



EPISODE 65: The Presumption of Guilt - Defense Attorney Noah Pines Talks About Client Joey Watkins and Overturning Murder Convictions

Mandy Matney 00:04

Hello and good morning, y'all. We are gearing up for a wild week in preparation for Justice Toal to decide Alex Murdaugh's fate on Monday, January 29, and likely on the 30th. I'm so excited to be covering the hearing next week and chatting with premium members on the premium feed as the events unfold. Learn more about how you can join the conversation at lunasharkmedia.com/membership. This week's cup of Justice will be a little different as we invite new contributors to expose the truth, give voice to victims and get the story straight. On today's show Eric and I explore ethics and criminal defense was well known at Laina. Criminal Defense Attorney Noah Pines next month, Liz and I are excited to interview Noah's client Joey Watkins, who was finally released from prison after 22 years as his conviction for a crime he didn't commit was overturned. We're going to be doing more episodes like this one where one or two COJ hosts interview special guests and we would love to hear your feedback as COJ amplifies more voices, illuminates more cases and educates you on more concepts. Today's guest is Noah Pines, a criminal defense attorney from Philly but currently practicing in Atlanta, Georgia. Noah was one of the first supporters of the Murdoch murders podcast during our conversation with him we cover how he found himself in the legal profession, how he became a fan of our podcast and mission and how hard it is to overturn a murder conviction. In a segment reserved just for premium members. Noah starts asking the questions to EB and me about the team and what's next for SEO. Jay, I'm so excited to share this interview with y'all. So let's get into it.

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Eric Bland 01:54

Hey there Luna shark members true sunlight listeners and cup of justice listeners. Cups up everybody. Cups up. This is a special morning. We have Mandy Matney with me, and we have our really, really good friend that we've been dying to interview. World famous, excellent criminal defense attorney Noah Pines out of Atlanta, Georgia. Mandy, what do you think? Are we excited to do this or what

Mandy Matney 02:23

I'm so excited, particularly because we get a lot of crap from people that say that defense attorney, we hate defense attorneys and defense attorneys hate us. And we don't we love defense attorneys, they do an important job. And here's Noah, Noah, thank you for joining us today.

Noah Pines 02:41

Thank you for having me. This is a big deal Mandy and Eric.

Eric Bland 02:47

A big deal. Love it. Love it. Love it. Good to good to see and know you and I talk a lot by text and once or twice by telephone. But this is really exciting to see you really excited to get deep into who you are and what makes you tick. And you've done such a good job in responding to a lot of the criticism that we sometimes receive. And people criticize us by saying that we're wrong and you either defend us and say we're right, or you challenge those that really don't have the legal knowledge that you have throughout this Myrtle matter. So we're gonna get to it quickly. Tell



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us a little bit about yourself. Who are you tell us about your family. Tell us about how long you've been a lawyer.

Noah Pines 03:32

Well let you I grew up outside of Philadelphia. I came to Atlanta when I was 18 to go to college and basically stayed in the south ever since then, really had no idea that I wanted to be a lawyer, even in college didn't have an idea and the person who was what was your major political science. easy's major at Emory. So you know, you didn't have to write a paper it was pretty easy as like, I'll just do that. Emory is not easy. Emory is not easy. No. Emory is not easy. Yeah. But someone suggested, you know, the person I was dating at the time was like, we should go to law school. And I was like, that sounds like a good idea. We ended up breaking up and not going to law school together, which was a great thing because it led me to my wonderful wife, Jen. But, you know, went to law school and Mandy like you I am a huge introvert. Which is weird because there are a lot of trial lawyers who are introverts. And so the thought of getting up and speaking in front of people and just speaking in general to people was really never something I thought I do. I thought it'd be the behind the scenes kind of guy. And just through some internships and experience led me to where I started practice. I interned in juvenile court. I worked with kids who were deprived, meaning they weren't they were neglected or they were delinquent, meaning they were charged with you know, acts that would be crimes if they were adults, asked for a juvenile court judge who ended up on TV for a while judge hatchet. And from there I made it to a



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prosecutor's office to have an internship and my intern supervisor who's one of my good friends It's usually a year older than me, just one day we were doing something in court and he goes, Yeah, you either got it or you don't, you got it. And you should do this. And that's how I started my career. I said, Okay, and that's how I started my career. I was a prosecutor in DeKalb County, which is the second largest county in the state of Georgia for about seven and a half years, total prosecuted misdemeanors for the first couple years, and then ended up prosecuting felonies, mostly child abuse cases. And I left the office a little bit after my son was born to go into private practice criminal defense with my partner, Peter Ross, who started his career doing criminal defense, and then kind of moved into the personal injury. So I came and took over the criminal part of the practice, he took over the personal injury part of the practice. And then, about 15 years ago, we added an immigration part of our practice.

Eric Bland 05:45

So you're like Ronnie and me, you have a partner that you've stayed together a long time, which is very, very rare. And you know, the rest of the world doesn't understand that. But two lawyers staying together as partners, you know, for anything in excess of five years is pretty rare, because lawyers have big egos. They disagree sometimes over money over cases. You know, you made a statement that really interested me, you said that a lot of trial lawyers are introverts, actually,



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Noah Pines 06:14

I think so. I think more than than you realize the, you know, I've talked to a bunch of people that mean, they're definitely the extroverts, but a lot of us, I mean, I'm exhausted after a trial, I just, you know, kind of want to go back and, and chill out and relax. But it's something where, you know, when I'm in court, it's not like a turning it on, but I know what I need to do. And it's walking into a courtroom, I'm comfortable, like, walking into a party. I don't sometimes you're just like, Whoa, there's a lot of people here and yeah, you know, there's all these sounds and noises, and I'm like, I just want to find somebody I know and talk to them sometimes. You know, that's more my personality. I like that, you know, don't love the small talk, you know, really enjoy the deeper conversations. You're

Eric Bland 07:00

talking to two people right here. If we have a sign, I have a sign that says I don't you know, I'm a big Larry David fan. And he has this thing. I don't do stop and chat. Yeah, Mandy and I were at a function. And I looked at her and, you know, she's very vivacious and bubbly and everything. But she's also an introvert. And, you know, it took us a while to start to be able to make small talk and do stop and chat. What do you think, Mandy? You agree? Yeah, it's

Mandy Matney 07:27

funny that you say that because I was about being an introvert and a lawyer. Because when I was at the point of my life, trying to figure out



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what I wanted to do, I was always pretty good at like making an argument on paper, I was always good at writing. I knew that I didn't know if I was good at anything else. But I always just kind of thought, I can't be a lawyer because I can't picture myself arguing in a courtroom. And I thought that all like in high school. I just thought all lawyers were trial lawyers. I didn't know that there. That's just a small fraction, he would

Eric Bland 08:00

have been an amazing, Brave Writer, you would have written such good briefs. Oh,

Mandy Matney 08:04

my gosh, I know. But I just I just immediately thought that that wasn't possible for me, because I was like, I couldn't stand up in front of a courtroom every day and make I just go blank when I'm in front of people. So but yeah, I mean, I think it, you get more used to it. And it's funny that you say that about small talk, because when I started calling Eric back in 2021, that's what I really liked about him. Because most Southerners, it just takes a very long time to get them to get to the point of like, you're trying to Eric would just get on the phone, say hey, here's how it is blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And then, and then also, a lot of my sources at the time, wanted to talk after they had something to say you know, blah, blah, and they would just be like hours on the phone with these people. And I like all these people, but I write your



