.

On Saturday, Lassen County sheriff's deputies arrested Maynard after a California Highway Patrol officer initially pulled him over for driving in an emergency closure area.

MAYNARD DENIES STARTING THE FIRES

After his arrest, Maynard told Forest Service agents he had not started any fires. He was then booked into the Lassen County Jail on a charge of violating a state law that forbids entering a closed emergency area. But later Saturday, a deputy told him that a federal felony arson charge was being added. An angry Maynard insisted that he is innocent.

"I'm going to kill you, f***ing pig! I told those f***ers I didn't start any of those fires!" he said to the deputy, according to the affidavit filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California.

Maynard was later transferred to Sacramento County's jail. He had a brief court appearance by video Tuesday, followed by his detention hearing on Wednesday.

In the days before he was taken into custody, Maynard allegedly set the Moon Fire on Aug. 5, as well as the Ranch and Conard fires, which both ignited on Aug. 7, according to Bolen's affidavit.

Maynard now faces federal charges of setting fire to land that's owned by the U.S. or is under its jurisdiction.

★★★

The Great American Dog Shortage

By Jennifer A. Kingson

(AXIOS) - Demand for pet dogs is far outstripping supply, and the imbalance is expected to worsen as young adults consider dog ownership a normal life stage (before kids), dog breeders face increasing regulation and the U.S. cracks down on illegal dog imports.

Why it matters: Rabies and other diseases that can jump from dogs to humans are cropping up in places where they were all but eradicated, a result of unscrupulous imports from countries with looser hygiene laws and health oversight.

Driving the news: On June 14, the CDC issued a temporary suspension of the importation of dogs from more than 100 countries deemed at high risk for rabies, including Egypt, India, China, Russia and Ukraine.

• At the same time, the Healthy Dog Importation Act — a bipartisan bill recently introduced in the House and the Senate — would require that every dog coming to the U.S. have a health certificate with proof of vaccinations issued by a properly licensed veterinarian.

By the numbers: While the U.S. imports more than 1 million dogs a year, the annual demand for dogs — imported or not— is 8 million.

• The American Pet Products Association released its biennial pet owners' survey in June, showing that "pet ownership has increased from an estimated 67% of U.S. households that own a pet to an estimated 70%" over the prior survey.

• Millennials were the largest cohort of pet owners, at 32%, followed by Boomers at 27% and Gen X at 24%.

What they're saying: "People are shocked when they hear the number of dogs that have been imported to the U.S.," Sheila Goffe, vice president of government relations for the American Kennel Club, tells Axios.

• "Some are going to pet stores, some are going to shelters, a lot are being sold online."

• Goffe says the USDA and U.S. Border Patrol are ill-equipped to police batches of dogs that arrive in the U.S. in groups as big as 40 or 50, with fake health certificates that have been photocopied.

Context: The number of dogs going to shelters and being euthanized has plummeted over the last 50 years, thanks to the success of spay-and-neuter programs and the rise of "responsible dog ownership," in which people commit to keeping a dog for life.

• "There just are not enough dogs entering shelters" to meet demand, says Patti Strand, president and founder of the National Animal Interest Alliance, who has bred Dalmatians for 52 years.

• While shady "puppy mills" do exist, most domestic breeders are highly ethical but are being squeezed by state and local laws that limit conditions for breeding dogs, according to Goffe and Strand.

• The "canine freedom trail" is one of many programs through which people transport dogs from states where shelters are full or crowded (like Texas and Alabama) to states where there aren't enough adoptable dogs (like New Jersey and Minnesota).

Goffe and Strand say notions that shelters are overcrowded or that it's wrong to get a dog from a breeder are outdated.

• Today, it is primarily sick or dangerous dogs that are euthanized — and when you "rescue" a dog from a shelter, the animal may simply be a foreign import that was brought to the U.S. to slake demand.

What's next: The dearth of available dogs will worsen — as will shortages of veterinarians and veterinary technicians, predicts Mark Cushing, head of the consultancy Animal Policy Group and author of the 2020 book "Pet Nation."

• Cushing says the mental health benefits of pet ownership are inestimable, as so many people have discovered during the pandemic. "Pets aren't a fad, so we're still in the beginning phase — and that will stun some people — of this surge of continuing demand for pets," he tells Axios.

