

PRESS RELEASE



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Joseph James DeAngelo Jr. Sentenced to 11 Consecutive Life terms without the Possibility of Parole for 13 Murders, and an additional consecutive Life term for 13 Kidnappings

“Golden State Killer” also admitted to committing dozens of other uncharged crimes

SACRAMENTO, CA – Joseph James DeAngelo Jr., 74, was committed to state prison for the indeterminate term of 11 consecutive life sentences without the possibility of parole for 13 felony counts of first-degree murder consecutive to the indeterminate term of life for kidnapping to commit robbery to run consecutive to the determinate term of eight years as to the weapon enhancements. The sentence was imposed for DeAngelo’s 13-year multi-county crime spree that terrorized much of California during the 1970s and 1980s.

“This “cold case” never went cold for the victims and survivors - it burned them to their very soul. I respectfully hope today resulted in a step forward in their healing process,” said Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce E. Dudley.

DeAngelo was identified through Investigative Genetic Genealogy (IGG) in 2018, more than three decades after he raped and murdered his last victim in 1986.

DeAngelo admitted committing crimes against 87 individual victims during attacks he perpetrated at 53 separate crime scenes. Charges were filed against DeAngelo for offenses he committed against 26 of his victims. DeAngelo also admitted committing crimes against 61 additional victims. Those offenses included attempted murder, kidnapping to commit robbery, rape, robbery, first-degree burglary, and false imprisonment. The uncharged crimes occurred in Alameda, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Santa Clara, Stanislaus, Tulare and Yolo counties.

Today’s sentencing was relocated to the Sacramento State University Ballroom to accommodate the large number of victims and their family members in attendance and to ensure social distancing in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic.

DeAngelo was jointly prosecuted by the district attorneys of Contra Costa, Orange, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, Tulare and Ventura counties.

The decision by prosecutors to accept DeAngelo's offer to plead guilty to the 26 charged crimes and admit the uncharged crimes was made in consultation with the victims and their family members. The totality of the circumstances, including the age of the victims, the age of witnesses and the death of other key witnesses, and the age of the defendant, were taken into consideration.

The massive scope of this case, which involved more than 1.3 million pages of discovery, would have unduly burdened the victims with a lengthy prosecution that was anticipated to take as many as 10 years. The plea provided the victims and their families who were terrorized by DeAngelo the opportunity to hear him admit his crimes. Over the last three days, victims and their loved ones described the impact of the crimes to the court, the community and the defendant.

This six-county joint prosecution resulted in a guilty plea of:

- 13 counts of first-degree murder with special circumstance allegations of multiple murders and murder committed during the commission of rape, robbery, and burglary.
- 13 felony counts of kidnapping to commit robbery with sentencing enhancements for personal use of a firearm and personal use of a knife during the commission of the offenses.
- DeAngelo admitted murdering:
 - Claude Snelling – September 11, 1975 – Tulare County
 - Katie and Brian Maggiore – February 2, 1978 – Sacramento County
 - Debra Alexandria Manning - December 30, 1979 – Santa Barbara County
 - Robert Offerman - December 30, 1979 – Santa Barbara County
 - Cheri Domingo – July 27, 1981 – Santa Barbara County
 - Greg Sanchez – July 27, 1981 – Santa Barbara County
 - Charlene and Lyman Smith – on or about March 13, 1980 – Ventura County
 - Keith and Patrice Harrington – August 21, 1980 – Orange County
 - Manuela Witthuhn – February 6, 1981 – Orange County
 - Janelle Cruz – May 5, 1986 – Orange County

DeAngelo also admitted to the uncharged crimes of:

- Attempted murder, kidnapping to commit robbery, rape, robbery, first-degree burglary, and false imprisonment.

DeAngelo's crime spree began in 1975 when he was working as a police officer with the Exeter Police Department. The crimes, which continued long after he was fired from the Auburn Police Department in 1979, escalated from peeping through windows to stalking, to rape and serial murder.

His crimes earned him the nicknames of the Visalia Ransacker, the East Area Rapist, the Original Night Stalker and the Golden State Killer. It was not until April 2018 that Sacramento authorities announced that Investigative Genetic Genealogy had identified DeAngelo as the person responsible.

The identification, arrest and prosecution of DeAngelo is the result of decades of work by law enforcement agencies across California.

Additional background information about People v. Joseph James DeAngelo, including the factual basis for each plea, can be found at www.peopleversusjosephdeangelopressmaterials.com