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efficient. I don't like to waste time. But I love that Eric. I love that Eric would just be like, Okay, that's what I said by

Noah Pines 09:08

that's the Philly and Eric That's, you know, the Philly way, which is sort of you get to the point, and then you're done. And you know, that's I like it. I like efficiency. That's how I am too. I'm I'm really big into time efficiency. The funny thing is, if I, I always thought about being an investigative journalist like that always kind of, you know, intrigued me with what I do. Yeah. So and get to get back to your point, Eric. Yeah. So I've been with my partner for over 20 years. And I always say it's like marriage without the sex. You know, you're in this relationship. There's some things that he does that drive me crazy. I'm sure there's lots of things that I do that drive him crazy. But you know, I use his strengths for part of the practice. He uses my strengths for the other part of the practice. We understand that together we are better than we would be separate. And same like Ronnie and May. Yeah, we started our firm with just Peter and myself and one assistant and now we have five lawyers who work for us and 14 support staff. Wow, most of our majority 10 of our support staff are bilingual. We have a huge immigration practice that we, you know, built really before people were before criminal lawyers did immigration, and they kind of go together. So it's very important.



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Eric Bland 10:22

So why why criminal law? You know, I interned at the Washington DC Public Defender's Office in my last year of college, and most of the people who work at the DC Public Defender's office were former supreme court clerks. And, you know, I was watching some really heavy lifting in the superior court there in DC on criminal cases. And it just, I don't think I could take that emotion of getting close to a defendant and then either, you know, fleeing that defendant or or they would lose a trial and then they go away. And it I just couldn't see myself doing criminal law what what was inside of you that said, hey, you know what, I can do this, I can handle this hard emotional stuff, whether these people are wrongfully charged or they did do something, but the government's being too oppressive on them. What was there something in your childhood, high school college that made you want to do criminal law? So

Noah Pines 11:18

not necessarily, when I started out as a prosecutor, I'm like, this is kind of fun. And then the question is, what do you do? How long do you stay a prosecutor for the rest of your life like someone like Creighton, you know, and my wife and I were talking about starting a family, which is very difficult when you work for the government and you want, you know, you both decide that, you know, she wants to stay home with our children in the beginning. And so as either a career prosecutor, maybe go to the US Attorney's Office, which I interviewed with, or make the switch, and there was a time that I wasn't ready to make the switch, and



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I'm like, I don't know that I can defend criminal cases. And then what I realized was, I didn't

Eric Bland 11:52

make that mental. How do you mentally make the switch? Yeah, well, so I thought

Noah Pines 11:56

I was a pretty fair prosecutor. I mean, I've prosecuted lots of child abuse cases, I dismiss lots of cases, too. I mean, my last year, in the DHS office, I mean, in seven months, I tried 14 child molestation cases, which is a lot, that's two a month for, you know, seven months. And the year before I had a lot of people go to prison for a long time. And I was like, I don't I don't know if it's right for me. And then I realized not every prosecutor is as fair as I am. And I can do my job. And, you know, do it with integrity, and do it with honor, and help people and that's what you realize, and what you realize, Eric and Mandeville is, you know this from talking to victims and victims families, sometimes it's, it's, I mean, it's always about your client. But sometimes it's about their family, too. It's the grandma, you know, who brought me a picture of her grandson who she raised, who was is like broke my heart. He was 15 charged with armed robbery and in Georgia 15, armed robberies, 10 years mandatory minimum prison, and they treat you as an adult. And she brought me a picture of him when he was like seven years old, playing Little League running the bases. And no matter what he was charged with, and you know, no matter what his culpability was, and he may have been a party to the



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crime, meaning, you know, he sort of helped it happen, you know, he's a 15 year old, he's a kid, that grandma's always gonna

Eric Bland 13:17

say, we don't want to write a book, we don't want to write a book on a 15 year old. You know, there's a lot of chapters left.

Noah Pines 13:22

Exactly, and that grandma looks at him not as that 15 year old, but that seven year old. And, you know, that's one of the things I realized is there's there's always family members that are out there, too, that this impacts way as much as it does really the defendant in there are some oppressive prosecutors, there are some people who don't get treated fairly in the system. There are police officers who are not ethical there are, you know, judges who don't treat people fairly, too. So, you know, I always say sometimes we're there for mitigation. Sometimes we're there for mitigate for vindication. So if sometimes you're just trying to mitigate the damage, and sometimes you're trying to vindicate your clients say we did not do this. What

Mandy Matney 14:04

kind of cases do you not take like,

Eric Bland 14:08

yeah, Mandy, and I were curious about that are there and



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Mandy Matney 14:11

how do you decide Yeah, how do you decide that some

Eric Bland 14:13

people don't take pedophile cases? I take really messy cases any case any pedophiles? I

Noah Pines 14:19

mean, I do I actually I do a lot of appellate work there. I represent people charged with child molestation all the time. Wow. I do.

Eric Bland 14:27

How about you know, some people say I won't represent a rapist or fee for sure.

Noah Pines 14:31

Well, let's start with my general principle. My general principle is if I start to judge my clients, and make make judgments on their actions, then it's time for me to quit what I'm doing, like my job is not to make moral judgments on my clients. I can't, you know, it's kind of like think about the ER doctor who sees somebody who's been shot all over that ER doctor doesn't say, Well, you know, is this Eric bland or is this you know, some gangbanger and you know, do I really want to do the surgery the best I can you just got to you I can't make moral judgments. And when I do, that's when I need to quit. That's interesting. That doesn't mean I take every case, there are some cases I just don't like, I stay away from



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cartel drug cases, I don't like those, you know, I stay away from anything that could, you know, endanger my safety. And there are some people that I just don't want to represent. There are some cases every once in a while, where there was a case here in Atlanta, where a teenager with mental health issues, Lord, these two other teenagers behind a grocery store and killed them. And I was like, You know what I don't, it's just too close to home, it literally was close to home. And I, you know, the kids were my kids age at the time, and I'm like, I'm just gonna stay away from that, you know, I stayed out of cases, like the Young Thug case, if you know about that the YSL case, which is a huge case, in Atlanta, it's been going on since January, I stayed out of that case, not because of the content, but because I didn't want to spend a year in trial with the same lawyers that that would just drive me nuts. And, you know, kind of to get back to the criminal part, you know, criminal moves quicker. As you know, Eric, it is not, you know, we're not dealing with motion after motion and deposition, and then another motion and reply, it just moves quicker. And it's actually better for my brain, I realized this, as much as I sometimes would like to put the stress away. They'd be like, You know what, no more criminal. Like, I don't need the stress in my life, I'll just go deal with our civil practice, because we have a ton of civil cases that need to be tried. I realized my brain is not wired for that. As much as it is for what I do. I this is kind of where I thrive.

Eric Bland 16:32

Well, are you known for a particular discipline like Jack's whirling here in our neck of the woods, they you know, he's missed a murder, you know,



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that every time they write an article about him, they say, Oh, he's tried 300 murder cases, which that's a lot of murder cases. Yay, 7777. He's good friend. But what I'm saying is, you know, that's a tremendous amount of trial. No other cases. I mean, it's just, are you known for something? Are you more a generalist? Like I?

