

**IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT IN AND FOR
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA CIVIL DIVISION**

Steven N. Gosney,

Plaintiff,

v.

CASE NO.:

The McClatchy Co., LLC d/b/a
Miami Herald, Brittany Norman aka
Brittany Wallman, Individually and as a
Reporter for the Miami Herald, and
Sarah Blaskey, Individually and as a
Reporter for the Miami Herald,

Defendants.

COMPLAINT

Plaintiff, Steven N. Gosney (hereinafter Gosney), by and through undersigned counsel, hereby files this Complaint against Defendants, The McClatchy Co., LLC d/b/a Miami Herald (hereinafter Miami Herald), Brittany Norman aka Brittany Wallman, Individually and as Reporter for the Miami Herald (hereinafter Wallman), and Sarah Blaskey, Individually and as a Reporter for the Miami Herald (hereinafter Blaskey), and alleges as follows:

THE PARTIES AND JURISDICTION

1. This is a civil action by Plaintiff against Defendants for actions that took place in Miami-Dade, Florida with damages far exceeding \$50,000, exclusive of interest, costs, and attorney's fees, which invokes the jurisdiction of this Honorable Court.

2. Plaintiff is an individual practicing attorney residing in Miami, Florida.

3. Defendant Miami Herald is a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Delaware with its operating headquarters located at either 11410 N.W. 20th St., Miami, Florida, 33172 or 3511 N.W. 91st Ave, Doral, Florida 33172.

4. The Miami Herald is a news business with a primary area of circulation in the South Florida counties of Miami-Dade, Broward, and Monroe, but has a substantial national and international online presence.

5. It is believed that Defendant Wallman is an individual residing in the Miami-Dade Florida area and was employed by Miami Herald as a journalist at all relevant times to this complaint.

6. It is believed that Defendant Blaskey is an individual residing in the Miami-Dade Florida area and was employed by Miami Herald as a journalist at all relevant times to this complaint.

7. Wallman and Blaskey, both individually and per the directions of Miami Herald, published articles about Gosney soon after he was employed as an Assistant State Attorney in the Miami area.

8. The subject of this Complaint alleges that Defendants' either intentionally or negligently published false disparaging statements of fact with the malicious intent to interfere with Gosney's professional career and defame his character.

9. The alleged publications that are the subject of this complaint were originally published from and/or in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

10. Venue is proper in this Court as the Defendants operate their business and/or reside in Miami-Dade and the publications at issue, for the causes of action, originated in Miami-Dade, Florida.

11. All pre-suit requirements have either been satisfied or waived, including pre-suit notice to media defendants in a defamation action per Fla. Stat. § 770.01

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

A. Pre-Defamatory and Tortious Interference Background

12. After law school and receiving a masters degree in criminal justice, Mr. Gosney has focused his many years of ethical advocacy in the area of criminal law and is a board-certified criminal trial lawyer. He is also a known advocate for strong prosecutorial ethical standards, is qualified to argue death penalty appeals and has argued before the Florida Supreme Court on many occasions.

13. Further, during his many years of criminal advocacy, Mr. Gosney has authored many law review articles and books on criminal law topics.

14. Gosney enjoys writing as part of his career and has engaged in fictional writing that takes from both the good and bad experiences of criminal prosecution and defense. One of Gosney's fictional books, *Death Penalty Desires*, is a crime novel that portrays situations regularly encountered by criminal practitioners (as well as commonly depicted in other fictional crime novels), such as criminal subculture, adult language, rape and murder, prosecutorial misconduct, and the anti-social views of persons within the criminal justice system.

15. The fictitious crime novel contained a morality play about two murders, a trial, and the death penalty, how an innocent person can be sent to death row based on prosecutorial misconduct, and ethical lapses of those involved in the criminal justice system.

16. At the time in question, Gosney offered two versions of the novel: a PG version, and an R rated version, which was available only on Gosney's private website and contained disclaimers as to the content of the book for purchasers.

17. The R-rated version contained the following disclaimer: "There is a lot of reality here, but also a load of creative licenses. Try not to draw conclusions about the author from the content herein!"

