



## PRESIDENT'S SHOWCASE

The Florida Bar Continuing Legal Education Committee and the  
Criminal Law Section present

### Justice Lost and Found; Gilbert King and Conviction Integrity in Florida

Friday, June 28, 2019, 2:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**COURSE CLASSIFICATION: INTERMEDIATE**

Course 3212

[jdorminy@floridabar.org](mailto:jdorminy@floridabar.org)

#### AGENDA

- 2:30 p.m. – 2:35 p.m.      **Welcome & Introduction**  
*Honorable Thomas N. Palermo, Tampa*
- 2:35 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.      **Gilbert King: Author of *Devil in the Grove* and *Beneath A Ruthless Sun***  
*Gilbert King, New York*  
*Richard Graham, Ormond Beach*
- 4:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.      **Panel Discussion: Florida's New Conviction Integrity Units**  
*Melissa Nelson, Jacksonville*  
*Shelley Thibodeau, Jacksonville*  
*Andrew Warren, Tampa*  
*Teresa Hall, Tampa*  
*Cynthia Schmidt, Orlando*



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### GILBERT KING: AUTHOR OF *DEVIL IN THE GROVE* AND *BENEATH A RUTHLESS SUN*

Pulitzer Prize-winner, Gilbert King, will speak about his newest book, *Beneath a Ruthless Sun: A True Story of Violence, Race, and Justice Lost and Found*; the story of a small town with a big secret during Florida's civil rights era. King is joined by former Judge Richard Graham, a real-life character from the book.

#### PRESENTERS



**GILBERT KING** is the author of *Beneath a Ruthless Sun: A True Story of Violence, Race, and Justice Lost and Found*, published by Riverhead Books in April, 2018. His previous book, *Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America*, was awarded the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for General Nonfiction. The book was also runner-up for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize for Nonfiction, and a finalist for both the Chautauqua Prize and the Edgar Award for Best Fact Crime. King has written about race, the death penalty, and United States Supreme Court history for the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, and *Smithsonian* magazine's history blog, *Past Imperfect*. He is also a contributor to The Marshall Project, and the author of *The Execution of Willie Francis: Race, Murder, and the Search for Justice in the American South*, published in 2008. King lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.



**RICHARD (DICK) S. GRAHAM** was born and raised in DeLand, Florida. He received his Bachelor's degree from Florida State University and is a 1967 graduate of Stetson University College of Law. Following graduation, Dick served six months active duty in the U.S. Army Reserve and six years as a reserve officer in the JAG (Judge Advocate General) unit in Orlando, Florida, honorably discharged with the rank of captain. In 1968, he became a partner in the Daytona Beach law firm Landis Graham & French, where he continued in private practice until 2002. He is past president of the Volusia County Bar Association and past chairman of The Florida Bar's Seventh Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee. In 1988 he was elected to the Florida House of Representatives. He chaired the Volusia County Legislative Delegation and received numerous honors and recognitions during his four-year term in public service, including statewide recognition from the Florida Engineering Society and from the Florida League of Cities. In 2002, Dick was appointed Circuit Judge of the 7th Judicial Circuit by Governor Jeb Bush and ran unopposed twice after his initial appointment. He presided over the civil division during his last seven years on the bench, handling some of Volusia County's highest profile cases. Retiring from the bench in October 2012, he joined Upchurch Watson White & Max Mediation Group as mediation counsel. Dick resides in Ormond Beach with his wife, Bunnie. They have two adult sons, a daughter-in-law and a grandchild.

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### PANEL DISCUSSION: FLORIDA'S NEW CONVICTION INTEGRITY UNITS

In 2018, Melissa Nelson, State Attorney for the Fourth Judicial Circuit, created Florida's first Conviction Integrity Unit. This panel will discuss the Conviction Review Units in Jacksonville, Orlando and Tampa. Participants will include State Attorney Melissa Nelson and Conviction Integrity Unit Chief Shelley Thibodeau (4<sup>th</sup> Circuit); State Attorney Andrew Warren and Conviction Review Unit Chief Teresa Hall (13<sup>th</sup> Circuit); and Cynthia Schmidt, Director of Community Engagement and Special Projects (9<sup>th</sup> Circuit).

#### PANELISTS



**MELISSA NELSON** took office as State Attorney for Florida's Fourth Judicial Circuit on Jan. 3, 2017. She leads a group of more than 100 attorneys and 200 staff who represent the people of Clay, Duval, and Nassau counties, primarily in criminal matters. Nelson spent 12 years in the office as an Assistant State Attorney from 1997-2009. During that time, she prosecuted capital homicides, white collar matters, sex crimes, and crimes against children. In 2009, she joined McGuireWoods and worked in private practice for seven years. Since taking office, Nelson has committed to employing new public safety measures, including the deployment of strategic prosecutorial initiatives. She also is committed to leading the implementation of modern criminal justice reforms and ensuring the office's work is done in a fair, transparent manner for the people it serves. Recognized for her ethics, integrity, professionalism, and collegiality, Nelson recently was inducted into the American College of Trial Lawyers. She is a member of the Chester Bedell Inn of Court, the Jacksonville Women's Lawyers Association, and previously served on the Judicial Nominating Commission for the Fourth Judicial Circuit. Nelson earned both her undergraduate and law degrees from the University of Florida. Nelson and her husband, Jason, live in Jacksonville where they raise their three children.

