

### Court said 7-year delay ruined man's defense

**DEATH ROW**/from 1A  
 "I am sure he was innocent, and I was confident that in the end it would come out," said April Scott, who has been a single parent to the couple's two children since her husband's arrest five years ago.  
 The family, who live in West Palm Beach, made the six-hour drive to State's Branch Central Florida once a month to visit Scott, now 46, at Florida State Prison.  
 Now they will prepare for his sentencing, possibly by next week.  
 "I'm churning here," April Scott said, adding that they will celebrate with a late birthday party for their son and daughter, who this week turned 5 and 7.  
 "Just having him home will be the best thing," she said.

Scott had been a suspect since the murder 12½ years ago. Police relinquished a loan for a Paula Gordis a few hours after Linda (disappeared and found a charred body that a medical examiner determined had been doused with gasoline and set afire.  
 The girl had died of asphyxiation and smoke inhalation, leading investigators to believe she was alive when she was torched. Scott was considered a suspect because a witness testified that Scott was with the girl that night.  
 But Scott had an alibi. He and a girlfriend had gone to the Sarasota

vicinity of drunken driving, soliciting a prostitute and stealing a plane, but the outcome of the other cases was unavailable Thursday.  
 Seven years after the murder, Scott was indicted. The new Charlotte County sheriff had reviewed the case and assigned a new investigator, who produced four pages of allegations and circumstantial evidence placing Scott with the girl.  
 He was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to die in the electric chair.  
 But, reversing Scott's appeal, the Supreme Court found that after more than seven years, Scott was no longer able to corroborate his alibi that initially was checked out by law enforcement officials. He was unable to present certain witnesses in his defense because the

witnesses had died and evidence that may have been helpful to Scott was lost as a result of the delay.  
 The justices said they had "no choice but to reverse Bradley F. Scott's conviction, vacate his death sentence" and order a Charlotte County circuit judge to find him not guilty.  
 April Scott, who plans to graduate from Florida Atlantic University in August with a degree in criminal justice, said she came home Thursday afternoon from school to the sound of her parents and child screaming.  
 Her 3-year-old son, who has seen his father only behind bars, ran to her with the news. "Mommy! Daddy's coming home!"  
 And sure enough, she said.

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### Polygraph test results are released

**RAPE**/from 1A  
 Smith right to ask for a test as the woman. "Fundamental fairness requires that he be accorded the same piece of mind."  
 In his brief request, Smith's attorney said Ken Brown, an acquaintance of the woman, said the woman "has a reputation of promiscuity."  
 "It was testified... that at recently in January she attended a party with two of her sexual partners," Smith's attorney wrote.  
 "Mr. Smith may well face a higher risk of infection from [her] than she does from him."  
 Smith would have submitted voluntarily to an AIDS test if he had been asked, his attorney said.  
 "Of course, the state would then have had to forego the prosecution if it continues to seek in this case."  
 The request for Smith to submit to a court-ordered AIDS test came a day after DNA tests results were made public. Smith's attorney argued that prosecutors were pandering to the media because they "did not have the decency" to contact them with the DNA test results before they were released Monday.  
 "If any results had remained about the state's conviction disregard for Mr. Smith's right to a fair trial, the events of the past few days have laid those doubts to rest," the attorney wrote.  
 Lape has scheduled a hearing for 8:45 a.m. today on various legal preliminaries in the case. Smith might appear at the hearing, but he is not required to do so.  
 The woman who reported that Smith raped her said she thought about committing suicide in the first weeks after the March 30 incident, according to a polygraph examination report made public Thursday by police.  
 Writing to police about the April 23 polygraph test, private examiner Warren Holmes of Miami said the woman told him "that since the incident and all the publicity she has considered suicide."  
 Holmes did not elaborate about the woman's statements about suicide in his report and would not comment any further Thursday about what she said.  
 Holmes, who has been administering such tests since 1983 and once headed the Miami police detection unit, concluded that the woman "did not lie in her verbal responses to the pertinent test questions" concerning her version of the reported rape.

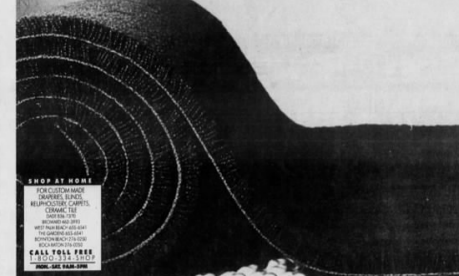
### Coast Guard boosts patrols

**REFUGEES**/from 1A  
 attempting to keep Cubans from seeking refuge, he said. "First we've got to get our own house in order."  
 This year, more than 800 Cubans have fled the island by raft or small boat for Florida, up from 391 in 1989 and 497 last year.  
 The Coast Guard said the Florida Straits is always heavily patrolled because of its busy commercial and recreational boat traffic, but a marked increase in rafters this year called for additional measures.  
 "Due to the extremely dangerous conditions, and use of suicide rafts by refugees, we feel that special patrols are needed during periods of increased refugee migration," spokesman Jeff Karvas said in a news release.

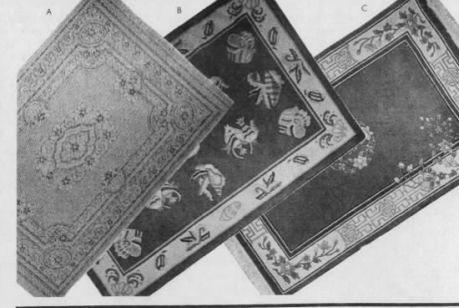
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