18. On Wednesday, June 26, 2024, due to his academic accomplishments and reputation, Gosney was hired as an Assistant State Attorney in Miami to assist in the many challenges confronting that office, including conviction integrity, policy development including Brady compliance, and strengthening the ethics in the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office.

19. Unfortunately, The Miami Herald along with Wallman and Blaskey did not agree with the hiring of Gosney and purposefully began pressuring the State Attorney's office to fire Gosney through publications attempting to equate Gosney's personal views and beliefs with villains in his fictional book.

20. Wallman interviewed Gosney on or around July 3, 2024.

21. Per the topics discussed and questions posed at the interview, it was apparent that Defendants were prepared to write an article about Gosney that aligned his character, political beliefs and morality upon the fictional villains of his book.

22. During the interview, Gosney explained to Wallman that his personal, social and political beliefs were not a reflection of the villains in his book and that they were in place to give a dramatic picture of the system and its flaws as opposed to endorsing any misogynistic beliefs or social taboos. In fact, Gosney made it clear that he did not endorse the behaviors of the villains in his fictional book.

23. During the interview, Wallman admitted that she had not read all of his book at the time of the interview.

24. However, within hours of the interview, Defendants published a disparaging article about Gosney with the intent to humiliate his character and gain public support for his firing.

B. The July 3, 2024 Article

25. Within hours of the interview with Gosney, on July 3, 2024, despite knowledge of the actual falsity of their statements, and/or acting in reckless disregard of the truth, Defendants published the first hit piece against Mr. Gosney. *Exhibit "A" (hereinafter the First Article)*.

26. There was no other purpose of this First Article being published in The Miami Herald other than to be used as sensationalized reporting and a personal attack upon Gosney, with complete disregard of

its truth or the negative impact the article could have upon the career of a man who was trying to make a difference in the local State Attorney's office.

27. Gosney's career is ruined by Defendants simply because he wrote a fictional book that had villains who used language and had views that were offensive to readers, which is the very purpose of a villain in a fictional story.

28. The First Article took a few socially negative phrases and themes associated with villains from a fictional book and wrongly imputed those negativities upon the character and morality of Gosney, simply because he was the author of that fictional book depicting a villain.

29. The First Article cited, out of context, the most salacious contents of the fictional novel to falsely imply it was a "sex novel" while ignoring the main themes and purposes of the novel, as well as disregarding the corrections to their narrative explained by Gosney prior to publication.

30. The First article contained the following specific false statements about the Plaintiff:

- a. The headline of Defendants First Article states: "Women are sex objects in **sadomasochistic novel** by man hired to train Miami prosecutors."
 - i. By reading that headline, it leaves readers with the impression that Gosney is a man who views women as sex objects for his desires as a sadomasochist and now he is training Miami prosecutors, which will tarnish the State Attorneys' office.
 - ii. The artfully written headline invokes interest from the reader with a negative question of "why would Miami prosecutors be trained by one that is a sadomasochist and sees women as sex objects."
 - iii. The artfully written headline does nothing to dispel the immediate negative imputation upon Gosney and, as will be seen below, the entire article is slanted significantly against Gosney.
 - iv. Further, the focus of the book Death Penalty Desires is a not sadomasochism or focused on depicting women as sex objects, but instead, there are two villains that

have sadist tendencies, which is encompassed in a few sentences within the entire novel.

v. Also, although there are villains in the fictional book that do look at women as sex objects, the prevailing theme is that women are strong and able to overcome adversity, even when objectified by villain men.

vi. There should not have even been a story about Mr. Gosney's fictional book that also encompasses his new position with the State Attorney, as it was completely unrelated to the training he was to provide the state attorney's office.

b. The body of the article goes on to state: "The **vast majority** of females in the book are described with vulgar disrespect by the various characters **and the narrator.**"

i. "Vast majority" is defined as "the greatest part of something, to the point where alternatives are nearly irrelevant in size" (*Wiktionary.org*¹); and "almost all of a group" (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*).

ii. It is absolutely not true that the vast majority of females in the book are described with vulgar disrespect by the various characters or Gosney. There are a few parts of the book where villains do describe a few females with disrespect, but it is not the theme of the book and is simply the thoughts of negatively portrayed villains in a fictitious book that would have no bearing on the character of Gosney or his ability to train or work with prosecuting attorneys.

