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it's a secret

669 N.W.2d 762

State v

Zimmerman

Evan Zimmerman



FACING LIFE: THE RETRIAL OF EVAN ZIMMERMAN

A&E TV

The story of one man's choice to reject a tainted freedom and risk a life sentence to clear his name.

Directed and produced by Shane DuBow and David Boodell.

when the 2nd trial ended...



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EVAN ZIMMERMAN

Other Wisconsin Cases with False Confessions

In November 1998 Evan Zimmerman began dating Kathleen Thompson in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, but they broke up in May 1999.

Not quite a year later, on February 25, 2000, Thompson married Robert Miles, though the marriage got off to a shaky start—they were seen fighting at the wedding reception. That night, both Miles and Thompson were taken to jail following a domestic dispute.

At 3 a.m. on February 26, Thompson was released while her husband was remained in custody on a probation hold. Thompson refused an offer of a ride home from a police officer and set out on foot to her residence, just a few blocks away.

At 5:45 a.m., her body was found on a curb on Laurel Street. She had been strangled.

Police found Zimmerman on the afternoon of the morning the body was found. He was drinking in a VFW bar and was very intoxicated.

A prosecution witness testified that Zimmerman told him that Thompson had been murdered and "they found her up on Margaret Street, gutted like a fish."

Police contended that even though some of the details were wrong (the street was Laurel and she had not been gutted), he knew these things because he was the killer. Zimmerman contended he had heard that information when he got up that morning and went to a gas station to buy cigarettes.

Zimmerman contended he had been at the VFW on the night of the murder—which was confirmed by witnesses—and then went to try to

State:	Wisconsin
County:	Dodge
Most Serious Crime:	Murder
Additional Convictions:	
Reported Crime Date:	2000
Convicted:	2001
Exonerated:	2005
Sentence:	Life
Race:	Caucasian
Sex:	Male
Age at the date of crime:	53
Contributing Factors:	False Confession, Inadequate Legal Defense
Did DNA evidence contribute to the exoneration?	Yes*