

**INDETERMINATE SENTENCE PAROLE RELEASE REVIEW**  
(Penal Code Section 3041.2)

**JASON GREENWELL,** [REDACTED]  
Second Degree Murder

**AFFIRM:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MODIFY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REVERSE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **X** \_\_\_\_\_

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

In 2010, Jason Greenwell had been on a six-day methamphetamine binge when he and four crime partners restrained, assaulted, kidnapped, and burned the 15-year-old female victim to death. Mr. Greenwell held her down while three of his crime partners beat her with their fists, stomped on her head, hit her legs with a bat, and tied a rope around her. Mr. Greenwell and three of the crime partners then drove to a remote location where they put her body in a ditch and set it on fire.

**GOVERNING LAW**

The question I must answer is whether Mr. Greenwell will pose a current danger to the public if released from prison. The circumstances of the crime can provide evidence of current dangerousness when the record also establishes that something in the inmate's pre- or post-incarceration history, or the inmate's current demeanor and mental state, indicate that the circumstances of the crime remain probative of current dangerousness. (*In re Lawrence* (2008) 44 Cal. 4th 1181, 1214.)

**DECISION**

I acknowledge that Mr. Greenwell committed this crime when he was 20 years old and that he has since been incarcerated for 11 years. In making this decision, I carefully examined the record for evidence demonstrating Mr. Greenwell's increased maturity and rehabilitation and gave great weight to all the factors relevant to his diminished culpability as a youthful offender, including his impulsivity and other hallmark features of youth. I note that Mr. Greenwell faced adverse childhood experiences that shaped his life and choices. Mr. Greenwell reports that his father abused him, his mother, and his siblings, and he frequently tried to escape his home. The psychologist who evaluated Mr.

Greenwell noted that, "[t]his combination of a dysfunctional home and exposure to crime in his neighborhood/environment likely influenced his thinking, attitude and behavior as evidenced by his early involvement in drug use, criminal behaviors and juvenile arrests."

In determining whether Mr. Greenwell is suitable for parole at this time, I have given great weight to his growth in prison. He earned an associate degree and a vocation, and has participated in consistent self-help programming, including substance abuse prevention courses. He has also maintained an exemplary disciplinary record. I also recognize that Mr. Greenwell confessed to authorities

[REDACTED] I have given great weight to these factors during my consideration of his suitability for parole but conclude they are outweighed by negative factors that demonstrate he remains unsuitable for parole at this time.

I have carefully examined the record for evidence that Mr. Greenwell's insight and self-awareness have developed sufficiently to minimize his risk factors. Unfortunately, I find that Mr. Greenwell's discussion of the causative factors for his involvement in the crime indicate gaps in insight that bear on his current risk level.

Mr. Greenwell and his crime partners brutally killed a vulnerable teenaged girl. More than a decade after the crime, however, Mr. Greenwell describes his role in the murder as if he stumbled upon the crime and aimlessly joined in. He admitted to the parole board in 2021 that he left the scene of the crime briefly but chose to return: "I let go, I got up and, uh, stepped back.... And, and as soon as he began hitting her with the bat, I took off...I just, I took off out of the room. And, um, for whatever reason, I went back in the room, I, I don't know why, but I went back into the room..."

Mr. Greenwell was unable to articulate the internal causative factor that led him to participate in this crime. He told the Board, "Um, I just, uh, I chose to feel sorry for myself and make excuses rather than make a change and do something. And, uh, just continue to get stuck in that cycle and continue to feel sorry for myself. I made bad decision after bad decision and blaming it on other people and it was never my fault, so, I mean, nothing was ever gonna change... There's no excuse for why, why I made the decisions I made."

While I recognize Mr. Greenwell's remorse and improving accountability for his life crime, he must do additional work to deepen his insight into the causative factors of his crime before he can be safely released on parole. In particular, I

encourage Mr. Greenwell to focus on developing a deeper understanding of his triggers for substance use, and its nexus to his violent conduct.

The psychologist who evaluated Mr. Greenwell diagnosed him with Methamphetamine and Cocaine Use Disorders, in remission in a controlled environment. Mr. Greenwell, who has a long history of drug abuse, had been on a six-day methamphetamine binge when he committed the life crime. His drug use persisted in prison, and he admitted that he abused methamphetamine “a handful of times” in 2014 and 2015. The psychologist who evaluated Mr. Greenwell found that he was, “unable to relate all of [the] 12 steps.” Given the nexus between Mr. Greenwell's substance use and his participation in the life crime, and his ongoing substance use in prison with limited understanding of the 12 steps, I conclude that he needs to do additional substance use prevention programming before he can be released. I encourage Mr. Greenwell to focus on further developing his coping skills that will allow him navigate stressors in a prosocial way, and thereby avoid relapse.

I commend Mr. Greenwell for his rehabilitative efforts and encourage him to continue on this positive path.

### **CONCLUSION**

I have considered the evidence in the record that is relevant to whether Mr. Greenwell is currently dangerous. When considered as a whole, I find the evidence shows that he currently poses an unreasonable danger to society if released from prison at this time. Therefore, I reverse the decision to parole Mr. Greenwell.

Decision Date:  
March 29, 2022



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GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor, State of California