iii. The sentence falsely equates the words, thoughts, and actions of villains, within a fictional novel, as the opinions of the Gosney, and associates this authorship of the fictitious book as something that should disqualify him from his job.

c. The First Article cherry picks some of the most sensitive and emotionally charged aspects of the villains portrayed in the book in an intentional attempt to falsely support the above

¹ Wiktionary.org is a reference tool that provides community driven definitions, as understood by the general public, such as the audience of The Miami Herald.

sentence along with the false premise that men controlling or dominating women against their will are the prevailing subject throughout the novel and are endorsed by Gosney.

- d. However, Defendants selectively leave out any portions of the book that would show that the book was truly about the flawed humans that work in a broken legal system with undertones of women being able to overcome adversity and make negatives into positives.
- e. The statement “Most female characters are portrayed as sex objects” is false and defamatory.
 - i. Although there are a few villains in the book that have misogynistic views, the book casts these thoughts and characters in a negative light.
 - ii. There are around 35 female characters in the book (13 main female characters and another 22 minor female characters), from which only 6 of those characters were associated with sexual references.
- f. The statement “The book equates being female with being submissive” is false and defamatory and meant to interfere with Gosney’s position with the State Attorney.
 - i. Even if this statement was true there is no basis to align this fictional book with Gosney’s ability to do his job.
 - ii. However, this statement is not true as the novel does not equate being female with being submissive. In fact, the main female character’s arc is one of learning to stand up for herself.
 - iii. Also, female lawyer Josephine Roy, Esq. handles the mitigation in a penalty phase of a death penalty case all by herself and at no point needs “help” from any male, as was stated in the First Article. And, between her and her husband, she is the attorney who is qualified to handle death cases.
 - iv. There is nothing within the book that would indicate that Gosney was of the belief that being female implies submissiveness.
- g. The subheading “FEMALE HEROES?” is false and defamatory.

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- i. The false and misleading subheading supports Defendant's preconceived false narrative that Gosney is misogynistic.
 - ii. In fact, the novel contains many female heroes.
 1. The lead character, Amanda Carey Smallwood, evolves and learns to stand up for herself; she takes care of her dying father, helps in the jail with fellow prisoners, and is positively portrayed overall.
 2. The female defense attorney, Josephine Roy, Esq., is a hero defense attorney who professionally handles the penalty phase of a death penalty case and is positively portrayed.
 3. The female character Corporal Denique Omeika Terrell is heroic and is positively portrayed.
 4. The female secretary, Mae Lombard, is a voice of conscience to the male lead character and is positively portrayed.
 5. The female Russian Friend, Natasha, is positively portrayed.
 6. The female Celina Johannessen, juror 27, is positively portrayed.
 7. The female prosecutor who handles the penalty phase of the death penalty trial is positively portrayed (in contrast with the male villain prosecutor Johns).
 8. Amanda's father's hospice nurse, Mrs. Althea Maria Santos, is positively portrayed.
 9. Natalie, who befriends the lead character in college, is positively portrayed.
 - iii. Again, it is the sensationalized tag lines and emotion grabbers used by the Defendants to purposely falsely cast Gosney in a misogynistic light with the intent of harming his reputation and career.

C. The August 2, 2024 Article

31. On August 2, 2024, despite knowledge of the actual falsity of her statements, and acting in reckless disregard of the truth, Wallman and the Miami Herald published, printed, and distributed the second hit piece against Mr. Gosney (attached as Exhibit “B”) (hereinafter the Second Article).

32. The fact that the Second Article was published further supports the malicious intent of the Defendants to harm Gosney.

