

Share 0 More Next Blog»

[Create Blog](#) [Sign In](#)

Share this on Google+

GRITS FOR BREAKFAST

WELCOME TO TEXAS JUSTICE: YOU MIGHT BEAT THE RAP, BUT YOU WON'T BEAT THE RIDE.

THURSDAY, APRIL 05, 2012

IPOT announces trio of non-DNA exonerations out of Dallas

My employers at the Innocence Project of Texas issued a press release this morning about Texas' latest exoneration, another non-DNA case solved by actually finding the real perpetrators:

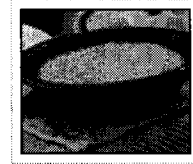
Innocence Project of Texas FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THREE WRONGFULLY CONVICTED PERSONS TO BE JOINTLY EXONERATED

The Innocence Project of Texas, in conjunction with Houston Attorney Tracey Cobb and the Dallas Law Firm of Sorrels, Udashen & Anton announces the exoneration of three wrongfully convicted persons. On April 6, 2012, at 9:00 a.m., Darryl Washington, Shakara Robertson and Marcus Lashun Smith will appear before Judge Lena Levario of the 204th District Court in Dallas County for a hearing where it is expected that they will be declared innocent of the Aggravated Robbery offense they were charged with in 1994.

Mr. Washington, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Smith were arrested in November of 1994 and charged with aggravated robbery of an elderly person based on a purse snatching from an elderly woman. The three men, along with two juveniles, were arrested and accused of committing the offense. Mr. Washington was tried to a jury and received a 99-year prison sentence. Mr. Robertson and Mr. Smith subsequently accepted plea bargain for probation in order to avoid Mr. Washington's fate.

The case against the three men consisted of erroneous eyewitness identifications. The men's innocence was proven when Houston Attorney Tracey Cobb, while still a law student at the University of Houston Law School and working with the law school Innocence Network, began investigating Mr. Washington's case. After her

 SOUTHERN, DAILY AND
GOOD FOR YOU

 GRITSFORBREAKFAST
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Grits for Breakfast looks at the Texas criminal justice system, with a little politics and whatever else suits the author's fancy thrown in. All opinions are my own. The facts belong to everybody. Who is this guy?

[VIEW MY COMPLETE PROFILE](#)

SUBSCRIBE BY EMAIL

Subscribe via Grits' site feed

 Enter Your Email to Git Yer
Daily Grits!

 Subscribe me!

 Preview | Powered by
FeedBlitz

SUBSCRIBE TO

graduation from law school, Ms. Cobb doggedly continued her investigation, locating the men who actually committed the aggravated robbery. Ms. Cobb was able to obtain affidavits from these men admitting their role in the offense and confirming that Mr. Washington, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Smith were completely innocent.

Ms. Cobb enlisted the assistance of the Innocence Project of Texas, through its President Gary Udashen, to assist her in the representation of Mr. Washington. IPOT also agreed to take on the representation of Mr. Robertson and Mr. Smith through volunteer attorneys Bruce Anton and Robert N. Udashen. The Udashens and Mr. Anton are partners in the Dallas Law Firm of Sorrels, Udashen & Anton.

Ms. Cobb and IPOT worked closely with Craig Watkins and the Dallas County District Attorney's Office Conviction Integrity Unit on this case. Russell Wilson and Cynthia Garza, prosecutors with the District Attorney's Conviction Integrity Unit, conducted their own investigation and ultimately concluded that the three men were innocent of the charges.

On March 2, 2012, a daylong hearing was held before Judge Levario where four of the five men who actually committed this offense testified and admitted their involvement. The fifth man is deceased. Judge Levario also heard testimony from Mr. Washington, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Smith as well as two juveniles who were arrested with them. At the close of the testimony, Judge Levario made oral findings that Mr. Washington, Mr. Robertson and Mr. Smith were actually innocent.



The hearing on April 6, 2012, will be the formal entry of Judge Levario's findings of actual innocence.

The Innocent Project of Texas acknowledges the excellent work of the Dallas County District Attorney's Office, which has led to the anticipated exoneration of these three men and has previously led to the exoneration of over 25 other wrongfully convicted persons from Dallas County.

POSTED BY GRITSFORBREAKFAST AT 11:05 AM 

3 COMMENTS:

Thomas R. Griffith said...

-  Posts ▼
-  Comments ▼

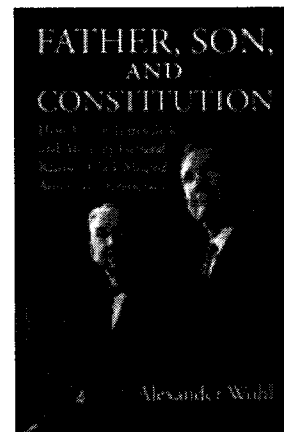
DONATE

Use these buttons to **donate to Grits** (Paypal payment) or donate \$8 monthly (Paypal subscribe). Alas, the system will charge sales tax.



ADVERTISE ON GRITS!

Place Your Ad on Grits



"Wohl's compelling book on **Tom and Ramsey Clark** shows how, as major actors in some of the great legal struggles of twentieth-century America, father and son became civil libertarians almost in spite of themselves." — **Linda Greenhouse**

University Press of Kansas

[Learn more...](#)