• "People with one dog will get a second dog. People with one cat will get a second, or they'll get a different species."

★★★

Continued from page 2 • Florida Police Bend Entrapment Rules ...

concerns about the show's methods. Could they have been aiding police in entrapment? Sounds good for ratings and arrests.

Yes, there are sexual predators, that is not disputed. They should be brought to justice the lawful way. Adults who intend to meet other adults on "adult websites" should not be duped into a relationship by an undercover agent whose only intent, before, during and after is solely to gain a conviction.

ONLINE IS THE TOP WAY PEOPLE ARE FINDING THEIR SPOUSES TODAY

Why would police want to entrap those who did not seek to commit a crime in a time where an increasing amount of people are seeking adult relationships online, utilizing websites they believe to be safe? Simple answer: to generate more revenue by gaining more convictions.

It is simple to say, "Don't be stupid. Don't engage offers that are not lawful." For those who say this, you must also know that people are still arrested who ended the conversation(s) at the point the undercover officer's age was changed to "under 18". The will to arrest/convict continues, whether you actually met someone, attempted to meet, or otherwise – just ask Peter Hill!

One attorney who asked to remain anonymous until a pending case is finished said there is a new case, and separate case law that could help resolve arrests where cops entrapped people on third party websites, like described above. He believes there is still hope for many who never intended to commit such crimes before being persuaded to by undercover adult police agents. He said, "government must first obtain permission to conduct stings on third party websites which they have not obtained in my experience." Could a loophole like this be the difference?

IN CLOSING

Mr. Hill never intended to meet anyone underage - he was role playing. The government may say he was not role playing. He (or his attorney) will say he was. Role playing is not a crime. He went onto an adult website and responded to an adult ad that said, "18-years-old." The fact Mr. Hill went to an adult site and responded to an adult ad was conveniently omitted from his arrest affidavit. Further, the government cannot say for certain whether or not Mr. Hill was role playing. Why? The government never sought evidence from his electronic devices. For over two years - all of Mr. Hill's electronic devices were left in his possession without being analyzed by law enforcement. Whose job is it to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt? In the case of Mr. Hill, it will be Florida State Attorney Thomas Bakkedahl. Elected Prosecutor for Florida's 19th Judicial District, Bakkedahl is ultimately the person responsible for this case as he is elected and has the power to dismiss Peter's charges. Remember, the case against Mr. Hill did not start when he responded to an adult ad - it started when police concocted the idea to entrap Mr. Hill.

The U.S. incarcerates more people per capita than any other developed country. It is obvious, with allowed entrapment, why that is. Imagine the tax money spent to incarcerate people who had no intent to commit a crime.

Now, most relationships in the United States begin online. Be careful, the next one you start could be with a cop whose sole purpose is to pull on your heart strings while attempting to deceive you into becoming a criminal. And, for those who believe that if they don't commit a crime, they will have nothing to worry about, remember this – you too could be part of the next big sting…

One thing is certain, police methods have evolved to be the originator of criminal behavior. Despite what someone is arrested for, an entrapment defense is not limited to a specific crime. An entrapment defense should lawfully apply in all cases where someone is unlawfully targeted. Entrapment is a valid defense; the prosecution must show the defendant had a predisposition to commit the crime if it is raised.

Let's talk about that!

The US~Observer will be publishing a follow-up article once this case concludes.

Editor's Note: If you, or anyone you know have been wrongfully arrested or convicted, contact us immediately. The US~Observer champions helping those who are victims of injustice. Email: editor@usobserver.com, or call, 541-474-7885.

★★★

The US~Observer's services have defeated over 5,000 false charges to-date.

Are You Facing False Criminal Charges?

Have You Been a Victim of False Prosecution?

Welcome to the largest racket in history: The American Justice System

If you are facing prosecution for false charges then you are aware of how the 'justice' industry (racket) in America works. You (the innocent person) have been falsely charged with a crime. Most of the time you receive a myriad of stacked charges intended for the sole purpose of extracting a "plea bargain" from you.

