

## **Under Pat O'Brien Watch As Chief Of Criminal Prosecutions For The Cook County State's Attorney's Office, The Office Wrongly Convicted At Least 27 People**

*As chief of criminal prosecutions for the Cook County State's Attorney's office, at least 27 people were wrongly convicted under Pat O'Brien's watch. According to contemporaneous media reports, O'Brien served as chief of criminal prosecutions for the state's attorney's office from at least March 1989 to the fall of 1993, when reports show he had left to open a private practice. According to multiple criminal justice databases, at least 27 people were wrongly convicted in Cook County from March 1989 to October 1993. The Innocence Project, the Northwestern University Bluhm Legal Clinic Center on Wrongful Convictions, and University of Michigan National Registry of Exonerations provide information about exonerations in the United States — cases in which a person was wrongly convicted of a crime and later cleared of all the charges based on new evidence of innocence.*

### **O'Brien Appeared To Serve As Chief Of Criminal Prosecutions For The Cook County State's Attorney's Office From March 1989 To October 1993**

*Researcher's Note: The following details on Pat O'Brien's tenure with the Cook County State's Attorney's office were pulled from news archive searches. We submitted a public records request with the Cook County State's Attorney's office for O'Brien's personnel file. The FOIA officer said the responsive records were previously destroyed and no longer available.*

### **O'Brien Was Chief Of The Criminal Prosecutions Bureau In The CCSAO As Early As March 1989**

**A March 24, 1989, Chicago Tribune Article Referred To O'Brien As The Cook County State's Attorney's Office's "Chief Of The Criminal Prosecutions Bureau."** [Chicago Tribune, 3/24/89]

O'Brien, chief of the criminal prosecutions bureau, who prosecuted Williams with Lynne Kawamoto, said he believes the verdict marks the first conviction for second-degree attempted murder in Cook County, and perhaps Illinois, since a change in the law last year allowed such a finding.

[Chicago Tribune, 3/24/89]

**A January 30, 1990, Chicago Tribune Article Referred To O'Brien As The Cook County State's Attorney's Office's "Chief Of The Criminal Prosecutions Bureau."** [Chicago Tribune, 1/30/90]

The **Cook County** state's attorney's office will continue to move cautiously in its use of DNA testing after a published report said some scientists regard the tests as too unreliable to use in court, a top prosecutor said Monday.

"We went slow in the beginning" when DNA was first touted last year as the biggest advance in crime-fighting since the turn of the century, said **Pat O'Brien**, chief of the criminal prosecutions bureau.

[Chicago Tribune, 1/30/90]

A January 4, 1991, Chicago Tribune Article Said O'Brien Was "In Charge Of The [Cook County State's Attorney's Office's] Criminal Prosecutions Bureau." [Chicago Tribune, 1/4/91]

Hollowell met Monday with Assistant **Cook County** State's Atty. **Pat O'Brien**, who is in charge of the office's criminal prosecutions bureau.

[Chicago Tribune, 1/4/91]

## **By October 1993, The Chicago Tribune Reported That O'Brien Left The Cook County State's Attorney's Office To Open A Private Practice**

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An October 5, 1993, Chicago Tribune Article Referred To Pat O'Brien As A "Former Prosecutor For The Cook County State's Attorney's Office" And Said O'Brien Opened A Private Practice In Chicago. [Chicago Tribune, 10/5/93]

you know," says Bilandic. . . . **Pat O'Brien**, a highly regarded and sometimes outspoken former prosecutor for the **Cook County** state's attorney's office, has set up shop at 53 W. Jackson Blvd. He'll share office space with **Dean Morask** and **John Armellino**, two other former assistant state's attorneys. . . . Trial attor-

[Chicago Tribune, 10/5/93]

**Sun-Times: O'Brien Finished His Second Stint In The State's Attorney's Office In 1993.** According to the Chicago Sun-Times, Pat O'Brien worked in the Cook County State's Attorney's Office from 1975 to 1981 and again from 1986-1993. [Chicago Sun-Times, [1/22/20](#)]

## From March 1989 To October 1993, At Least 27 People Were Wrongly Convicted In Cook County

### March 1989 – October 1993: At Least 27 People Were Wrongfully Convicted In Cook County, Illinois.

According to the Innocence Project, Northwestern University Bluhm Legal Clinic Center on Wrongful Convictions and the University of Michigan National Registry of Exonerations, at least 27 people were wrongfully convicted in Cook County, Illinois from March 1989 to October 1993. [Innocence Project, accessed [9/3/20](#); Northwestern University, Bluhm Legal Clinic Center on Wrongful Convictions, Illinois Exonerations, accessed [9/3/20](#); [University of Michigan, National Registry of Exonerations, accessed [9/3/20](#)]

## The Innocence Project Has Record Of Three Cases In Cook County Where The Defendant Was Convicted Between March 1989 & October 1993

| March 1989 – October 1993: Innocence Project Wrongful Convictions In Cook County, Illinois |   |                 |                  |                  |
|--|---|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Name   | Conviction  | Conviction Date | Exoneration Date | Race             |
| Kevin Bailey   | First degree murder, armed robbery, and burglary          | 4/5/1991        | 1/30/2018        | African American |
| Richard Johnson  | Rape, Robbery   | 11/20/1992      | 3/8/1996         | Caucasian        |
| John Willis  | Two counts of Sexual Assault, Two counts of Armed Robbery | 2/13/1992       | 3/15/1999        | African American |