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**SHELLEY THIBODEAU** joined the Fourth Judicial Circuit State Attorney's Office in January of 2018 as the Director of the newly created Conviction Integrity Review unit. Prior to joining the State Attorney's Office, Shelley was in private practice, primarily representing criminal defendants in state and federal court, and at the appellate level, for over 20 years. Shelley received her law degree from Florida State University College of Law in 1995 and graduated from Florida State University in 1991 with her B.A. in communications. While in law school, Shelley interned at the Florida House of Representatives, the Public Defender's Office, and the Children's Advocacy Center. Shelley is a member of the Florida Bar and the Jacksonville Bar Association and is admitted to practice in the United States

District Court for the Middle District of Florida. While in private practice, Shelley was a certified Family Law Mediator, member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, the Northeast Chapter of FACDL, the Florida Family Law American Inn of Court, and the American Inn of Court.



**ANDREW WARREN**, since taking office on January 3, 2017, has been reforming the local criminal justice system. He has been tough on violent criminals, fraudsters, and repeat offenders who threaten the safety of our neighborhoods. He has utilized innovative reforms and created successful diversion programs to hold low-level offenders accountable while steering them away from the downward spiral of the system, including civil citation programs for juveniles and adults. Warren has focused on treatment, prevention, and rehabilitation for offenders with substance abuse and mental illness in order to reduce recidivism rather than further the revolving door of the criminal justice system. He has minimized poverty traps that criminalize people because they are poor. He has embraced data-driven approaches that improve safety, cut crime, and save taxpayer dollars. Additionally, Warren has emphasized transparency and civic engagement to build trust with the community that he serves. Warren previously served as a federal prosecutor with the United States Department of Justice. After initially prosecuting street crime in Washington, DC, he spent the majority of his career with the Justice Department prosecuting complex financial fraud all across the country—crimes that victimized retirees, investors, and taxpayers. Among other high-profile cases, he successfully prosecuted Robert Allen Stanford and other executives at Stanford Financial Group for orchestrating one of the largest frauds in history, a \$7 billion Ponzi scheme. As a prosecutor, Warren earned multiple accolades from the Justice Department and federal law enforcement agencies, including the 2013 Attorney General Award for Trial Litigation. He has lectured and served on panels across the United States and abroad regarding criminal justice, and he was an instructor at the Justice Department's national training center.

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Warren studied economics and political science at Brandeis University before receiving his law degree from Columbia University. Following law school, he clerked in federal district court in San Francisco and then practiced complex criminal and civil litigation with an international law firm in New York and Washington, DC. Born and raised in Gainesville, Florida, Warren returned home to the Sunshine State to continue his public service. He lives in Tampa with his wife and two daughters.



**TERESA HALL** comes to Florida after residing in Indianapolis, Indiana. Ms. Hall has a varied background with thirty years of experience in health care and over seventeen years of experience as a practicing attorney. Ms. Hall was admitted to practice law in the State of Indiana in 2001 and then in Florida in 2017. During her legal practice, Ms. Hall has represented the indigent in criminal defense, worked in supervision for homicide prosecutions for the Marion County Prosecutor's Office in Indianapolis, Indiana, and previously held a judicial position for criminal law courts from 2010 to late 2012. During her legal career Ms. Hall has conducted and/or presided over more than one hundred and twenty criminal jury trials. She enjoys teaching and mentoring to fellow attorneys and law students.

Ms. Hall has presented on topics pertaining to criminal law on a local, state and national level, including presentations for the National District Attorney's Association. Currently, Ms. Hall is the Supervising Attorney for the Conviction Review Unit for the State Attorney's Office of the Thirteenth Judicial Circuit, Hillsborough County, Florida and has recently been accepted as an Adjunct Faculty member of the Stetson University College of Law. Ms. Hall enjoys time with her family and getting to know her new home of Tampa, Florida.



**CYNTHIA SCHMIDT**, Assistant State Attorney, Ninth Judicial Circuit, is a graduate of the University of Central Florida followed by the University of Florida. She spent 14 years as a criminal defense attorney, followed by 14 years as an educator. Using her network in the legal community and larger area, Ms. Schmidt recently became the Director of Community Engagement and Special Projects for the State Attorney's Office, under the Honorable Aramis Ayala. Ms. Schmidt is honored to assist with her office's Conviction Integrity Unit.



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### CLE Credit

General: 3.0 hours

### Certification Credit

Criminal Trial: 3.0 hours  
Criminal Appellate: 3.0 hours  
Juvenile Law: 3.0 hours

