

“An Unreal Dream: The Michael Morton Story” Documentary

The CNN cable network broadcast “An Unreal Dream: The Michael Morton Story” for the first time on December 5, 2013. Directed by Al Reinert, [the two-hour documentary](#) portrayed the harrowing true tale of Michael Morton who was freed in 2011 after spending 25 years in prison for the murder of his wife Christine. Morton was sentenced to life without parole, and said upon his release, that if he had been sentenced to death he likely would have been executed.

Michael Morton’s story demonstrates systemic flaws in the legal system and the serious consequences of when the wrong person is prosecuted. Christine Morton’s killer went on to kill again—a crime that remained unsolved until the DNA evidence in Morton’s case was tested, linking the real killer to both cases.

Since his release Michael has reunited with his now-adult son Eric—who grew up believing his father had killed his mother.



Michael and Christine Morton with son Eric in 1986 (KVUE)

Morton has been an advocate in the Texas legislature for protections against wrongful conviction, and Governor Rick Perry signed the Michael Morton Act into law in 2013.

Ken Anderson was the prosecuting attorney in Michael Morton’s case, and he later became a judge. The Texas State Bar [filed ethical charges](#) against Anderson alleging he deliberately failed to comply with a court order by not disclosing evidence favorable to Morton, and falsely telling the trial judge during a pretrial hearing on Feb. 6, 1987 he had no such evidence. The charges against Anderson were resolved when [he pled guilty](#) on November 8, 2013 to contempt of court. Ninth Judicial District Judge Kelly Moore sentenced Anderson to serve ten days in jail, and he was fined \$500, ordered

to perform 500 hours of community service, and disbarred from practicing law in Texas.

Anderson’s disbarment was subject to review by the Texas Supreme Court, and if approved, he would have had to wait at least five years before applying for reinstatement of his Texas law license.

Anderson short-circuited the disciplinary process and avoided serving his jail sentence, paying his fine, and performing 500 hours of community service when on November 19, 2013 the Texas Supreme Court accepted his motion to resign as a Texas attorney in lieu of his adjudged punishment. The Court’s ordered stated in part: “The Court further concludes that acceptance of the resignation of Ken Anderson is in the best interest of the public and the profession.”

“An Unreal Dream’s” website is, www.anunrealdream.com.

Sources:

“An Unreal Dream: The Michael Morton Story,” *CNN cable network*, CNN.com

[Anderson gets 10 days in jail](#), disbarment pending. By Brad Stutzman, *Austin Statesman*, November 8, 2013

[In The Matter Of Ken Anderson](#), No. 13-9155 (Sup. Ct. of Texas, 11-19-2013)



Innocents Database Webpage Now Includes Detailed Statistical Information

The [Innocents Database](#) linked to from [Justice Denied’s](#) website is the world largest database of persons exonerated of their convicted crime.

The database’s webpage was updated on May 29, 2014 to include detailed statistical information about the 4,732 cases in the database that include 2,762 U.S. cases, and 1,970 cases from 112 other countries. The information includes charts showing the number of exonerated people convicted of various crimes over different periods of time, and how long the average period of incarceration was before a person’s exoneration. The [Innocents Database](#) includes:

- 891 people exonerated in the U.S. and other countries before 1989.
- 784 people exonerated in the U.S. of a homicide related crime since 1988 were incarcerated for an average of 12-1/4 years.
- 475 people exonerated in the U.S. of a

sexual assault related crime since 1988 were incarcerated for an average of 11 years.

- 2,088 people exonerated in the U.S. of all types of crimes since 1988 were incarcerated for an average of 9-1/2 years.

- 490 people exonerated outside the U.S. of a homicide related crime since 1988 were incarcerated for an average of 8-1/3 years.

- 233 people exonerated outside the U.S. of a sexual assault related crime since 1988 were incarcerated for an average of 3-1/3 years.

- 1,753 people exonerated outside the U.S. of all types of crimes since 1988 were incarcerated for an average of 5-2/3 years.

One fact readily apparent from the information now available on the Innocents Database webpage is the United States is less efficient at exonerating a person than are other countries. Overall countries other than the U.S. incarcerate a person for a shorter period of time before their exoneration.

[Click here](#) to go to the Innocents Database at, www.forejustice.org/search_idb.htm.

The source of cases in the Innocents Database includes, but isn’t limited to, court decisions; newspaper and magazine articles; books; convictions overturned by the Court of Appeals after the case was referred to the Court by the Criminal Case Review Commission for England, Wales and Northern Ireland; convictions overturned by Scotland’s Court of Appeals after the case was referred to the Court by the Scottish Criminal Case Review Commission; convictions overturned after the case was referred by the Norwegian Criminal Case Review Commission for post-conviction court review; and cases in the National Registry of Exonerations.



Visit the Innocents Database

Includes details about more than 4,700 wrongly convicted people from the U.S. and other countries.

www.forejustice.org/search_idb.htm

Visit the Wrongly Convicted Bibliography

Database of hundreds of books, law review articles, movies and documentaries related to wrongful convictions.

www.forejustice.org/biblio/bibliography.htm