33. The Second Article contained the following specific false statements about the Plaintiff:

- a. The headline “Lawyer who wrote sadomasochistic novel is cutting ties with Miami State Attorney’s Office” is false and defamatory, for the same reasons as stated above: it is not a “sadomasochistic novel.”
- b. Within the Second Article, the statement “Two months after the Miami-Dade State Attorney’s Office hired a lawyer to train new prosecutors, he is leaving the job amid controversy over his recently self-published **novel rife with sexual violence and misogyny**” is false and defamatory because it implies that sexual violence and misogyny are the primary subject matter of the book and that it was his association with sexual violence and misogyny that caused him to lose his employment.
- c. The statement “His sex novel contained few positive depictions of women” is false and defamatory, which was explained above.
- d. As in the first article, the Second Article cherry picks the most emotionally charged language of the book and uses it to falsely equate the words, thoughts, and actions of villains within a fictional novel as the opinions of the author and then aligns them with the reason he lost his job.

34. Upon information and belief, the aforesaid Miami Herald articles were written by Wallman and/or Blaskey in Florida and the article was reviewed, edited, and approved for publication by the Miami Herald, which was published to the entire Miami Herald readership, to include national and international readers.

35. Defendant's statements and innuendos about Gosney were false and made with actual malice, as Defendant knew or should have known the statements were false or were made with reckless disregard of whether it was false or not.

36. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's defamatory statements, Plaintiff has suffered harm, including but not limited to loss of a job, damage to reputation, significant emotional distress and anguish, and economic loss.

37. In fact, these articles reached peers and judges in the legal community, some of which is evidenced by the following:

- a. The Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers-Miami-Chapter refused working with Gosney and called for his termination;
- b. The Miami-Dade Chapter of the Florida Association of Women's Lawyers refused to work with Gosney and called for his termination;
- c. It is believed the article moved a Judge on the 3rd DCA to forward the Herald article to Gosney's employer, Ms. Rundle, following up with a phone call to express her concerns about Gosney's assignments, based solely on the defamatory content of the article;
- d. Many others that are known and unknown believed the falsities of these articles that resulted in Gosney losing his job and blackballing him from his established profession in criminal law.

38. It is clear, that because of the false articles published by Defendants, Gosney has been significantly damaged both personally and professionally.

CAUSE OF ACTION

Count I: Defamation – The McClatchy Co. d/b/a/ The Miami Herald

39. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in paragraphs 1 through 38 as if fully set forth herein.

40. The Miami Herald to include employees Wallman and Blaskey negligently published false statements and innuendos of fact concerning Plaintiff's character, political beliefs and morality with the intent to harm Gosney in his profession and office.

41. The Miami Herald knowingly published false statements and innuendos of fact concerning Plaintiff's character, political beliefs and morality with the intent to harm Gosney in his profession and office.

42. The Miami Herald published these false statements of facts to third parties locally, nationally and internationally.

43. The Miami Herald acted with actual malice in making these false statements of facts as they were made with knowledge that they were false or with reckless disregard for their truth.

44. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's defamatory statements, Plaintiff has suffered harm, including but not limited to loss of a job, damage to reputation, emotional distress, and economic loss.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that this Court enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff and against The Miami Herald and awarding all damages permitted by law for such cause of action, to include compensatory damages to be determined by the proper finders of fact and law and any other such relief this Court deems proper.

Count II – Defamation – Wallman, Individually

45. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in paragraphs 1 through 38 as if fully set forth herein.

46. Wallman, as an individual, negligently published false statements and innuendos of fact concerning Plaintiff's character, political beliefs and morality with the intent to harm Gosney in his profession and office.

47. Wallman knowingly published false statements and innuendos of fact concerning Plaintiff's character, political beliefs and morality with the intent to harm Gosney in his profession and office.

48. Wallman published these false statements of facts to third parties locally, nationally and internationally.

49. Wallman acted with actual malice in making these false statements of facts as they were made with knowledge that they were false or with reckless disregard for their truth.

50. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's defamatory statements, Plaintiff has suffered harm, including but not limited to loss of a job, damage to reputation, emotional distress, and economic loss.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that this Court enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff and against Wallman and awarding all damages permitted by law for such cause of action, to include compensatory damages to be determined by the proper finders of fact and law and any other such relief this Court deems proper.

Count III – Defamation – Blaskey, Individually

51. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in paragraphs 1 through 38 as if fully set forth herein.

52. Blaskey, as an individual, negligently published false statements and innuendos of fact concerning Plaintiff's character, political beliefs and morality with the intent to harm Gosney in his profession and office.