Noah Pines 17:01

It's not that it's, yeah, I mean, it's not it's, it's more general criminal. I mean, you know, look, I represent my son's friends on speeding tickets, and then I'll go handle a murder case or child molestation case or a rape case, I would say that. Lawyers know that I handle a messy case, messy case doesn't bother me, kind of excites me sometimes not excites, like, in a creepy way, just like the how do I deal with this? Right, like, and I guess I'm known to be creative. You know, in cases that seem unwinnable? And I do a lot of appellate work, too. So it kind of goes hand in hand that sometimes in a in a case, I'll try something that another lawyer maybe hasn't tried, because I have already thought about it as an appellate issue.

Eric Bland 17:45

Do you make do you do a lot of appellate arguments?

Noah Pines 17:48

I do? Yeah. So I handle a lot of appeals on cases that I haven't tried, mostly those are murderers, or, you know, child sex crimes where other lawyers make mistakes. You know, they don't do their job. They're



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ineffective, we get a lot of that. Lawyers who just should not be handling, you know, cases that where people can go to prison for the rest of their life. That happens all the time.

Mandy Matney 18:10

So I have a question. Noah was one of our first advertisers on MMP back in the day was a long time ago and 2021 like we just had a handful of advertisers. How did you hear about MMP? What made you like it? What made you be a fan and then have cup of justice? How do you get interested in this?

Noah Pines 18:32

Sure. So I can't remember. I can't remember if my wife Jen told me about MNP to begin with, you know, Murdoch, obviously bled into Georgia just because of the sensationalism of the story. But I was like in and I'm my wife says this all the time. She's like, you're such a cynic. I'm like, I'm a cynic. But I'm right like 90% plus of the time probably like probably like you too. And I was like something's not right about this case. And this is when it was got first reported you know, that they got killed and then the roadside and like something just doesn't sound right. And and, you know, there was a big case in Dunwoody where the Dunwoody daycare murder case where a wife had her husband killed and I remember my wife saying, you know, oh, they looked as like not a love triangle. And she's like, You don't know what you're talking about these everybody knows them says they are love and love triangle. And of course, it was a love triangle. So Murdock, you know, definitely



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interested me in the story. And then I think Jen told me about the podcast, and I listened to it and I was like, Oh, this is this was really good. I listened to undisclosed you know, I listened to a couple seasons that including Joey Watkins case, which we can talk about later. In sometimes like the I hate to say bored me but it bored me because it was just sometimes too deep and there's something about MMP that kind of grabbed my attention. So I started listening in the beginning, when everybody's making fun of your voice, man. You know, and so I'm a beginning listener. And by the way, what you have done, and I'm gonna say you because it is really you first with Liz, and then Eric is just incredibly amazing. And, you know, by saying I'm proud of you, I don't want to sound patronizing. I've enjoyed watching what you've built. And it's really incredible. And I don't think people realize what it takes to build a podcast, especially to the level that you have with the amount of listeners you have. It's, it's incredible. So hats off to you, or cups up to you, I guess, is a better way to say, for what you've done. And and so I just, I became an early listener, I saw you needed some sponsors. And it was just one of those things where it's like, yeah, this is the right thing to do. Because I enjoyed the show, and I wanted to help out. And then I forget how long I sponsored the beginning. And then I kind of tailed off on it. And I think by the time I tried to sponsor again, you guys were like, too big. It was, it was like, you guys were really big. So then I sponsored a couple of justice for a little bit. And, you know, I remember the early shows when Eric came on. And you know, as soon as Eric came on, like, Eric, I don't sound like I'm from Philly anymore. You obviously do. And as soon as you start talking, there's like this familiarity that I'm like, oh,

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man, I gotta listen to this guy a little bit, you know, and you sound like, you know, the people I grew up with. And of course, cup of justice, I think is an interesting and interesting take on sort of, to be able to have these conversations without it really being, you know, scripted isn't the right word without it being as focused a little bit more loose. Yeah.

Mandy Matney 21:28

I remember when Eric started on those first few episodes getting so many messages and tweets from people saying, I like Eric he has to be from Philly, right like people on people immediately. Philly the first time you started talking. It was great. I want to get back to this, but we should take a commercial break. So we will be right back. Okay, so I want to talk to you know about the Joey Watkins case. Can you walk us through it and how you got involved. And it's just very fascinating, as we, Murdock case are currently dealing are not in an appeals. But what phase are we in? I don't even know. What do you call whatever we're in right now?

Noah Pines 22:25

No. I mean, you're in the sort of the direct appeal because you're still on the motion for new trial.

Mandy Matney 22:29

Yeah. direct appeal. Yes. So tell us about Joey.



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Noah Pines 22:32

So Joey Watkins was a teenager up in a small town in North Georgia called Rome, Floyd County. And, you know, if you asked Joey, what kind of kid he was, he would probably say he was a little bit of a rebel and a little bit of an ass to a bunch of people. But you know, that's just kind of he was a teenager. Rome is a small town. And he did everybody did everybody. I mean, his trial, like everybody who testified had dated somebody else. But there's a gentleman by the name of Isaac Dawkins, who was killed and he was killed while driving his truck down a road, like a four lane divided highway, you know, meeting in the middle of grass. And they didn't have any suspects. You know, there was there was a car that was in the area of blue car. And that's not what Joe drove. But people just started saying, you know, Joey, Joey, Joey. And the reason was, is because Isaac data Joey's ex girlfriend, Joey had moved on from his ex girlfriend, but you know, so Joey's name comes up. He's investigated by the local police. The local police have nothing on him in a in essence, close the investigation. And then what happened was the family went to the county police. So the local police meaning the city police, the county obviously has control the entire county and this detective was named Stanley Sutton who ended up passing away recently. And when you could do a whole year on Stanley Sutton and his cases and what he's done, I think to people, you know, Stanley starts really confirmation bias against Joey, and just start jamming these pieces together to make them fit. And they didn't fit. And Joey gets charged with murder. And Joey would tell you, he wasn't worried because he didn't do it. He just really wasn't worried. So



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Mandy Matney 24:18

yeah, good question really quick. I'm sorry. I hate interrupting people, but what was the way of homicide

Noah Pines 24:24

so he got shot. Sorry, I should have said that. So okay, shot in his car. Isaac is driving down a road and he veers to his he's driving. You know, let's say I can't remember if north south east west anyway, he's driving in, you know, one direction he veers across the median and then ends up in the woods on the other side of the highway, okay. And he dies of gunshot. There's an eyewitness that eyewitnesses there's a blue car that was behind Isaac's car behind his truck. So the only car in the areas is blue car. And by the way, Joe didn't drive a blue car he drove a pickup truck And that's all they had. So they have Isaac dead in his truck, they have really just kind of a horrible police investigation. At the scene. Nobody really knew what they were doing. We don't have pictures of everything that we need. And that's, that's what they had. And so, Stanley Sutton to kind of go back starts, you know, it's Joey, it's Joey Joey. And this is, you know, a long time ago when cell phones people had cell phones, but cell phone evidence was, you know, sort of in its infancy. And the important part to know is that the during the Joey's trial, testimony came out that Joe Joey was near his house, when he made a call office that pinged off a cell phone tower, that cell phone tower, and the murder happened in another place. So you know, house here, we're here. The problem was the Joey's lawyers didn't really understand the cell phone evidence, nor did the state and they just



