

# Nichols says DA in on cover-up

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Brian Nichols is accusing Fulton County District Attorney Paul Howard of covering up misconduct by a prosecutor and is asking the trial judge to throw out the death penalty and certain evidence.

Nichols has entered a mental health defense to four killings in the Fulton County Courthouse shooting case, which happened when Nichols escaped from custody during his rape trial March 11, 2005.

Nichols contends in a court filing Tuesday that his former prosecutor in the rape case — now a possible key witness in his murder case — engaged in criminal misconduct before his rape trial. Moreover, Nichols and his high-powered legal team contend that Howard has refused to hand over information about the alleged misconduct.

In a statement to The Atlanta Journal-Constitution late Tuesday, the former prosecutor, Gayle

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# Nichols: Former prosecutor accused of criminal behavior



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Abramson, and her husband, Rand Csehy, accused Nichols' lawyers of trying to derail the murder case by defaming Abramson with a wiretap conversation that concerned another murder investigation.

"Not only is this document factually inaccurate and filled with intentional falsehoods, but it is incomplete," the two former prosecutors said.

Nichols contends in the 35-page complaint that Abramson engaged in criminal behavior the year before his rape trial and may have violated the law while engaged in an undercover operation for Howard's office by socializing with a murder suspect and his friends while on a trip to Palo Alto, Calif.

Abramson said in the statement that she had

unwittingly met a friend of the murder suspect, Scott Davis.

He has since been convicted of the 1996 murder of Atlanta millionaire David Coffin in his Buckhead condo.

In the fall of 2004, Abramson said, she traveled to Palo Alto to visit a friend and David Benjamin Sugarman, whom she had met in Atlanta a few weeks earlier, the statement said.

"Ms. Abramson was not only unaware that Sugarman was friends with convict Davis but had no idea who convict Davis was at the time," the statement said.

"On Saturday, Oct. 30, 2004, she attended a party with Sugarman, Davis and their friends and, upon arriving, was handed an alcoholic beverage. Ms. Abramson advised that she became disoriented, light-headed and eventually felt

as if she was in a 'zombie state.'

"She recalled being sexually assaulted by two men and eventually taken to a house by Sugarman, where she recalled drugs were present."

Nichols' complaint says Davis and the friend were "openly speculating" on the wiretapped conversation that Howard knew Abramson was "involved in gross misconduct."

The prosecutor who was operating the wiretap was Rand Csehy, now Abramson's husband, who recognized that the "Gayle" the men were discussing was his girlfriend.

The two prosecutors alerted Howard to the "embarrassing situation" caught on the wiretap, the complaint said. Abramson resigned shortly afterward to take a job in private practice.