



Bloodsworth: The True Story of the First Death Row Inmate Exonerated by DNA (Shannon Ravenel Books)

By Tim Junkin

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Charged with the rape and murder of a nine-year-old girl in 1984, Kirk Bloodsworth was tried, convicted, and sentenced to die in Maryland's gas chamber. From the beginning, he proclaimed his innocence, but when he was granted a new trial because his prosecutors improperly withheld evidence, the second trial also resulted in conviction. Bloodsworth read every book on criminal law in the prison library and persuaded a new lawyer to petition for the then-innovative DNA testing.

After nine years in one of the harshest prisons in America, Kirk Bloodsworth was vindicated by DNA evidence. He was pardoned by the governor of Maryland and has gone on to become a tireless spokesman against capital punishment.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Attorney and novelist Junkin (*The Waterman*) makes his nonfiction debut with the little-known story of Kirk Noble Bloodsworth, who in 1984 was falsely accused of the brutal sex murder of a nine-year-old girl in Maryland. The local authorities narrowed in quickly on Bloodsworth based on questionable eyewitness identifications, while neglecting a slew of clearly worthwhile leads. Bloodsworth was convicted and sentenced to death, before an appellate court found that the state had failed to disclose exculpatory evidence to the defense concerning the suspicious figure who had helped direct police to the child's corpse. Yet the retrial again ended with a guilty verdict, although the judge's reservations about the circumstantial evidence led him to impose two life sentences. As Junkin tells it, Bloodsworth's inner strength and determination enabled him to survive in prison and to learn of advances in DNA fingerprinting that led to his 1993 exoneration and Maryland's belated identification of the killer. While this book isn't as gripping as Randall Dale Adams's account of his escape from death row or the writings of lawyer Barry Scheck, Bloodsworth, who became an advocate for abolishing the death penalty, deserves to be better known, and the battery of mistakes that led to his lethal jeopardy should disturb any fair-minded reader on either side of the capital punishment debate.

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From [Booklist](#)

DNA has so seeped itself into the popular consciousness that it's hard to remember that, in the early 1990s, it was only beginning to emerge as a forensic tool. This hard-hitting and moving examination of the first death row inmate whose conviction was overturned through the use of DNA evidence combines forensic science, knowledge of police procedure (and police malpractice), trial coverage, and chilling representations of prison. The inmate saved by DNA (in 1992) has a name even Dickens couldn't improve upon: Kirk Bloodsworth. A Chesapeake Bay crabber, Bloodsworth was convicted of the mutilation slaying of a nine-year-old girl in 1984. Junkin, an attorney, is at home tracing the police and legal snafus that imprisoned an innocent man. He presents two parallel stories: that of Bloodsworth's conviction and torturous prison experiences and that of the D.C. lawyer who took on his case. Outrage-provoking. *Connie Fletcher*
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Review

"Kirk Bloodsworth is an American Josef K., an icon of a system that failed him—and justice—at every turn."

—*Washington Post Book World*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Marie Boyd:

This Bloodsworth: The True Story of the First Death Row Inmate Exonerated by DNA (Shannon Ravenel Books) book is not really ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you receive by reading this book is information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific Bloodsworth: The True Story of the First

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