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nobody talked about time distance. So time distance, there was a point two miles, you know, roughly from where Joey was to where the murder happened, he would have had to, you know, leave the area where his cell phone pinged, drove down a highway, done a U turn, because he he had to get to the other side of the highway killed Isaac, and he would have had do that in four minutes and 30 seconds. So 8.2 miles and four minutes and 30 seconds. Impossible. Right? Yeah,

Eric Bland 26:23

I mean, you'd have doesn't make any spaceship. And by

Noah Pines 26:25

the way, there was construction. There were cars, there was traffic. It was just but nobody, you know, nobody understood that. And nobody explained that to the jury. And Joey got convicted. I mean, he got convicted at trial there. There's a whole bunch of other stuff that the DHS office did, including burying a ballistics report that really hurt Joey. The the allegation was that Joe had killed two dogs, one of the dogs being Isaac's dog. And the other one was what they called the graveyard dog, which was a dog that was found near the grave of Isaac, which was really wasn't near as found in a ditch on the side of the road. And the DHS office kept saying that Joe is the one who did it and this Ballistics matched and it turns out, the ballistics didn't match timeout.



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Eric Bland 27:10

How often does that happen? You just said they buried a report and that, you know, that just made Mandy and me just go to into orbit. I mean, does that happen alive is Is it common? Do you see it isn't accidental is an intentional?

Noah Pines 27:27

Well, in this case, it appears intentional, because it was delivered to the district attorney's office during the trial. And of course, everyone's like, well, we didn't know about it. I would say that deliberate bearing happens a lot less than intentional shading, and intentional shading, although I think can be worse. You know, I can give you a quick example, I handled an appeal of a guy who got convicted of rape in Savannah area. And when the GBI agent came and testified, she's testified that there was DNA found in the rape kit and that it was likely and probable sperm, so likely and probable. To me, that means like, there's a good chance. And the way that you determine if there were a sperm in the DNA is actually pretty easy. You'll look under a microscope. They didn't look under a microscope. They used a procedure that wasn't approved. This is the GBI. So the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, use instead of looking under a microscope, which takes like 10 seconds, they used a procedure that was not approved. And when we had the GBI supervisor come testify at the motion for new trial hearing, she admitted that they didn't look under the microscope that the procedure that they used was not approved. And that likely and probable doesn't even mean 50%, which is crazy. And by the way, my



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client lost his appeal. He lost his appeal, because the Court of Appeals in Georgia said that that's not enough to show, you know, we allege that the lawyer was ineffective for not getting their own DNA expert. And the courts I get you lose in the Supreme Court of Georgia failed to hear. So there's a lot of shading. I think that happens more than intentional hiding, but to get back to Joey's that those are the two big issues. So he gets convicted, he gets life in prison. And he starts to write the Georgia Innocence Project. And back then the Georgia Innocence Project maybe had like \$100,000 in funding. It's a project that's designed to help exonerate people who are wrongly convicted. And they're like, Look, we're not going to take your case because you had a good lawyer and there's no DNA and we don't take non DNA cases back then they were only taking rape cases with DNA because they could definitively prove that somebody didn't do it. So 12 years later, 12 years after and Joey lost his appeal. He lost his habeas. I think he lost a federal habeas he was explained

Eric Bland 29:44

to our listeners, how you go from state court after the Supreme Court denies an appeal. And then you you migrate to federal court. Everybody says, you know, habeas corpus, what does that mean? And then also, we heard Dick the other day mentioned well If we get into our appeals or go to federal court explain that to our listeners.



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Noah Pines 30:04

So in Georgia, you have the right to direct appeal, which means you file a motion for new trial, you allege we do things a little bit differently in Georgia and South Carolina, you have to allege ineffective assistance of counsel, which means your lawyer sucked at the motion for new trial, then you can allege it on appeal. And then once you're a direct appeal, rights are over, meaning the Georgia Court of Appeals or Supreme Court has ruled you have no more direct appeal, you can't appeal again. So you got one shot. So in Georgia, you file a motion for new trial, you allege that your trial counsel was ineffective. And then you go to the court of appeals or the Supreme Court, depending on what kind of case it is, once that's over, once your appeal is over, you have no more direct appeal rights, you can file a petition for habeas corpus, either in state court, which you have to do within four years or in federal court, which you have to do in a year. The time things are a little bit interesting. Most people don't file for federal habeas is they're very hard to win. So most people just file a state habeas. But Joey was 100%, out of appeal rights, he had nothing left. And he goes to the Innocence Project. They say, No, he keeps writing them year after year after year. And they say no. And then in I think it was like 2014. They agreed to take the case. And they're convinced that he's innocent based on the cell phone, because it's just so it's just clear. I mean, in Murdoch, the cellphone evidence put Alec in the area of the murder, and it showed where he went,

Mandy Matney 31:35

it's exactly what I was thinking. Put him in. Right. It's the opposite. Yeah,



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Noah Pines 31:39

this is the opposite. It puts him right out of it. It's just not right. It's not possible. It's just not possible. And once a

Mandy Matney 31:47

year was what year was the murder? Sorry, early 2000s.

Noah Pines 31:51

Yeah, I think it was 2000 is when Okay, his trial started 2007. Around

Mandy Matney 31:56

the a lot of this is reminded me of the anon SIADH case, which I'm sure you're familiar with, because of the undisclosed podcast. And the cell phone evidence was shaky in that case. And yeah, it's it sounds very similar, but continue. So

Noah Pines 32:13

add on was Season One of undisclosed and they were looking for people for season two, and that Innocence Project was like, we're gonna submit our case to Susan Simpson and see if they'll pick it up. And they did. So Joey's case is season two, it's awesome of undisclosed and they just did an incredible job of really digging into all the problems with the case. The witnesses who are lying, Stanley Sutton, who, you know, just was known to get people you know, he would he put out a reward picture, you know, in the jail of like, hey, you know, we need information on this case. And then guess what jail snitches will come out horrible,



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because there's a direct reward. He This is the craziest thing I've you know, I always forget this. And, and the lawyers who worked on the peel, forget it during the preliminary hearing. They the state had wiretaps. But there was allegations that Stanley had done some other taping that was outside of the wiretap. And Joey's lawyer asked the detective about whether there was any other like kind of an illegal wiretap and no joke. The guy took the fifth, the

Eric Bland 33:20

detective to he still employed, is he still is he still in

Noah Pines 33:23

his dead now? Okay, but the detective took he took the fifth during their preliminary hearing, and I was when I was looking at this, I was like, this is huge. And that you know that the appellate lawyers were so focused on the appeal, like you sometimes you don't pick up stuff like that. And like, this is ridiculous. And by the way, he didn't testify at the trial, the lead detective did not testify at trial. It's crazy. Crazy. So Joey gets convicted, they believe this other guy. There's so many crazy parts of this story. They believe this other guy named Mark free was also involved in murder, he gets charged his case gets severed, meaning like split off from Joey's and he goes to trial and gets acquitted. So one guy gets acquitted, who is allegedly with Joey, who committed the murder, or one of them shot. And so Mark gets acquitted. Joey gets convicted. Isn't that crazy? Yeah. So anyway, the Innocence Project takes it to undisclosed and they start digging through, and they literally knock