You then rush to an attorney, pay him a huge retainer to cover the usual $200.00 per hour (if not higher), which he/she charges, to supposedly defend your innocence. The attorney usually files some motions, writes some worthless letters and makes many unproductive (unless they pertain to you accepting a plea bargain) phone calls until you are broke. Generally, you haven't even started your trial and 99% of the time the attorney hasn't completed any investigation.

All of a sudden your attorney is telling you that you can't win your case and you should accept the benevolent plea bargain that the almighty prosecuting attorney has offered you. "Do you want to take the chance on spending 30-40 years in prison when you can plea bargain for 18 months," your attorney tells you. What happened to: "I think we can win this case, it's a good case." Remember? Isn't that pretty close to what your attorney told you as he/she was relieving you of your money?

You then accept a plea bargain and go to jail or you have a jury trial, you're found guilty (because your attorney hasn't produced enough evidence-if any and because the judge directs the jury to find you guilty) and then you go to jail. When you finally wake up you realize that on top of now being a criminal, you are flat broke and incarcerated. You find that the very person (your attorney) you frantically rushed to retain, became your worst enemy.

There is only one way to remedy a false prosecution: Obtain conclusive evidence by investigating the accusers, the prosecutors – everyone involved with your case. In other words, complete an in-depth investigation before you are prosecuted and make the facts public, forcing a just outcome.

The US~Observer newspaper will not waste your time or your money. This is not a game, it's your life and your freedom. We do not make deals. If you are innocent, then nobody has the right to steal what belongs to you, most of all, your liberty. Nobody! That includes your attorney - as well as your supposed public servants.

Why have a bad day when it's still possible to force justice ... right down their throats?

The US~Observer investigates cases for news. We want to win, just as you want to prove your innocence.

For justice sake, don't wait until they slam the door behind you before contacting us if you are innocent. Preventing a wrongful conviction is much easier than achieving a post-conviction exoneration.

Call Us Today!
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If you prefer email:
editor@usobserver.com

"One false prosecution is one too many, and any act of immunity is simply a government condoned crime." *- Edward Snook, US~Observer*

Faces of the US~Observer's VINDICATED

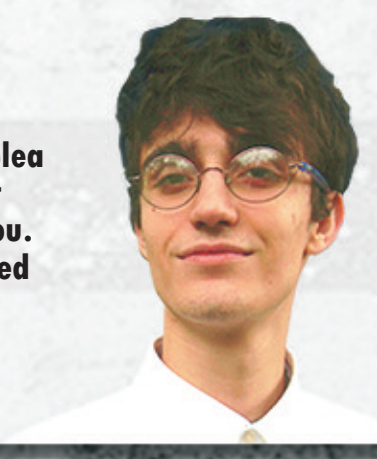
Shawn Yoakum
Employment Discrimination

"You changed my life forever, and made me want to help others. You did what you said you would."

Status: Compensated

Bryan Tucker
Sex Abuse

"I would have taken the plea deal for crimes I didn't commit if it wasn't for you. Thank you. I was acquitted because of you."



Status: Acquitted

Dean Muchow
Government Abuse

"Your investigative reporting was instrumental in stopping the District Attorney's abusive attacks."

Status: Cleared

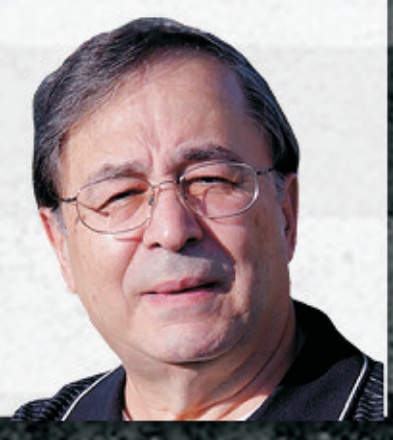
Jessica Morton
Sex Abuse

"If it wasn't for the US~Observer I would have lost everything; my freedom, my family. You made sure that didn't happen!"

Status: Dismissed

Jose Velasco-Vero
Felony Firearms Crimes

"My case was the first of its kind. You absolutely defeated these unwarranted charges!"



Status: Dismissed

Ella Lee
Assault & Resisting Arrest

"...no amount of reading can convey the heart, the sincerity and dedication of care you receive from these guys. Through their hard work, I got my dismissal papers today... So sweet it is."

Status: Dismissed

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