53. Blaskey published false statements and innuendos of fact concerning Plaintiff's character, political beliefs and morality with the intent to harm Gosney in his profession and office.

54. Blaskey published these false statements of facts to third parties locally, nationally and internationally.

55. Blaskey acted with actual malice in making these false statements of facts as they were made with knowledge that they were false or with reckless disregard for their truth.

56. As a direct and proximate result of Defendant's defamatory statements, Plaintiff has suffered harm, including but not limited to loss of a job, damage to reputation, emotional distress, and economic loss.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that this Court enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff and against Blaskey and awarding all damages permitted by law for such cause of action, to include compensatory damages to be determined by the proper finders of fact and law and any other such relief this Court deems proper.

**Count IV – Tortious Interference with a Business Relationship –
The McClatchy Co. d/b/a The Miami Herald**

57. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in paragraphs 1 through 38 as if fully set forth herein.

58. As of June 26, 2024 Plaintiff had an established identifiable employment position with the State Attorney's office in Miami.

59. The Miami Herald, to include employees Wallman and Blaskey, knew that Gosney had an employment position with the State Attorney's Office and, through two publications,

intentionally interfered with Gosney's employment with the State Attorney's Office without legal justification or any privilege to do so.

60. The Miami Herald's intentional interference with Gosney's job proximately caused Gosney to lose his job with the State Attorney's Office, from which Gosney suffered great financial harm.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that this Court enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff and against The Miami Herald and awarding all damages permitted by law for such cause of action, to include compensatory damages to be determined by the proper finders of fact and law and any other such relief this Court deems proper.

**Count V - Tortious Interference with a Business Relationship –
Wallman, Individually**

61. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in paragraphs 1 through 38 as if fully set forth herein.

62. As of June 26, 2024 Plaintiff had an established identifiable employment position with the State Attorney's office in Miami.

63. Wallman, individually, knew that Gosney had an employment position with the State Attorney's Office and, through two publications, intentionally interfered with Gosney's employment with the State Attorney's Office without legal justification or any privilege to do so.

64. Wallman's intentional interference with Gosney's job proximately caused Gosney to lose his job with the State Attorney's Office, from which Gosney suffered great financial harm.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that this Court enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff and against Wallman and awarding all damages permitted by law for such cause of action, to include compensatory damages to be determined by the proper finders of fact and law and any other such relief this Court deems proper.

**Count VI - Tortious Interference with a Business Relationship –
Blaskey, Individually**

65. Plaintiff incorporates by reference the allegations contained in paragraphs 1 through 38 as if fully set forth herein.

66. As of June 26, 2024 Plaintiff had an established identifiable employment position with the State Attorney's office in Miami.

67. Blaskey, individually, knew that Gosney had an employment position with the State Attorney's Office and, through two publications, intentionally interfered with Gosney's employment with the State Attorney's Office without legal justification or any privilege to do so.

68. Blaskey's intentional interference with Gosney's job proximately caused Gosney to lose his job with the State Attorney's Office, from which Gosney suffered great financial harm.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff respectfully requests that this Court enter judgment in favor of Plaintiff and against Blaskey and awarding all damages permitted by law for such cause of action, to include compensatory damages to be determined by the proper finders of fact and law and any other such relief this Court deems proper.

DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL

Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury on all issues so triable.

Dated: September 08, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

PARRISH & GOODMAN, PLLC

/s/ Joseph E. Parrish, Esq.

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Exhibit “A”