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door to door, you know, and start talking to people that don't want to talk to them. They start talking to jurors who don't want to talk to them. And they finally meet them, they find one juror who at first didn't want to talk to them and then starts talking and mentions sort of like off the cuff while I you know, the cell phone evidence while I drove, I drove it, like during deliberations and they're like, oh, okay, I mean, they knew how big this was, but they didn't want to freak her out. And so they kind of just asked information. And it turns out that this juror on a weekend and drove from what she thought was point A to point B. The problem was she picked the wrong spot. She didn't know where point A and point B where she drove it when there was no construction, she drove it on the weekend when there was no traffic, and she drove it in the opposite direction, meaning she didn't have to make the U turn that Joey Wood had to make to make all this happen. So she just kind of drove, you know, from where Isaac was shot to where Joey's house was? And she's like, Oh, no, it can be done. And she brought that into the jury room. There's a question of, of how many people she told if anybody. We believe that she definitely told other people. But it's still it's huge information, which is

Eric Bland 35:43

also again, that's internal. And that's internal interference, right. And

Noah Pines 35:46

so the Innocence Project files a new habeas bass, it's basically saying, like, we could not have discovered this before, we didn't know this



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before, you know, this is new information, we get one more shot, and the court dismissed it and said, Nope, too bad. You're procedurally barred. You should have raised it before. And so that gets appealed to the Georgia Supreme Court. And they say, Nope, we're not going to hear the case. So Joey's again, out of luck out of luck in and add a look in the lawyer named Ben Goldberg. He's a private lawyer like myself, who volunteered his time pro bono to help the Innocence Project, just, you know, filed a motion to reconsider in front of the Supreme Court and just laid it out again, and then cited a case and they said, All right, well, we'll hear it. And all they were hearing is was whether we could then proceed with a habeas and so they heard it, and they said, You know what, we're going to let you proceed with habeas. So then we had

Eric Bland 36:42

is amazing for them. They reversed to Yeah, because that's Rarey.

Noah Pines 36:45

They reversed themselves. Yes, extremely rare. Like normally, like I filed a motion reconsider a couple of weeks ago, and someone's like, that was really good. And I was like, Yeah, thanks. And it got denied, like the next day they rubber stamp it. Yes. So that gave Joey the opportunity to file a habeas and of course, the Attorney General's office is, you know, they don't our attorney general's office like they don't care. They don't care that there's this evidence. They they just don't care. They don't care that this journal did this. And the big issue, right, is that this is a violation of Joey's constitutional rights, because what you have is unsworn



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testimony in the jury room, that's, you know, which is this one juror, it's unsworn. And cross examined, if she told any other jury anything, you know, that would impact their verdict, but more importantly, it impacts her verdict. So she is now bringing something into the jury room by herself by saying, Oh, I did it, and it can be done without sort of a cross examination. And of course, if she tells it to any other juror, then it's even worse. But But by the way, the standard, we had to prove actual harm. So you know, I know you guys talked about that in the last cup of justice. But yeah, the actual harm or actual prejudice was the standard that the habeas court made us. And I say, US, I wasn't part of the case at that time I knew about it. And this is how it all came about. I knew about Joey's case, I knew my friend Ben was working on it. They were doing their habeas corpus case in North Georgia, up near the Tennessee line, and I just happened to be up there for a case, it's like two hours outside of Atlanta. So I see all the people from the Innocence Project. And I said, What do you What are y'all doing here? And they're like, Oh, where are you? In Joey's case? I'm like, Well, how's it gone? And they're like, it's gone pretty good. I said, Okay. I was like, Well, if you if you win this proceeding, I'll try the case with you Ben for free. He's like, really? I'm like, yep. And you know, lo and behold, I forget how long after that he calls me and he's like, remember what I saw you up in Walker County? I was like, yeah, he's like, remember what you said. It's like, Yep, he was, oh, we won. I was like, All right. Well, I'm I'm in now. And so that's how I joined the case. And that's how I joined, you know, Joey's defense,



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Mandy Matney 38:58

how many years ago is that? The

Noah Pines 39:00

whole process? He his habeas was granted in 2022. So his habeas was granted in 2022. We secured him bond and the beginning of 2023. And his case was dismissed at the end of 2023. And they're not gonna retry that. Well, they were they really were, and they were and there is no doubt in my mind that the podcast helped Joey get a new trial. I think it really did. And, you know, it's interesting because the people want it to cover sort of our representation of Joey you know, when we talk about media and how media gets into a case and they want it to kind of do a behind the scenes and I'm like, Absolutely not. You know, like I'm not letting a camera into our discussions not letting you know any well we will air it till after I'm like, No, it's just no you know, and it's it we

Eric Bland 39:55

know carpooling and Griffin did it in with You know, their trial situation, they showed some of that in the fox documentary. I just found that to be incredibly offensive. Yeah, no.

Noah Pines 40:07

I mean, it was like, There's not even a question that we're gonna do it because, you know, this is Joey's life. Like, I



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Mandy Matney 40:13

don't think they're high. Yeah, it's

Noah Pines 40:14

like, what? Like, what am I going to act for you guys? Like, I'm not gonna say what I'm really gonna say on a camera like, I would never do that. And you're not coming into our strategy session? Because, by the way, anything I tell you, as a reporter is not privileged. Right? You know, you can be subpoenaed privileged,

Eric Bland 40:28

right. It's, and you're not giving up your work product?

Noah Pines 40:30

I'm not kidding. Yeah. And so I think that we're kind of mad about that. But you know, I can't remember if mandif is your list sort of talking about playing, you know, chess, and it's, or even you, Eric, and, you know, it's if it is chess, it's three dimensional chess, it's not just on a board, it is every every thing that we do everything that I do on a case, you know, I, I think about from every possible angle. And my whole thing with Joey was how do we how do we convince the DA not to retry this case? And, you know, for a while, I didn't know that it would happen. And it was a new dA. So she had no, really, you know, skin in the game for this wrongful conviction, but trying to, you know, convince her why Joey shouldn't be recharged was really difficult. Yeah,



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Eric Bland 41:19

we'll talk about that when we come back from the break. All right. So how do you do that? Is it over time? Is it by wearing them down? Is it by paper conference, Room meetings? Mediation? What do you do? Yeah,

Noah Pines 41:41

it's multifaceted. Eric. It's multifaceted. Do I want to tell you exactly how I did it? Not really,

Eric Bland 41:50

don't I made the sausage? Okay. Yeah, no,

Noah Pines 41:52

it was, look, you you have to know who your audience is, in addition to knowing your case, and what I would say is that we had a very good strategy of the motions that we were going to file and how we were going to file the motions. And there were a lot I mean, there were, you know, I think we filed like 20 motions to challenge certain evidence to, you know, to get in certain things. And then it really was just, you know, presenting the cellphone evidence, one of the things I learned from Murdoch was about the cart team. You know, we have cellphone experts here, but I didn't know about a car team. And so I reached out to a car expert. And, you know, I told the DHS office, I was like, don't trust me, go talk to somebody from the FBI, who's in the car team. You know, ask them, and that's one of the things you know, because they're not gonna believe my expert, no matter who they are. I'm like, but you



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go do it. And I think, you know, when it just kind of push came to shove, they really realized that the cell phone evidence was just insurmountable. And so Joe, what

Eric Bland 42:54

did it feel like? No, you know, feel like when they, when you made that phone call, and you know, to, was that the most gratifying feeling you've ever had in your career?

