



Government Misconduct and Convicting the Innocent: The Role of Prosecutors, Police, and Other Law Enforcement

Our report on [Official Misconduct in Exonerations](#) is out! It has already been covered by the [Washington Post](#), the [New York Times](#), [NBC News](#), and [USA Today](#).

This is the most comprehensive study yet of official misconduct by police, prosecutors, and other officials based on an analysis of 2,400 exonerations in the Registry.

Read the report!



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Major Patterns From the Report

Official misconduct contributed to the false convictions of 54% of defendants who were later exonerated. In general, the

Concealing exculpatory evidence—the most common type of misconduct—occurred in 44% of exonerations.

Police officers committed misconduct in 35% of cases. They were responsible for most of the witness tampering, misconduct in interrogation, and fabricating evidence—and a great deal of concealing exculpatory evidence and perjury at trial.

Black exonerees were slightly more likely than whites to have been victims of misconduct (57% to 52%), but this gap is much larger among exonerations for murder (78% to 64%)—especially those with death sentences (87% to 68%)—and for drug crimes (47% to 22%).

30% of the cases. Prosecutors were responsible for most of the concealing of exculpatory evidence and misconduct at trial, and a substantial amount of witness tampering.

In state court cases, prosecutors and police committed misconduct at about the same rates, but in federal exonerations, prosecutors committed misconduct more than twice as often as police. In federal exonerations for white-collar crimes, prosecutors committed misconduct seven times as often as police.

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