



# Twisted Truth

*Wendy Schmid-Eastwood*

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## **Twisted Truth** Wendy Schmid-Eastwood

After supporting an innocent man on Death Row in Texas for eight years and finally watching him be put to death, I felt compelled to write this book. The book begins with a description of Richard's childhood and adolescence and shows how he became unwittingly involved in a crime through his sister and her drug dealer boyfriend. He was then arrested, falsely accused of capital murder and sentenced to death. The real murderer is still alive and free to this day. As I was given information and access to the post-conviction appeals made by Richard's lawyers, I was able to give details of the crime, the trial and the serious flaws and errors, which were made during the whole process. There are descriptions of the years Richard spent on Death Row plus extracts from some of his letters. The years between 1993 and 1995 were extremely stressful as we had to survive four execution dates during that time. The hopes, disappointments, uncertainty and anguish are depicted in this part of the book. There are accounts of the visits, which my husband and I made to Death Row between 1997 and 2000, how we consequently tried to help and support Richard, our last frenzied efforts to try and save him and finally the last agonizing months and days leading up to the harrowing experience of witnessing Richard's execution. There is an extensive chapter about the justice system in Texas, which includes an appeal and post-conviction review, political context, underfunding of Texas defence lawyers, official misconduct, false witnesses, false expert testimony, the execution of mentally retarded and juvenile offenders in Texas, racial discrimination and last but not least - the execution of the innocent, where some examples are given. In the Afterword there is an extract from a Texan newspaper showing that the judge who presided over Richard's case now has second thoughts about his guilt. A great deal of research, time, thought and effort has been

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