Noah Pines 43:05

I think it was, it was, like I couldn't. I had a feeling it was coming. And then I had to let the team know. And you know, the team was just so involved, too. I didn't want to give them false. So I would I never give a client the news until it's signed and filed. Like so. We're all the all the lawyers were on the phone. I'm like, Okay, it's gonna happen, right? What do you mean? I'm like, the case is gonna get dismissed. Well, can we call Joey? I'm like, No. And they're like, What do you mean? I'm like, until I see a filed copy. Because I can't ever give a client false hope. I mean, that's the worst thing you could do to somebody you imagined be like, I think your case is gonna get dismissed, Eric. Oh, I was wrong. Now. You got a good trial for murder. Hey, Mandy, remember when you're gonna go to prison for life? Now you're not Oh, wait, I was wrong. I'm sorry. I thought it was gonna happen. So unless it's done, I don't tell a client. And you know, while we're the lawyers, were all on the phone. You know, we came in and so Claire Gilbert, who has been with the Innocence Project forever, and really started this and was on the



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podcast a lot with Susan. I'm like, Alright, let's get Joey on the phone. And Claire, you do it. And so she's so Joey, and she just starts talking, but I was like, Joe, your case is dismissed. I was like, your, you know, it's like she was going on and on. And like, Joe, your case is dismissed, like, Let's just tell him, we got to, then you can tell him whatever you want. But like, give him the news. And, and he, he just really couldn't believe it.

Eric Bland 44:25

How's it what's he doing now? Is he trying to get his life back and get your life back after 23 years.

Noah Pines 44:31

So his family owned a car business, a used car business. He's been working there since he got out he was he was such a great person, even when he was in custody, that you know, for the last few years, he was down in where the Georgia State Patrol services their cars and Joey's you know, knows how to work on cars. So he was like, kind of, he got out of jail during the day to go work. He was kind of in work release. And so he actually worked. He worked on police cars, and they loved that we actually had people come up and testify for his bond hearing who are law enforcement officers to say, you know, this guy works on our cars everyday. He's the greatest guy, we trust them. And so he's back in the car business. Okay. This is the first Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's that he spent out in 22 years. He went in at 20. And out at 42. Wow. And, you know, I was actually messaging with Mandy one day,



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and we were just kind of joking around. And she mentioned Joey's case. I was like, You know what, like, you're right, Mandy, I have to I have to reach out to him and just see how he's doing. And you know, I sent him pies for Thanksgiving so that he could have a little something extra special. He went to a call them up when the Braves were in the playoffs. And I was like, You ever been to a Braves playoff game? He's like, nope, like, alright, we'll come on down, and you're coming tonight. And just to be able to get to experience life again, and he's not bitter. You know, I don't know that I wouldn't be bitter, but he's grateful

Eric Bland 45:58

that he sue. Did he do a civil suit? You

Noah Pines 46:02

know, civil suit would be really difficult in Georgia. It's it's very, very difficult. But we're trying to get him compensation through the legislature. Like they'll have to pass a special law. Alright, I

Eric Bland 46:12

have one. I have one more legal question that I want. We're gonna get into your ultra marathon running and what you know how long you've been Kojak for. But when you do ineffective assistance of counsel on a client, have you ever assisted in that like that always seems to me like the clients criticizing your representation, but you want it to happen, so that they have a chance to you ever testify and say, Yeah, I could have done this. And I probably shouldn't have done this or you don't



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cooperate in that if ineffective assistance argument that always is interesting to me. Yeah, no, I

Noah Pines 46:46

mean, do you have so you know, just for the listeners, ineffective assistance means your lawyer didn't do, you know, their a good job, which could be a constitutional violation. Anytime I have a client who gets convicted, you know, of a serious offense, I say, go find another lawyer, get another lawyer for the appeal. That way they can allege ineffective if I've done anything wrong. If I've done something wrong, I'll 100% Admit it, there are certain lawyers that won't admit it. I'm working on an appeal, where one lawyer represented two people charged with murder. And one of them was accused of murdering their child. And the other one was accused of what's called second degree murder for leaving the child in the care of the mother who was abusive, which is just impossible. It's not ethically possible to do that, because the defense for the one spouse is conflict. I didn't know that she was abusing the kids like that would be the defense. And that lawyer just refused to admit any. I mean, she she was horrible in what she said, if I make a mistake, I'll admit it's mistake. You have to, and we all make mistakes,

Eric Bland 47:51

man, he wants to ask you some questions about murder and what you think of the Yeah, lawyering and you know, the prosecution?



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Mandy Matney 47:59

Well, the start out, I think something that has been very baffling to me. And I don't know about you know, but watching people respond to all this Becky stuff that's been going on, and their accusations of jury tampering. And the press acting like it was guaranteed that he was going to have a new trial, and like it was an easy thing. Can you explain like, and you just did how, how difficult is it? If you are a person like Alex Murdoch, who has all the money and power in the world? How difficult is it to get a new trial? After you're convicted of murder? Oh,

Noah Pines 48:46

it's it's almost impossible. You know, you're no longer presumed innocent, you're, you know, presumed guilty, that the burden is that is there any evidence really to support the verdict? And you know, every time I find an error in a case, it's always like, Well, yeah, you're right. There's error, but it's harmless error, which means it didn't impact the verdict. You'll come home after a day, and I'll tell my wife, I'm like, Man, I just lost an appeal. And she's like, Yeah, no offense, you lose every appeal, which isn't true. I don't lose every appeal. But she knows how hard it is. I mean, you spend all this time working on appeals, and you're like, you think you have a good, you know, a good issue. And the courts like, Yep, it's harmless. Or, you know, yeah, we're just not going to give you a new trial. And it happens all the time.



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Mandy Matney 49:28

Right. And I was, I was surprised even seeing headlines this week. Acting like judge toll has suddenly made this an uphill battle like it was. He was sliding his way to a new trial. It's always it's it's an uphill battle. That's the way that the system is designed once you are convicted by a jury of your peers. It's really really hard to get a new trial and I felt like I was in crazy land watching people just assume Okay, let's get ready for a new trial. And what is going on here?

Noah Pines 50:02

Yeah, no, I mean, and the problem is people don't really understand the law and how the process works, and

Mandy Matney 50:08

how difficult it is. Like, I just kind of knew, I mean, I've listened to a lot of undisclosed, I listened to cereal. I understood how hard it was for odd Nan Sayed to get released finally, after years when there was lots of evidence in his favor. And again, we are talking about a man here, where there is a lot of evidence that he is at the scene of the crime during the crime, and nobody else. It's just, it seems insane to me. But on that note, I would like to ask you about Dick and Jim, and what you have thought of their defense throughout this case?

