



## David Quindt

On October 6, 1998, eighteen year old Riley Haeling was fatally wounded, and fifteen year old Jennifer Salmon was shot twice but survived, in a drug related burglary in a suburb of Sacramento, California. Months after the crime, twenty-one year old David Quindt was implicated as a suspect by a fellow gang member, John Anderson. Anderson claimed he had provided Quindt with two guns the day before the shooting, one of which matched the caliber of the gun used at the scene of the crime. Quindt was arrested in mid-February, 1999.

Quindt was a known gang member with a juvenile criminal history, and he resembled a composite sketch drawn with the assistance of the surviving victim. Quindt was put on trial and positively identified by Salmon as the killer. Based almost exclusively on this eyewitness testimony, Quindt was convicted by a jury on December 2, 1999, of first degree murder, attempted murder, and robbery.

Before Quindt was sentenced, an informant – motivated by a \$10,000 reward offered by the Haeling family – contacted investigators and implicated three other individuals in the crime. Further investigation led to the identification of the real criminals and eventually all three were convicted. Quindt was released from jail on May 22, 2000, and on the same day the district attorney's office moved to vacate the conviction on the ground that the real criminals had been identified. He received \$17,200 in compensation for his incarceration from the State of California.

–Charles Armbrust

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**State:** California

**County:** Sacramento

**Most Serious Crime:** Murder

**Additional Convictions:** Attempted Murder, Robbery

**Reported Crime Date:** 1998

**Convicted:** 1999

**Exonerated:** 2000

**Sentence:** Not sentenced

**Race:** Caucasian

**Sex:** Male

**Age:** 21

**Contributing Factors:** Mistaken Witness ID

**Did DNA evidence contribute to the exoneration?** No

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The National Registry of Exonerations is a joint project of the University of Michigan Law School and the Center on Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University School of Law.

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<http://www.deathpenalty.org/article.php?id=407>

**David Quindt**

County: Sacramento

Convicted of: 1st Degree Murder

Year of Conviction: 1999

Sentence: Life without parole

Year Released: 2000

Years Served: 14 months

Wrongful Conviction Factors: Mistaken eyewitness identification

When the police called asking about a double murder, David Quindt did what most innocent people do. "I said sure, I'll talk to you, I have nothing to hide, I didn't do this." He met with police, answering all of their questions and even taking a lie detector test. But then he was convicted based on the identification of one eyewitness. "I was dumbfounded," David said, "I couldn't believe what was going on at all."

The shock took its toll on the 24 year old man. "I had a nervous breakdown when I was there [in jail]," he said. David attempted suicide twice, first jumping out of a fourth story window, then cutting his stomach open.

But then he began to focus, realizing he had to help himself or he would never go home. "I always said I will go home." He began researching his case and the law. He drew strength from an unlikely source, a guard. "He always told me don't give up, keep going," David said. "If it wasn't for that one cop, I don't think I would have made it."

Then, out of no where, the Deputy District Attorney who had him convicted, Mark Curry, came to visit in prison. He said, "David, I'm sorry. You get to go home on Monday." New evidence, revealed after David's trial, led the district attorney to the true killer. David burst into tears.

He spent another difficult weekend in jail and then had to suffer the indignity of being released from the back gate, rather than the front door. But when he walked to the front of the jail, David saw his grandmother waiting for him and again started to cry. Two years in custody for a crime he did not commit changed David's whole life. "People don't know how precious life is," he said. "When I got out, I was like a reborn child." But when he got out, he had nothing and found himself and his wife homeless for a time. "We're still struggling," David said, "but I'll make it. I made it through this and nothing could be worse."

<http://www.deathpenalty.org/downloads/SFMag.pdf>

## INNOCENCE LOST

By Nina Martin, Executive Editor, *San Francisco* magazine  
November 2004

**Executive summary** *San Francisco* has spent the last year reviewing California's largely unexamined record on wrongful convictions and discovered that the nation's largest criminal justice system has sent more innocent people to prison for longer terms than any other state and repeatedly passes up opportunities to undo the error. As a result, no fewer than 150 and as many as 1,500 people are now in California prisons for life for crimes they did not commit, and the system is set up to repeat its errors.

**NAME:** David Quindt **Race:** white **Jurisdiction:** Sacramento County **Crime:** fatal shooting during attempted theft of marijuana during a home invasion **Date convicted:** 1999 **Sentence:** life without parole **Release:** 2000, Sacramento Superior Court **Reason:** verdict set aside after a tipster revealed the identities of the true killers **D.A. response:** worked to free him **Reasons cited by court and/or attorneys for wrongful conviction/reversal:** eyewitness error (Quindt strongly resembled actual killers) **Years wrongfully imprisoned:** 2 **Compensation/lawsuit:** received \$17,200 in state compensation **Other:** *Sacramento Bee* reporter was writing a book about the D.A.'s office when this case occurred; codefendant was also convicted, then freed; three men were later convicted of the crime

<http://www.victimsofthestate.org/Name/P3.html>

**Sacramento County, CA**

**David Quintt**

**Oct 6, 1998**

David Quintt was convicted of a fatal shooting that occurred during an attempted theft of marijuana in a home invasion. His co-defendant, Anthony Salcedo, was also charged, but had not been convicted due to a mistrial. Quintt's verdict was set aside after a tipster revealed the identities of the true killers. They were later convicted. Quintt served 2 years of a life without parole sentence. Quintt's case was written about in *The Prosecutors* by Gary Delsohn (2003) [6/05]

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Dutton, Aug 12, 2003 - Law - 368 pages

Depicting American justice at its best and worst, *The Prosecutors* lifts the lid off today's legal system with details that are more shocking and graphic than any television show or bestselling novel. Allowed unprecedented access to spend a year inside an urban prosecutors' office, Gary Delsohn provides a riveting, behind-the-scenes look at how America's increasingly overburdened