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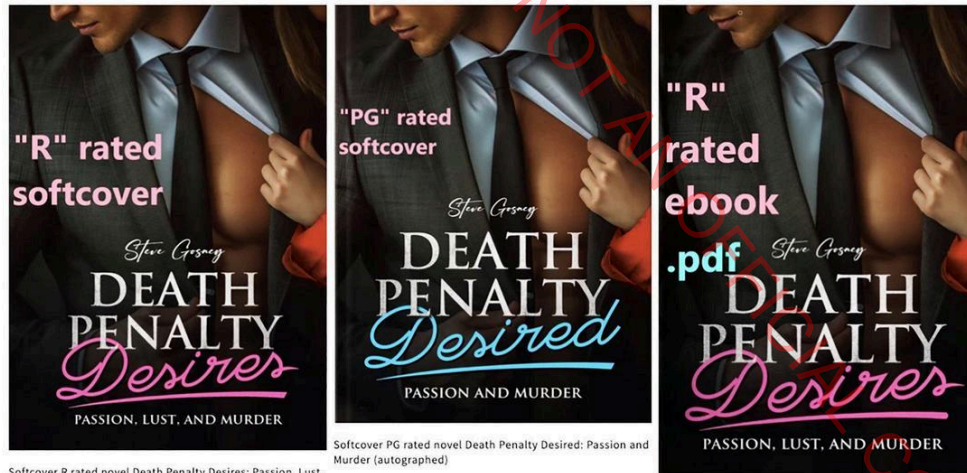
Women are sex objects in sadomasochistic novel by man hired to train Miami prosecutors

By [Brittany Wallman](#) and [Sarah Blaskey](#)

Updated January 2, 2025 4:16 AM Gift Article

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Softcover R rated novel Death Penalty Desires: Passion, Lust, Murder (autographed)

Book covers of a book written by Steve Gosney on [stevegosney.com](#) *Screengrab*



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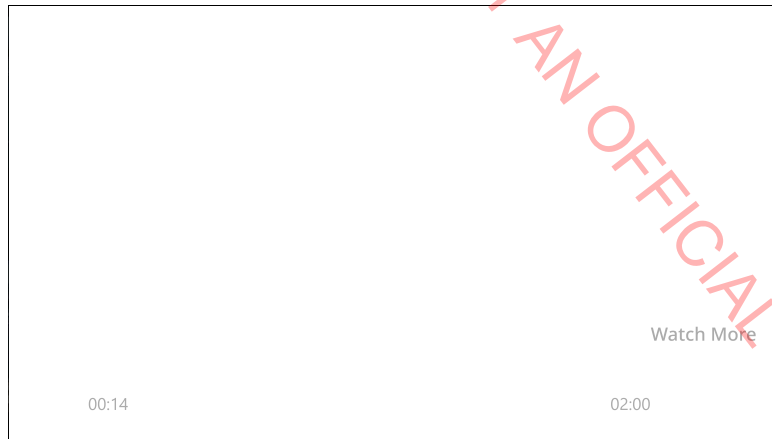
EXPAND ALL

Reality Check is a Herald series holding those in power to account and shining a light on their decisions. Have a suggestion for a future story? Email our journalists at tips@miamiherald.com.

A lawyer who was just hired to train young prosecutors at the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office is the recent author of a Rated R novel with sado-masochistic themes depicting women as sex objects and a transgender woman as an "it," a "he-beast" and "the thing."

"Explore a woman's desire for submission as she stands accused of being the infamous "Sex Toy Killer;" the book blurb says.

TOP VIDEOS



Steve Gosney was sworn in last week as a new hire for the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office, run by Katherine Fernandez Rundle. He was hired amid [a slate of changes](#) Fernandez Rundle made in response to judicial findings and defense lawyers' complaints that some of her prosecutors violate the legal rules of criminal court. Gosney told a social media audience that the state attorney liked his "passion for ethics."

It appears that neither Fernandez Rundle nor any of her top chiefs read Gosney's novel, *Death Penalty Desires*, which is easily purchased on his [self-named website](#) or Amazon, has been discussed [on his Rumble video channel](#) and is listed on his resume. The State Attorney's Office did not release documents requested by the Miami Herald related to his hiring, including his job description and salary.

Gosney told the Miami Herald that he doesn't condone the sex-based violence and misogynistic thinking of his characters. He said the book illustrates his stance against the death penalty.

"It's a morality play. It's a commentary on society. It's a meditation on the system, and how the system can go wrong in myriad ways to convict an innocent person, and it's a tour through Death Row," he said in an interview.

In a statement Wednesday, State Attorney's Office spokesman Ed Griffith said the book was written while Gosney "was a [Florida Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers'] member working as a public defender." The book was written less than five months ago.

