

Statement of Michael Morton on Showtime Series “Outcry”

Two weeks ago, I watched a preview copy of the film series “Outcry,” the first episode of which aired tonight (July 5, 2020) on Showtime. I have followed Greg Kelley’s case since shortly after his arrest on child sexual abuse charges in 2013 in Williamson County, Texas – the same County where, in 1987, I was wrongly convicted of my wife’s murder. Greg’s trial lawyer, Patricia Cummings, was one of the dedicated lawyers who represented me pro bono for many years while I was still in prison. After I came home, Patricia became a dear friend and an honorary member of my family and remains one to this day.

After Patricia took on Greg’s case in 2013, she told me she was representing a young man in Williamson County who she strongly believed was innocent. It was clear to me how committed she was to Greg’s defense as she worked tirelessly to prepare for trial for months. After the jury convicted Greg, Patricia even asked me to come to the Williamson County jail to counsel him on how to survive as an innocent man in prison, which I did.

I was both shocked and dismayed to watch a preview of “Outcry” and see how the filmmakers portrayed the history of Greg’s case and my own. The film uses my story as a frame for the history of injustice in the Williamson County District Attorney’s Office and how my exoneration supposedly paved the way for new, reform-minded leadership. Remarkably, however, the film rehashes false allegations regarding Patricia’s handling of Greg’s case (which the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals already rejected), and never once mentions that Patricia was the *only* attorney in Williamson County who had the courage and integrity to represent me while I was still in prison. It also portrays District Attorney Shawn Dick and his First Assistant, Lindsey Roberts, as “truth seekers” who were supposedly inspired by my exoneration to bring real change to Williamson County. Yet the film never mentions that they played key roles in seeking to obstruct an inquiry into the prosecutorial misconduct that caused my wrongful conviction and (in Mr. Roberts’s case) fought to keep me in prison even after DNA identified my wife’s real killer. Mr. Dick even rehired Mike Davis, one of the men who prosecuted me, as an ADA on his staff, where he remains today.

No one connected with the making of “Outcry” – including the producer, Pat Kondelis, or Greg’s lawyer, Keith Hampton – ever contacted me about the film. They never asked permission to use the details of my life story, nor did they fact-check any aspect of the film with my lawyers or with me.

I wrote to Showtime on June 25 to express these and other concerns. Attached to this statement is a copy of my letter. To date, I have gotten no response from Showtime; the film production company, BatBridge Entertainment; or anyone involved in the making or airing of this film. All we received was an email from a Showtime executive saying they had forwarded my lawyer’s letter to a lawyer for the film company – who still never contacted us.

I was extremely happy for Greg when the CCA found him innocent based on new evidence that was not available at the time of his trial. I only wish that Showtime had acted responsibly in telling our stories -- rather than denigrating one of the fine lawyers who got me out of prison, while glorifying the people who fought so hard against me.