

**The  
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**Jamie and Gladys Scott:  
Wrongfully Convicted  
Represent Our Resistance  
By Dr. Lenore J. Daniels, PhD  
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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As the social order continues, it devises other ideals of social danger, among them women.

In the United States today, there are more than ninety thousand women in prisons. Of that number, over 80 percent are mothers, who have left more than 167,000 children behind, living in a tenuous freedom.

-Mumia Abu Jamal, *Jailhouse Lawyers*

In Chicago, James "Hawk" Rasco decides its time to return home, to his native soil - Mississippi. Now, he was returning to Scott County with his family. Rasco's nephew ran a nightclub - in dry Scott County. The nephew, along with other Black nightclub owners, paid *the* sheriff in order to sell alcohol. The sheriff was Glenn Warren, otherwise known as the "High White Sheriff."

Some things *do* change but only slightly. Years later, an FBI investigation landed Sheriff Warren in a courtroom and ultimately in prison. Rasco's nephew ends up turning state's evidence against "High White Sheriff." James Rasco buys the nightclub after the nephew enters the witness protection program.

And sometimes things tragically remain the same. Enters Deputy Sheriff Marvin Williams - "Black!" Sheriff Williams is angry. He believes Rasco, the new owner of the nightclub, should continue business as usual. Show Me The Money! James Rasco refuses.

And Williams tells Rasco that he will get him! I will get you one way or the other, even through your daughters!

We have to remember that Frantz Fanon tells us there's the violence of the perpetrators and there's the violence of resisters. The violence of the former disrupts human potential while the later disrupts tyranny motivated by hate. *Who was Marvin Williams really? In this narrative, what does he represent?*

Time passes.

The Scott sisters, stop by a local store. It is December 23, 1993. Jamie (22) and Gladys (19) Scott, two young mothers, have run out of heating fuel. They drive to the local store in town. But when they exit the store, the car *will not* start up!

The women decide to leave the car and begin walking home when they hear voices. There are two Black men, cousins, in their 20s, known as the Duckworth men. Gladys recognizes one of them from the chicken plant where she and Jamie work. The Duckworth cousins offer to take the women home. Jamie, however, pays the men \$10 dollars.

But the ride home was far from pleasant. According to Jamie, one of the men began touching her. The women exit the car and started walking home. Again, Jamie and Gladys here a commotion from behind them, but they don't stop.

Jamie and Gladys finally arrive home. Soon, three young men, 2 brothers and a cousin, known as the Patrick Men, knock at their door. The Patrick Men, 14, 16, and 18 years old, tell the sisters that the two Duckworth men started a fight with them. That's it.

It's Christmas Eve. Morning.

There's a knock at the Scott sisters' door. It's Sheriff Marvin Williams. He's come to arrest Jamie and Gladys!

Sheriff Marvin Williams had a story to tell the court, the residents of Scott County, and the media...

But he has to work on it!

First, the sisters are charged with conspiracy to rob the Duckworth men of \$9-11 dollars, but Sheriff Williams has a little talk with the Duckworth cousins and the Patrick Men. The "victims" (one with 3 convictions for DWI) point to the Scott sisters. The Patrick Men (one if not two of them with previous run-ins with the law), threatened by Sheriff Williams with time at Parchman prison, where they would "be made out of women" if they didn't cooperate and single out the Scott sisters, agreed. It was the Scott sisters! Now, according to Sheriff Williams, the Scott sisters robbed the older men of \$200 - at gun point! Armed robbery!

The Patrick Men confessed to the robbery, but why let truth get in the way of a good story!

A gun was never located, and the "stolen" wallet was recovered in streets, according to

an affidavit by a trustee of the jail. The wallet "re-appeared" 2 days later with a photo ID of the "victim" and \$60 dollars! This same trustee also claims that the "armed robbery" never happened. Only later, in affidavits, did the "victims" and the Patrick Men confessed to being coerced and threatened by Sheriff Marvin Williams.

*But this is a narrative of violence, of vengeance and not of justice.*

*Family-hired* lawyers advised Jamie and Gladys *not to testify*, and there were several potential witnesses to the character and innocence of the Scott sisters. But, only one will do or not! Five witnesses in court told conflicting stories, but all declared that Jamie and Gladys are innocent.

And the judge? Judge Marcus Gordon has a bit of a history, American history. In 1964, 3 civil rights workers, Schwerner, Chaney, and Goodman were found dead. Edgar Ray Killens was found guilty for the murder of these 3 men - in 2005! Guess who was the judge? Killens, an old KKK organizer, was charged with 3 counts of *manslaughter* (not murder) and sentenced to 20 years in prison for each count.

