

## Oklahoma Man Exonerated After Nearly Five Decades in Landmark Case



In a historic turn of events, Glynn Simmons, a 71-year-old Oklahoma man, has been declared innocent after enduring an astonishing 48 years, one month, and 18 days behind bars for a crime he did not commit. The University of Michigan's National Registry of Exonerations, which meticulously tracks cases of wrongful imprisonment, confirmed this landmark development, making it the lengthiest known criminal imprisonment case in modern U.S. history.

### A Decades-Long Miscarriage of Justice Unraveled

Simmons was convicted in 1975 for the murder of a store clerk during an armed robbery at an Oklahoma City liquor store in 1974. However, the conviction hinged on the testimony of a single witness who, as revealed in the subsequent legal proceedings, had lied on the stand. The witness falsely claimed to have identified Simmons in a police lineup when she had pointed to others.

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### New Evidence Emerges: A Twist in the Legal Saga

Over the years, Simmons' legal team uncovered crucial evidence that could have altered the course of justice. Witnesses attested that Simmons was present at a pool hall in a nearby city at the time of the robbery, contradicting the prosecution's narrative. This revelation, documented in the National Registry of Exonerations report, underscored the grave miscarriage of justice.

### Freedom Finally Attained

Judge Amy Palumbo of the Oklahoma County District Court played a pivotal role in rectifying this egregious error. Relying on the newfound evidence, she declared Simmons innocent, leading to his release. Speaking at a press conference after the hearing, Simmons expressed his relief, saying, "Freedom agrees with me."

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### Legal Ramifications and Seeking Redress

Now free, Simmons and his legal team, led by attorneys Joseph Norwood and John Coyle, are contemplating legal action against the state to seek compensation for the 50 years stolen from him—the prime of his life. Norwood emphasized this during a briefing, underscoring the profound impact of wrongful imprisonment.

### A Legal Odyssey: From Death Penalty to Freedom

Initially sentenced to death in 1975, Simmons' punishment was later modified to life in prison in 1977 following a ruling by the Oklahoma Supreme Court. Judge Palumbo vacated the conviction in July, initially ordering a new trial. However, Simmons' legal team pursued a declaration of actual innocence, ultimately succeeding in overturning the wrongful conviction.

### A Resounding Message of Hope

After his release, Simmons offered a powerful message to others who may find themselves in similar circumstances: "When you know you're innocent, stick with it and don't ever stop. Don't let nobody tell you it can't happen because it really can." Glynn Simmons' harrowing ordeal is a stark reminder of the flaws within the criminal justice system and the enduring importance of perseverance in pursuing justice.

**Don't be a silent ninja! Let us know your thoughts in the comment section below.**

