



Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

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CASE OF INTEREST

Defendant Pleads Guilty to 1997 Sexual Assault

DATE: March 15, 2017

CASE: Joseph Brian Cox (Case #15F00096)

PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Matt Chisholm, Adult Sexual Assault Prosecution Unit

Joseph Brian Cox pled guilty to three counts of forcible digital penetration and two counts of forcible rape.

On the morning of May 20, 1997, Joseph Brian Cox unlawfully entered the home of the then 14-year-old victim, her mother and her 11-year-old sister. Cox wore a mask and held the family at gunpoint. He proceeded to bind the hands and feet of the victim's mother and sister with rope and tape. He also bound the victim's hands before forcibly sexually assaulting her in her bedroom. After the assault, Cox smoked a cigarette in the victim's room. He then looted the house for cash and valuables before fleeing. The assailant could not be positively identified because he was masked during the crime. Initial DNA testing of items found at the scene did not yield significant results and the investigation stalled pending further leads.

The Sacramento County Sheriff's Cold Case Unit continued to work the case. As DNA technology advanced, items they submitted to the District Attorney's Crime Lab for testing resulted in a hit to Cox. The most significant DNA matches were found on the cigarette butt recovered from the victim's bedroom and a roll of tape recovered from the scene that was used to bind the victims.

Cox faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. Sentencing is set for April 28, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in Department 16 before the Honorable Marjorie Koller.