[Innocence Project, accessed [9/3/20](#)]

## The Northwestern University Bluhm Legal Clinic Center On Wrongful Convictions Has Record Of 16 Cases In Cook County Where The Defendant Was Convicted Between March 1989 & October 1993

| March 1989 – October 1993: Northwestern Center On Wrongful Convictions Cases In Cook County, Illinois |             |        |            |             |                |
|---|-------------|--------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| First Name  | Last Name   | Arrest | Conviction | Exoneration | Crime          |
| Melvin  | Bentley     | 1990   | 1992       | 2000        | Murder         |
| Donald  | Brock       | 1988   | 4/1989     | 1989        | Theft          |
| Eric  | Caine       | 1986   | 9/1989     | 2011        | Murder         |
| Darrell   | Cameron     | 1991   | 1991       | 1992        | Robbery        |
| Miguel  | Castillo    | 1991   | 1991       | 2001        | Murder         |
| Xavier  | Catron      | 1993   | 9/1993     | 2000        | Murder         |
| Algie   | Crivens     | 1989   | 1992       | 2000        | Murder         |
| David   | Dowaliby    | 1989   | 1990       | 1991        | Murder         |
| Madison   | Hobley      | 1987   | 1990       | 2003        | Murder         |
| Juan  | Johnson     | 1989   | 1991       | 2004        | Murder         |
| Wilder “Ken”  | Berry       | 1991   | 1992       | 2000        | Sexual Assault |
| Ronald  | Kitchen     | 1990   | 1990       | 2009        | Murder         |
| James   | Kluppelberg | 1989   | 7/1989     | 2012        | Murder         |
| Aaron   | Patterson   | 1986   | 9/1989     | 2003        | Murder         |
| Marvin  | Reeves      | 1990   | 9/1990     | 2009        | Murder         |

|           |      |      |      |      |         |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|---------|
| Francisco | Vera | 1992 | 1992 | 1998 | Assault |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|---------|

[Northwestern University, Bluhm Legal Clinic Center on Wrongful Convictions, Illinois Exonerations, accessed [9/3/20](#); University of Michigan, National Registry of Exonerations, accessed [9/3/20](#); Chicago Tribune, [10/3/89](#)]

*Researcher’s Note: A Chicago Tribune article and the University of Michigan’s National Registry of Exonerations was used to confirm incomplete conviction date information of cases listed in the Northwestern University Bluhm Legal Clinic Center on Wrongful Conviction’s database.*

## **The University of Michigan National Registry Of Exonerations Has Record Of Eight Cases In Cook County Where The Defendant Was Convicted Between March 1989 & October 1993**

| <b>March 1989 – October 1993: University of Michigan National Registry Of Exonerations In Cook County, Illinois</b> |                  |              |               |                  |                   |  |
|---|------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|--|
| <b>First Name</b>   | <b>Last Name</b> | <b>State</b> | <b>County</b> | <b>Convicted</b> | <b>Exonerated</b> | <b>Contributing Factors Display</b>  |
| Lathierial  | Boyd             | Illinois     | Cook          | 1990             | 2013              | Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct, Inadequate Legal Defense                   |
| James   | Gibson           | Illinois     | Cook          | 1991             | 2019              | False Confession, Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct, Inadequate Legal Defense |
| Anthony   | Jakes            | Illinois     | Cook          | 9/1993           | 2018              | False Confession, Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct, Inadequate Legal Defense |
| Demetrius   | Johnson          | Illinois     | Cook          | 1992             | 2019              | Mistaken Witness ID, Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct                        |
| Andrew  | Reyes            | Illinois     | Cook          | 1992             | 2010              | Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct   |
| Victor  | Safford          | Illinois     | Cook          | 1992             | 2010              | False Confession, Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct                           |
| Demond  | Weston           | Illinois     | Cook          | 1992             | 2019              | Mistaken Witness ID, False Confession, Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct      |
| Shawn   | Whirl            | Illinois     | Cook          | 1991             | 2015              | False Confession, Perjury or False Accusation, Official Misconduct                           |

[University of Michigan, National Registry of Exonerations, accessed [9/3/20](#)]

*Researcher’s Note: We searched for cases in “Cook County” in the University of Michigan’s National Registry of Exonerations.*

### **The National Registry Of Exonerations Detailed Information About Every Known Exoneration In The U.S. Since 1989 – Cases In Which A Person Was**

## ***Wrongly Convicted Of A Crime And Later Cleared Of All The Charges Based On New Evidence Of Innocence***

**The National Registry Of Exonerations Detailed Information About Every Known Exoneration In The United States Since 1989—Cases In Which A Person Was Wrongly Convicted Of A Crime And Later Cleared Of All The Charges Based On New Evidence Of Innocence.** According to the National Registry of Exonerations’ website, “The National Registry of Exonerations is a project of the Newkirk Center for Science & Society at University of California Irvine, the University of Michigan Law School and Michigan State University College of Law. It was founded in 2012 in conjunction with the Center on Wrongful Convictions at Northwestern University School of Law. The Registry provides detailed information about every known exoneration in the United States since 1989—cases in which a person was wrongly convicted of a crime and later cleared of all the charges based on new evidence of innocence. The Registry also maintains a more limited database of known exonerations prior to 1989.” [University of Michigan, National Registry of Exonerations, accessed [9/4/20](#)]