Noah Pines 50:50

Well, I'm gonna I have a couple pieces of paper which you can't read. But I started I went back through my DMs with you in through Twitter,



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which by the way, I wasn't using Twitter back then. But you know, I started using it because everybody was on it. Mandy, I have some paper in front of me that I want to read to you. And it's it's our DMS back from December of 2022. And I guess you're getting a lot of hate. So I said, eff the haters. You're doing a great job, except one thing. You and Eric keep saying how smart Dick and Jim are. But only morons make multiple factual statements about their cases, especially before seeing all the evidence. Nothing Alex said was vetted, and every criminal defense lawyer knows their client doesn't always tell the truth. They are just two dudes who wanted the fame of being on TV. I'll talk law all day. Never facts. That's December 120 22. December 320 22. I just said after listening to the last episode of MMP, I'm convinced dick and Jim are morons who are just used to their power and bullying people to get what they want. They've got a reputation of being great lawyers, but no one has ever put that to the test. So love it. From the beginning, I couldn't believe don't forget,

Eric Bland 52:06

no, don't forget to Jim went out on TV and said Alex had a clear cut alibi. He was not at the mercy. I know

Noah Pines 52:13

over a year. I know. It's crazy. Do you never do that?

Eric Bland 52:18

He did it on a video. He did it on a documentary. You never



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Noah Pines 52:21

do that. Look, I handled a super high profile case in Atlanta of an Atlanta police officer who shot and killed somebody in self defense and every CNN and Fox and MSNBC. Everybody wanted me to be on every night. And I didn't do any of them. I did one the only media I did was I did a 45 minute core TV segment. Because I knew Vinnie, y'all know. And I knew that Vinnie would wouldn't do any gotcha stuff, he would actually let me talk. And it was a controlled environment. But there's no way I would have gotten on the news and started talking facts or anything about that, because it until you have every fact and have reviewed every fact you can't talk about the facts, because your credibility is the most important thing. Dick and Jim had no credibility to me walking into that courtroom, because of all the stuff that they said before that wasn't true. And that's like, that is a big deal. Well, their dick

Eric Bland 53:18

actually said that they were going to show who the murderer was, and no defense attorney has that obligation. And, you know, Mark, Eric goes, I think did it in in the Scott Peterson case, or was done somewhere. Nobody ever does that. And the other thing is, it still sticks in my head. You know, this must have been gang related or drug related that came in and sought revenge against Maggie and Paul. But what drug cartel or what gang people come on somebody's property without a gun. And they're gonna go into your house and get your guns and then kill the people with your guns. I mean, it's it's not feasible. And if there's two



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people because they said it was a two person shoot, nobody can keep that secret look, dodgy ASCII and crime and punishment. The guy who did the murder, couldn't keep it to himself, had a two people keep a secret where other people aren't going to have known that over the past three years. Don't you think somebody would have given a snitch to the police or somebody? There's not been a work on anybody else doing these murders except Alex. Nothing. Nobody's trading it for a lighter sentence. Nothing. And if

Noah Pines 54:25

that was true, Alex would know at least a general idea of who the people were right. All right. If it was really a drug cartel that he was involved with, or something nefarious, he would have a general idea of who that who that was. And

Eric Bland 54:36

we would offer up that information to the police.

Noah Pines 54:39

Exactly. Exactly. So. So Mandy, I from the beginning, I can say, you know, that's where, Eric, you know, you get other good lawyers. I didn't see good lawyering in this case. Now, again, that doesn't say that I would win this case because it's a really hard case to win. But, you know, starting off like,



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Eric Bland 55:03

would you put Alex on yes or no? Well, I

Noah Pines 55:05

mean, there's, there's, there's only two decisions client makes, right? I make every other decision, they decide guilty or not guilty, and they decide if they want to testify, I would have advised Alec not to testify. I think he would have done it anyway. But I would have done a cross of him myself, you know, because clients say that all the time, like, I want to testify. And I'm like, can I just ask him like, 10 questions in a row? And they're like, and I'm like, and that's a soft cross. And they're like, Yeah, I get it now. Right. I get it. And I you know, he was ripe for cross examination. I was actually thinking about that this morning. And, and I think Creighton did a good job. I think he I think he, I think he could have done more. You know, I would have started off with you know, who's your? Who do you trust most in your life? You know, you're you're close with your dad, you're close with your brothers. You're, you're close with Maggie. You love them? Are you closer with anyone else? And they're just kind of gone through all the people he lied to? You know, you lie to your dad, you stole from your dad, you lie to your brother you stole from your brother? You lied to your wife? You didn't steal from her. But I mean, it's it's it goes to Is there anyone you haven't lied to? Oh, yeah. The jury, I'm not lying to the jury now. Okay, these 12 Strangers you're gonna tell the truth to but you literally lie to everybody else in your life that you love that you love, including your dad, everyone. And that's why the financial part so important.



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Mandy Matney 56:28

Yeah. What do you think Dick? And Jim's biggest mistake was throughout the last three years, two years, whatever, we're at two and a half, you

Noah Pines 56:37

know, that you would? I don't feel like they thought of the global resolution to everything. Like, you've got to figure out, like, there's no way we're getting them out of the financial stuff. I just didn't see a strategy.

Eric Bland 56:53

I think it's a totality. I mean, like, I think it's a totality. Don't you think not one single thing, right? It's it's

Noah Pines 56:59

globe. I mean, I had a case, I tried a case up in Floyd County in Rome, and my client was charged like four separate cases. And I'm like, I think we could win three, but you're gonna lose this fourth one, I can't, there's it was just cut and dry. It was it was literally on paper. And I'm like, and this is what you're gonna get, and you're gonna get a non pro level sentence. And you we have to resolve all the cases. And he decided to take the case to trial, and he got a, like, a 30 year non probable conviction, because he wasn't thinking about the globe, you know, it's like, well, we can win this win, we can win this, you know, but I'm like, but you can't do anything about this other one. And I just didn't feel like



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they had a global strategy for this case. And I think that they could have had a better global strategy for this case,

Eric Bland 57:47

I think, I think it was Dick, who viewed this not on an international level, but his normal cases where he's able to be very aggressive with the press and with the courts. And he gets his way of, you know, of his personality. And he didn't realize that the whole world is watching and that he started never really perceiving how the world was not buying what he was selling. And he never adapted. And I think that was the major thing. You know, Jim Griffin always had to clean up after deck. And Jim had the heavy lifting stuff. And it was tougher, tough. You know, he did all the legal stuff. And you sold this week. And in the Status hearing, Dick got up and spoke. But he had nothing to say because he, he didn't even remember the four things that Justice told wanted to focus on. He didn't know the law. And he meandered along for about a minute and said, Well, I'm just going to turn this over to Jim. And I think he didn't realize how big this case was. So quickly, you know, what I'm saying?

Noah Pines 58:55

Well, you pesky podcasters, you know, really made people look at this. No, but it's true that the media, I think, you know, an unbiased look of the case. Although, yeah, I would say that is something really important in a case like this. And then as you know, as we know, old men can't learn new tricks. Mandy, we heard that from you yesterday, too. But



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yeah, you have to find a great line. And I hope I'm getting to that old point. So I don't know where although you're older than I am, Eric, but you have to have some self awareness. And I don't think the deck has any self awareness at all. I really don't. What

Eric Bland 59:40

do you want to know about Mandy? What do you want to know from Mandy, what do you want to know from me? Is there anything that you know, interest you and what we do or what are we going to do next with our lives? Anything that Yeah, I

Noah Pines 59:52

mean, I definitely want to know what you're going to do next. Eric, you're going to continue to practice law, you're going to just sort of move over into The medium or I mean, you're a little bit older than I am. So

Eric Bland 1:00:04

I'm a lawyer, and I'm always going to be a lawyer. I do like this and I plan to hitch my hip and wagon to Mandy and David, because I think they have a really bright future. But I'm a lawyer. You know, I like what I do. It this has gotten me interested, as you know, in this some, maybe going back into some criminal law that I did earlier in my career. So I took on a murder case, but you know, I, I want to be a lawyer. I want to use my brain. I like my mouth. I am not an introvert, accepted parties. I'm an



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extrovert, mostly in life. And so but yeah, I'm hitching my wagon to Mandy, and David and Liz. Yeah.

