

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**v.**

**KIRK TURNER**

Decision Date: August 21, 2009

The defendant Dr. Kirk Alan Turner was acquitted of first degree murder of his wife Jennifer Turner on the grounds of self-defense. Jennifer Turner was found Sept. 12, 2007, with her throat slashed in the shop building of the couple's house on 627 Jack Booe Road. Kirk Turner's defense attorneys argued that he was defending himself after his wife stabbed him twice with a 7-foot Viking-like spear. During the trial, prosecutors argued that Kirk Turner was so angry over a contentious divorce and the lawsuit his estranged wife filed against his girlfriend, Tondja Colvin Woods, that he killed her with a pocketknife. Prosecutors noticed a V-shaped stain on Kirk Turner's T-shirt. They charged Turner with murder, and then turned to the State Bureau of Investigation to help prove their theory: Turner killed her, wiped the knife on his shirt, then staged the scene by ramming the 18-inch blade through his thigh, twice. Bloodstain pattern analysts Gerald Thomas and his mentor, Duane Deaver, embraced the prosecutors' theory. Thomas quietly changed his initial report, which was consistent with self-defense. After a renowned bloodstain pattern expert disagreed with Thomas, Deaver and Thomas conducted unscientific tests to shore up the prosecution. Thomas stuck steadfastly to the story, even after it became clear that he had filed an erroneous account of the crime scene. The jury quickly returned with a non-guilty verdict, many citing fraud on behalf of the SBI false claims.