

3 innocent men freed after 36 years in prison

The story

Three men in the American state of Maryland have been exonerated after spending 36 years in prison for a crime they didn't commit.

Alfred Chestnut, Ransom Watkins and Andrew Stewart were 16 when they were arrested on suspicion of murdering a 14-year-old boy in Baltimore.

Baltimore's state attorney said detectives had coached and coerced teenage witnesses and evidence from the boys' lawyers and the jury.

Vocabulary exonerated

officially proven not to be responsible for a wrongdoing

- A woman was exonerated of theft after new evidence was presented at an appeal.
- The judge exonerated the men and apologised for their treatment.

behind bars

in prison

- If you are convicted of a serious enough crime, you will be put behind bars.
- My uncle spent time behind bars in the 1980s. Now he's a security consultant!

wrongful

unfair or illegal

- After their wrongful arrest, they were released within 24 hours.
- He sued his former boss for wrongful dismissal and won the case.

Language challenge

Which of these is to 'forcefully persuade someone to do something'?

- a) coerce
- b) contrive
- c) conduce

Answer:

- a) coerce