But why bother about *this* history!

But Sheriff Williams has his revenge. The jury deliberates for 36 minutes and the verdict: Guilty! Jamie and Gladys both received *double life* sentences! And the sisters do not possess any criminal record!

*Narratives of violence ensnarl people of color and effectively disrupt the lives as well as the well being of women and children.*

Five children grew up without the care and attention of their mothers for the *last 14 years*. One sister gave birth in prison!

In those 14 years, James Rasco dies of a heart attack. Both Sheriffs Warren and Williams are also dead.

And these Black women? Their safety depends on their silence! They linger in fear.

*How many Black women, Black mothers, innocent, linger behind bars in the United States? How many have stories that are invisible, absent from the discourse on incarceration and injustice?*

Angela Davis writes, Mumia Abu Jamal recalls, that once communism was no longer "the quintessential enemy" in the U.S., it was replaced "by ideological constructions of crime, drugs, immigration, and welfare." Of course, she writes, "the enemy within is far more dangerous than the enemy without, *and a black enemy within is the most dangerous of all.*"

*Can you imagine Jamie and Gladys as white women framed by a Black or a white sheriff?*

Evelyn Rasco has been fighting for her daughters' release the last 14 years. Rasco lost her husband and an older daughter who died of congenital heart failure in 2001. This daughter left behind a 5 year old child. In these last 14 years, Rasco has tried to be the

grandmother and the mother of 10 children (includes grandchildren of Jamie and Gladys) while sustaining the battle to free her two remaining daughters from prison.

Eleven of those 14 years, Rasco wrote letters to Operation Push / Rainbow Coalition. No response. She writes to Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr. asking him to submit a letter to Push / Rainbow. The congressman submits this letter to Nancy Lockhart at Push / Rainbow. Lockhart, working on a Masters in Jurisprudence at Loyola University Chicago at the time, contacted Evelyn Rasco.

Lockhart discovers that Rasco not only wrote letters to Operation Push / Rainbow Coalition without ever receiving a response, but in 1998 and 1999, Jamie and Gladys Scott appealed to the Innocence Project in Mississippi and in New Orleans.

No response.

Lockhart contacted the Innocence Project to ask why the organization refuses to respond to the Scotts.

No response.

The ACLU refuses to respond to the case.

No longer with Operation Push / Rainbow Coalition, Nancy Lockhart has dedicated her full attention to the Scott sisters' case. As a Volunteer Legal Analyst for the Committee to Free the Scott Sisters, Lockhart has worked on the Scott sisters' case without financial resources for the last 4 years. For Lockhart, the case represents a wrongful conviction.

Rasco and Lockhart have both written to the U.S. department of Justice Civil Rights Division. And only recently did Rasco receive a response!

Here's the response from Steven Harrell, Paralegal Specialist:

Criminal section - PHB  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Ms. Rasco:

This is in response to your letter post marked February 13, 2009, in which you allege that Jamie and Gladys Scott were wrongfully convicted of armed robbery in 1994. You further allege that, in order to obtain this conviction, local law enforcement officers intimidated a witness. We apologize for our delay in responding.

The Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division is responsible for enforcing federal criminal civil rights statutes. Much of our enforcement activity relates to the investigation and prosecution of deprivations of civil rights under color of law. These matters generally involve allegations of excessive physical force or sexual abuse by law enforcement officers.

Please note that federal criminal civil rights laws have a five year statute of limitations from the date of the incident. Since the incident in question occurred in 1994, we regret

that we are unable to assist you. This is not a judgment on the truth or merit of your complaint, it is simply to inform you that, because the relevant statute of limitations has expired, this office can not prosecute this case.

Inasmuch as you feel that Jamie and Gladys Scott were wrongly convicted, you may wish to contact The Innocence Project, a national organization dedicated to the exoneration of the wrongly convicted. You may contact the Innocence Project by sending correspondence to [info@innocenceproject.org](mailto:info@innocenceproject.org)

Sincerely,  
Mark J. Kappelhoff  
Section Chief  
Criminal Section  
Civil Rights Division

By:  
(Signature)  
Steven Harrell  
Paralegal Specialists  
Criminal section

"Now this is untrue, as Mrs. Rasco started writing the Civil Rights Division 14 years ago," Lockhart says.

