

RAPIST BLAMES SOCIETY, GETS 60 YEARS IN PRISON

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Rapist **Michael Champion**, blaming society and the criminal justice system for failing to rescue him from his life of crime, interrupted his sentencing Friday to demand that the judge take "into account the damage done to me."

Detroit Recorder's Court Judge Terrance Boyle nonetheless sentenced **Champion** to a pair of 60-to-90-year prison terms for two 1988 rapes, saying the accused "Northwest Serial Rapist" could never again have the opportunity to prey upon women.

Boyle dismissed eight other rape cases against **Champion**, 33, saying that after more than a year of legal proceedings on just two of the cases, "it is simply not just justified to spend more time."

The cases can be reinstated if the two convictions are overturned. The victims in those cases said **Champion** should never see freedom again.

"He put us all through hell," one victim told Boyle.

Assistant Wayne County Prosecutor Kevin Simowski said the minimum 60-year term means **Champion** will "be in prison till he's 93, if he lives that long. If he does get out, he'll be in no position to hurt any one again."

Within weeks of **Champion**'s release from prison in 1987 after serving an armed robbery sentence, northwest Detroit began to experience a series of rapes. **Champion** was arrested in August 1988 and ordered to trial on 10 rapes. Police suspected him of more than 30 attacks.

Since age 17, **Champion** has spent all but 18 months in custody. He escaped a potential life sentence in 1974 in a series of murders, rapes, robberies and kidnappings by informing on his associates, and received a reduced sentence for assault.

He was released after serving about five years, and was shortly arrested on rape and robbery charges. He pleaded guilty to robbery and was imprisoned until June 1987.

Champion said the police, judges and assistant prosecutors who played a part in his reduced sentences "failed me. . . . They hadn't given me what I needed. . . . I came from a broken home."

Outside court, Simowski said **Champion** "is as close as you can get to evil. . . . He goes crying that society was bad to you, so you go rape 50 women. Well, forget you, buddy."

Caption: Photo

: **MichaelChampion** ***

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