

Scott Mitchell

On January 20th, 1996, 24-year-old Scott Mitchell was taken to Area 1 at 51st and Wentworth where he was interrogated and tortured for approximately 33 hours by Chicago police officers Joseph Danzl, Glen Turner, and others who previously worked under the supervision of torturer Jon Burge regarding a double murder of Michael Mickey and wounding of Marvin Harris that occurred during the course of an armed robbery. Mitchell, who according to his mother had already suffered two prior severe head injuries, was hit repeatedly with a book during the course of interrogation, which he tried to ward off with his hand. Mitchell was also punched in his stomach and chest hard enough to make him cry. Danzl took a tool from Jon Burge's tool belt and threatened to arrest Mitchell's mother on unrelated charges which would have meant DCFS taking custody of Mitchell's siblings. Mitchell summarily made a court-reported confession.

When Mitchell was brought to Cook County Jail, he complained of pain in his chest and right thumb. Before his trial his court-appointed public defenders Gary Coyne and Rita Fry helped him file to suppress his confession. Even with testimony from the Cook County Jail Medical intake worker, the police denied mistreatment and Judge Henry Simmons denied the motion.

Mitchell was convicted of first degree murder and attempted first degree murder after he entered a negotiated plea of guilty in exchange for consecutive sentences of 30 and 15 years imprisonment for the murder of Michael Mickey and wounding of Marvin Harris. Upon sentencing he also received 3 years of Mandatory Supervised release.

On October 13, 2011, Mitchell, serving as his own attorney, filed a post-conviction petition that was the basis of his appeal. He asserted his three-year mandatory supervised release term extends his imprisonment beyond the 45-year sentence to which he agreed when he pled guilty and that he was not admonished as to that possibility. He further argued his due process rights were violated because he did not receive the benefit of his plea agreement. Mitchell asked that the MSR period be removed from his sentence or that his 45-year sentence be reduced to allow the MSR term to be served within the 45-year term.

On December 9, 2011, the circuit court and Judges James Obbish summarily dismissed defendant's post-conviction petition.

On July 25, 2013, the Torture Inquiry and Relief Commission stated that there was a preponderance of evidence that Mitchell had been tortured given the length of interrogation, the background and history of torture by Danzl, Mitchell's psychiatric history, mental faculties and diagnosis of Paranoid Schizophrenia, and also his complaint of injuries during medical intake at the Cook County Jail. In May of 2016 his appeal in the appellate court under judges Matthew E. Coghlan and Maura Slattery-Boyle, was reversed and remanded back to the circuit for further decision.

Scott Mitchell was paroled on June, 2017 and is projected to be discharged in 2020.