Noah Pines 1:00:39

And Mandy, why Eric,

Mandy Matney 1:00:41

Eric is extremely unique for a lawyer. I have talked to a lot of lawyers in my career. And it's very, very difficult for many of them to break down extremely complicated legal matters in a way that not only people understand, but people are interested in, and they want to hear more. And it we're in this weird world where we're a journalism podcast, but we we do have to keep people listening. And we have to keep people not entertained, but engaged. And Eric just does an amazing job of doing that. And I just remember back to 2021, when he would be on the phone, and there would be so many moments where I'd be like, I wish I recorded that. Because you would just yell and be so passionate about things, and also break them down in a way that I understood and didn't feel stupid for not knowing what a legal term was. And I think that that is just so important. And I think Eric and I and YouTube, Noah share this passion of really wanting people to have more tools to understand the law, the media, you just see this over and over again, where people can just get ran over by our criminal justice system. And, or, or by our in, in civil law, they can get ran over. And it is, it's very rewarding to be able to communicate with people about the things that we think really matter and try to make the world a little bit better, because we have seen a lot



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of horrible things and all of our careers. But yeah, Eric is a special shining star look

Eric Bland 1:02:30

at the maturation of Mandy know, over the past two years, you know, she went from this amazing writer, and she still can do that. But now she speaks. And she speaks with authority. She speaks with confidence. She's taken so many hits, but she keeps on standing. I mean, the growth of this woman over the past two years is just amazing. You know, she's in front of hundreds of people every day now speaking vulnerably, which is not the easiest thing in the world to do. Haven't you seen that growth as well, just listening to her and communicating with her? Oh, definitely.

Noah Pines 1:03:10

I mean, it's, it's, like I said before, it's been amazing to watch and I think that your podcast is really sort of the the rebirth you know, undisclosed was definitely their first you know, add ons case and Joey's in however many seasons after. But that's kind of like the old school. And you're the you know, I don't know if you're the new school or just the new wave of keeping people interested. But you literally have there's people who quit their jobs, Mandy and started doing kind of what you do in a different way on the internet about talking about crime cases, which is really incredible. I mean, in plus you get to meet show CRO, and I don't know, if you talk about how many people listen to your show, I kind of



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know how many people listen to your show. And it's, it's ridiculous. You have more listeners than like the Tonight Show.

Mandy Matney 1:04:05

I mean, sometimes, like,

Noah Pines 1:04:07

like, do you ever think of it that way?

Mandy Matney 1:04:09

I think I the one time when I was at a Taylor Swift concert and Denver, I looked around and I think there was 75,000 people in the stadium and ish. And I think I sent a picture to you guys I was like, This is how many people listen to a cup of cup of justice every week. And that was a big moment for me because you know, it's Americans really have to see football stadiums to understand people like crazy are actually listening to you like me, but I it's a it's an honor. It's a it's something that I hope to never take for granted. It has been tough and a lot of weird ways. But it's also It's something I'm so proud that I did. And I, I also have just really love our audience, our audience is full of smart, fantastic people who have given me faith and the population again, like there's a lot of people who care about justice and care about victims. And also, before, before I started the show, I always kind of thought that you had it. I'm really proud that we never dipped to being ultra sensational, or just gross, true crime. But we're still popular because I think that there was this way of thinking that you have to be really gross. And you have to



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give all the gory details, and not care about people to really be successful. And this and we've done the opposite way. And I'm really proud of that, like you said earlier today. No, everybody's got it like a cult, you have to have a code that you stick to. And I'm glad that we've stuck to our code.

Noah Pines 1:06:03

Well, you're you're authentic for me? I

Eric Bland 1:06:05

don't know. Yeah, I don't really think about the audience numbers. I always think about the loyalty like yesterday, I got into a little spit fight with a local blogger, whatever journalist and I kind of took the bait and I said something and said, Hey, no, you're wrong about this, because I was attacked ethically, I usually don't respond unless somebody attacks me ethically. And just the army of people, our listeners that just on a dime, are so smart and intuitive, and what they say and they come to your defense, and that's the most humbling thing for me, is to know that there are people that really care and when we're hurting, they hurt. They really do they feel our pain, and we feel their pain. Yeah,

Mandy Matney 1:06:53

and we can be open about it. They I've also really appreciated having an audit had a having an audience that actually cared about us as individuals. At the beginning, I started just kind of naturally bringing up things about my mental health and what the case was doing to me.



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And of course, there was a few we knocked a few bad ones off. In that time, I got a few like, media, I don't care stuff talking about yourself men admit I'm done listening to you. But like, I don't want those people anyway, get out. And I've we've created this this community of really awesome, empathetic smart people. Yeah, we're here to fight for us and lift, lift up each other. And also, they're they're all creating their own little. They're being pesky in their own ways. I love hearing I love being up book signings and hearing women who come up and talk to me and say that they fought their city council because their city council wasn't doing right. And I was pesky, because I filed a FOIA on this. And there, they always say like, I know, it's really small, but it's like the it's the small things that matter. We have to get people engaged in what our government is doing. Otherwise, we're all screwed.

Noah Pines 1:08:11

No, you're right. Well,

Eric Bland 1:08:13

on that it was a, an amazing hour and 16 minutes, we could talk to you for ever, no, and, um, I'm sure we're gonna have you back for part two, because there is a part of your life that I do want our listeners to know about. And that is, you are a marathon or soon to be an ultra marathoner. And what that kind of training takes and how the time, you know, to run 50 miles or 40 miles to get ready for the race. How do you juggle it all? You know, for me, the problem was, how did I juggle my practice with my family, and I was not as good at it as I should have



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been. And I want you to talk to our listeners that next time we have you on about the balance, how do you find balance because life is always about balance? And then, you know, the little things like how long have you been a Kojak? You know, you know, how often do you shave your head twice a week, three times a week? Those things but you're a wonderful person, you got a massively large heart. The legal profession is lucky to have you and certainly Mandy and I and Liz and David are lucky to have you as a friend and supporter. So I just want to say thank you so much for giving us your time. your valuable time. Mandy, you can finish up Yes,

Mandy Matney 1:09:30

thank you, Noah. And we're really excited. We're gonna have you back probably a few more times because you have a lot of interesting cases we need to dig into and we really appreciate you and your dedication to justice and your time. Well, thank

Noah Pines 1:09:46

you for having me. It was a true honor. So I appreciate you inviting me into your home. And

Eric Bland 1:09:53

with that, we say cups down, cups

Noah Pines 1:09:56

down cups down



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Mandy Matney 1:10:08

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