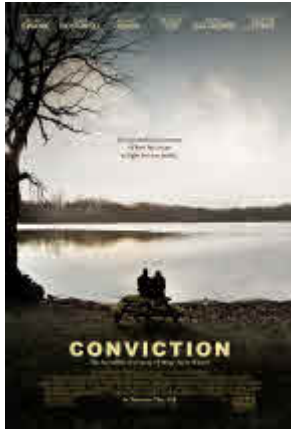


“Conviction” Was A Box Office Flop

Conviction is the big-budget Hollywood movie about the case of Kenneth Waters and his sister Betty Anne Waters years long efforts to prove his innocence of the 1980 murder of Katharina Brow in Ayer, Massachusetts. The movie had a number of bonafide stars, including two-time Academy Award winner Hilary Swank, Sam Rockwell, Minnie Driver, Juliette Lewis, and Peter Gallagher.



accounting for inflation is the equivalent of \$64.7 million today. Mr. Washington won the Golden Globe Award as Best Actor for 2000 and he was nominated for the Academy Award's Best Actor award.

In the Name of the Father (1993) starred Daniel Day-Lewis as Gerry Conlin who was one of the Guildford Four wrongly

convicted of an Irish Republican Army bombing in 1974 of a pub about 20 miles from London. The movie was a box office hit in England, and it grossed \$25.1 million in the U.S., which accounting for inflation is the equivalent of \$36.8 million today. Mr. Day-Lewis was nominated for the Academy Award's Best Actor award and the movie for Best Picture.

A Cry in the Dark (1988) starred Meryl Streep as Lindy Chamberlain who was wrongly convicted of murdering her infant daughter in Australia in 1980. It grossed \$6.9 million in the U.S., which accounting for inflation is the equivalent of \$12.4 million today. The movie was a huge box office hit in Australia where it swept all the major movie awards. Ms. Streep was nominated for the Academy Award's Best Actress award.

Conviction's poor box-office return was predictable. The week after *Conviction* opened in theaters *Justice Denied* wrote on its Facebook page:

In *Conviction's* first week of limited release it had a box office of about \$100,000. The lukewarm reviews of "Conviction" could mean that it won't spend long in theaters, and will soon be available for purchase on DVD.

Consideration of future movie projects about a wrongful conviction will definitely take into account that with so much going for *Conviction*, moviegoers simply didn't want to see it. It only grossed about half of what *A Cry in the Dark* did about an Australian wrongful conviction, and only about 10% of what *The Hurricane* grossed.

Sources:
Box Office Mojo, 2010 Domestic Grosses and Alltime Grosses, www.boxofficemojo.com
Internet Movie Data Base, www.imdb.com

Robert Lee Stinson Awarded \$25,000 By Wisconsin For 24 Years Of Wrongful Imprisonment

Robert Lee Stinson was 21 when convicted in 1985 of first-degree murder in the 1984 death of a 63-year-old woman in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The prosecution's key evidence was the testimony by two experts that Stinson's teeth matched bites on the victim. The experts said the woman, who was Stinson's neighbor, had been bitten by a man missing a tooth, and Stinson was missing a tooth.

Stinson was sentenced to life in prison.

After more than two decades in prison Stinson was able to obtain new expert dental evidence that he was missing a tooth where the bite marks indicated a tooth should have been, and he had an intact tooth where the perpetrator didn't. In addition, DNA tests of crime scene evidence excluded Stinson as the woman's assailant.

Based on the new evidence Stinson's conviction was overturned in January 2009. Within days he was released on bail after 24-1/2 years of wrongful incarceration. His murder charge was dismissed on July 27, 2009.

In May 2010 the same DNA tests that exonerated Stinson were matched to a man convicted of rape and murder in another case. When confronted with the test results he confessed to the murder Stinson had been convicted of committing.

Wisconsin's wrongful conviction compensation statute allows a maximum award of \$25,000. Stinson filed a claim and on December 28, 2010, it was announced that the Wisconsin Claims Board had unanimously voted to award Stinson \$25,000. The board also stated it was recommending that the Wisconsin legislature approve an additional payment of \$90,000 to Stinson.

Stinson is now 46. He was 20 when he was arrested the morning after the murder by police canvassing the area. The police arrested him because they said he couldn't adequately explain his whereabouts the night before when his neighbor was murdered.

Sources:
Robert Lee Stinson, the Milwaukee man exonerated of a murder conviction, will get at least \$25K from Wisconsin Claims Board, *Appleton Post Crescent*, December 29, 2010.

Conviction was released to theaters on October 15, 2010, amid much fanfare, a national advertising campaign, and media hype that Ms. Swank could be nominated for another Best Actress Academy Award.

Conviction didn't live up to expectations and was a major box office disappointment. It only grossed \$6.8 million in the U.S. Before disappearing from theaters in December 2010.

With a production budget of \$12.5 million and several million more spent on advertising, *Conviction* grossed less than 50% of its cost. *Conviction* may be able to at least break even with DVD and Blu-Ray sales, and overseas and cable TV revenue. *Conviction* was the 139th highest grossing movie of 2010. *Toy Story 3* was number 1 with ticket sales of \$415 million.

The 2010 Golden Globe Awards Nominations were announced on December 14, 2010. *Conviction* was completely shut out of any nominations. That didn't portend well for nominations for the Academy Awards. When the nominees were announced in January 2011 *Conviction* didn't receive any Oscar nominations.

There can only be speculation why *Conviction* was such a box-office flop. To put it's gross of \$6.8 million in perspective, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows — Part 1* grossed \$24 million from its midnight showing alone at theaters on November 18, and it grossed \$61.2 million during its first day in theaters.

Other movies about wrongful convictions have fared much better than *Conviction*. *The Hurricane* (1999) starred Denzel Washington as Rubin "Hurricane" Carter who was twice wrongly convicted of a 1966 triple murder in Paterson, New Jersey. It grossed \$50.7 million in the U.S., which