

CONFESSED SLAYER SEEKS PLEA CHANGE

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Donald Murphy, who **confessed** to killing at least six and possibly 12 Detroit prostitutes in 1980 and was later sentenced to 15 to 30 years in prison, asked Friday that his guilty **plea** be thrown out . In an appeal, Murphy claimed he misunderstood the full extent of his actions.

He told Recorder's Court Judge Edward Thomas he did not realize he would lose the chance to challenge the validity of his murder confessions when he pleaded guilty in January to two of the murders.

Murphy said he was told by his attorney, Wilfred Rice, he would be able to continue to challenge his statements to police even though he pleaded guilty to murdering Cecelia Knott and Cynthia Warren.

Thomas continued the hearing until Friday, when Rice will be questioned about his explanation of the **plea** to Murphy Because Murphy is trying to take back his guilty **pleas** , as opposed to being convicted by a jury, the first stage of his appeal must return to Recorder's Court. Regardless of Thomas' ruling on Murphy's request, the case, including transcripts of the new hearings, will go to an appellate court. Murphy now is in the Riverside Corrections Facility, Ionia.

THE CASE involved Highland Park High School girls' basketball coach David Payton, who was arrested in November 1980 and **confessed** to murdering four of 18 Detroit women, some of them prostitutes, in similar fashion that year.

However , Payton quickly recanted his confessions, and in December Murphy, arrested on another charge, surprised investigators when he **confessed** to six murders, including three allegedly committed by Payton. Despite the more detailed confessions by Murphy and the recovery of the possible murder weapon, police and prosecutors continued their case against Payton.

A Recorder's Court judge dismissed the charges against Payton.

MURPHY CONFESSED in court to six murders, including the three that had been charged to Payton.

Thomas, in sentencing Murphy to 15 to 30 years, said the confessions and physical evidence were proof that Murphy, not Payton, was the killer.

"You have . . . clarified (sic) an innocent man possibly being convicted," Thomas then told Murphy. "You, in fact, are responsible .

Caption: Pix

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