Mrs. Rasco initially started writing the Justice Department in 1994. She has not passed any statutory limits. The response that she has received is an untruth. She has written many times and the previous responses have been, "your information will be forwarded to the correct department." She has written the Criminal Division of the Civil Rights Department as well.

Lockhart also contacted Attorney General, Eric Holder, and as of the writing of this article, Lockhart has not received a response.

She also sent a letter to President Barack Obama. No response.

In October 2008, Nancy Lockhart hears Rev. Al Sharpton's voice on the radio. She calls in and tells him the Scott sisters' story. Sharpton says, "That sounds like the Troy Davis." Lockhart reminded him that situation with the Scott Sisters is different. Davis was on Death Row. "Let me give you to my assistant so we can get in touch with you," Sharpton says. The "assistant" is someone from a consultant firm. Someone will contact her soon.

So Lockhart waits for a call from the National Action Network (NAN). Time passes, again, and Lockhart calls NAN. She is told to contact a Mrs. Davis, and she is told to call at 10 a.m. the next day. "I called every day for two weeks at 10 a.m." Lockhart sent information to Mrs. Davis, but she never heard from Mrs. Davis again. A month passed. Months pass. Finally, in April 2009, Lockhart receives a call from NAN or rather the consultant firm, informing her that there is a chapter in Louisiana. Lockhart is given a couple of numbers call.

But Lockhart has to call NAN again. The numbers are useless. "One was a fax number

and the other was a disconnected number," recalls Lockhart. The consultant tells Lockhart that there are other chapters. Which is closest to Mississippi - Savannah, Georgia or Atlanta, Georgia, Mrs. Davis asks?

Do I need to say that, in the end, Rev. Al Sharpton and the National Action Network are missing in action!

But are we? You do not have to remain silent!

Lockhart: The Case of the Scott Sisters was featured along with other important information regarding the Mississippi wrongfully convicted on the May 22, 2009, on *One Black Man's View* radio program! Just scroll down to Event Description, highlight the first item for May 22, 2009 and click the second button on the left to play and listen. So please visit <http://blacktalkradio.ning.com/events/one-black-mans-view-5222009?rsvpConfirm=1> and please visit <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/justiceforall/2009/04/16/Scott-Sisters-Sentenced-to-Double-Life-No-One-Died-or-Was-Hospitalized> and share so that others can understand fully what this case is about!

Next, Nancy Lockhart has provided a sample letter to be sent to Attorney General Eric Holder:

Attorney General Eric Holder  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

The Honorable Attorney General Holder:

I am writing to request that you investigate the case of Jamie and Gladys Scott. The Scott Sisters were given double life sentences each in October of 1994 for armed robbery in the state of Mississippi. No one was injured or murdered. One witness states that about 11 dollars was netted in the armed robbery. All witnesses and victims of this crime have testified that the Scott Sisters were not involved in the robbery. Witnesses testified that they were coerced and threatened to lie on the Scott Sisters.

A 14 year old witness testified that he signed a statement which was prepared for him before he entered Deputy Sheriff Marvin Williams' Office. This statement was signed by the 14 year old without an attorney present. He was told that he would be released from the local jail the next morning if he signed it. He was not released.

This is an egregious wrongful conviction and the Scott Sisters have suffered now 14 years 8 months of double life sentences.

Jamie and Gladys Scott are housed in Pearl, Mississippi. Their ID numbers are Jamie Scott #19197 and Gladys Scott # 19142.

Sincerely,  
(Your Name)

Finally, to discuss strategies to organize the release of Jamie and Gladys Scott, to sign the petition, and to donate to the Committee to Free the Scott Sisters, please contact:

Nancy R. Lockhart  
Volunteer Legal Analyst  
Committee to Free the Scott Sisters

641-715-3900 - ext. 99222

Updates: <http://www.freethescottsisisters.com>

Petition: <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/Free-Jamie-Gladys/index.html>

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**The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog**


**BlackCommentator.com** Editorial Board member, Lenore Jean Daniels, PhD, has been a writer, for over thirty years of commentary, resistance criticism and cultural theory, and short stories with a Marxist sensibility to the impact of cultural narrative violence and its antithesis, resistance narratives. With entrenched dedication to justice and equality, she has served as a coordinator of student and community resistance projects that encourage the Black Feminist idea of an equalitarian community and facilitator of student-teacher communities behind the walls of academia for the last twenty years. Dr. Daniels holds a PhD in Modern American Literatures, with a specialty in Cultural Theory (race, gender, class narratives) from Loyola University, Chicago. Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Daniels.

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