"At the time of his hire, we were confident that he would be a valuable addition to our office in a special projects, legal, appellate, litigation support and training functions," Griffith said. "When I asked about this fictional novel, Mr. Gosney indicated that the key conceptual idea was to show what can happen to an innocent individual when the criminal justice system does not work as intended."

Gosney, 56, has experience both in criminal defense and prosecution. He served as a prosecutor for six years in Flagler County, and spent the last 14 years in the public defender's office in Daytona Beach, where, among other things, he trained new appellate attorneys.

As a self-published author, Gosney sells a PG and an R-rated version of his book. He has written other books, including *Brucie the One-Eyed Wonder Dog* for children, and a Christian-based *Handbook for Individual Freedoms*.

READ MORE: Miami-Dade prosecutors' 'deal with the devil' threatens to topple murder convictions

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alexsaizesq I hear he is a published author. Looking forward to reading his latest book
1d 1 like Reply

duediligencecorporate May I please have Monetary Relief from the 08/07/2018 police brutality attempted murder case caused by Officer Rony Rodriguez badge number 42511 from the City of Miami Police Department? Specifically the case that you assigned detective Gillette to.
4d Reply

ricardogonzalez5390 Congratulations to both. Welcome to Miami area, Florida
6d Reply

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Photo of Steve Gosney, left, being sworn in as an assistant state attorney by Judge Cristina Miranda, right, in a post shared on the official State Attorney Office Instagram account. *Instagram*

The book

The Herald read the R-rated version of *Death Penalty Desires*, in which a prosecutor frames the main character for her husband's murder, and she is sentenced to death. The prosecutor is described as drooling as he imagines media coverage and a possible judgeship.

The vast majority of females in the book are described with vulgar disrespect by the various characters and the narrator. There are violent sex scenes, including between the husband and wife. Themes of men controlling or dominating women against their will are threads throughout the novel.

There are several rapes or sexual assaults. The murdered husband is found with a sex toy lodged in his anus; a horse tail is attached to it.

When a prosecutor views the crime scene photos, he is “intoxicated” by photos of a “very dead” blonde woman.

[READ MORE: Investigator in Hialeah cop beating case wants state sanctioned for withholding evidence](#)

“The necrophiliac perversity aspect of his lust did not even cross his mind. ... He had shared popcorn with other prosecutors as they watched underage girls getting sodomized,” Gosney wrote. “He remembered one new prosecutor — a small tart young thing — who gave it up to him after one video watching session. The thought gave him a smile.”

The main character entertains an offer from the prison warden of living in a basement as his “submissive sex slave.”

One character muses that he’s “gonna rage f— “ a woman and “make her pay.”

A transgender inmate, described as a “man-beast” and “crazy eyed horror” with a “surgical abomination” and “mutilated crotch” threatens to sexually attack the main character. The “c” word is used to describe the main character’s female anatomy.

The book equates being female with being submissive. The main character is described at one point as having “accepted her feminine need — her primal desire for masculine domination.”

Most female characters are portrayed as sex objects.



An investigator struts through a hospital, eyeing every woman he passes and sizing them up for sex. He sees one woman and thinks, “I’d do her.”

A nurse, described as a “hospital slut,” throws herself at her boss, hoping he’ll impregnate her so she can quit her job.

Female heroes?

The book was written in a 10-day span in February, according to the website, but was “drawn from a lifetime of experiences.” The book summary calls it “a murder mystery and law novel set in the world of kink and passion. Try not to draw conclusions about the author from the content herein!”

Gosney said excerpts should not be taken out of context, and emphasized that the novel is a work of fiction. He cited several female characters he said were depicted as heroes.

One is a prison guard who testifies for the framed main character.

Another is an inmate nicknamed for anatomical reasons as “the Eunuch,” who performs a heroic act when he crushes the neck of the transgender inmate described repeatedly as a “he-beast,” to stop the inmate’s sexual assault of the main character.

The third female hero cited by Gosney is a defense attorney who serves as “second chair” to her husband, “hearing her words spoken confidently by her husband” in the court proceedings, and then takes over, very capably, when he’s exhausted. She needs help handling the complexities of a death penalty case, so a male defense attorney is brought in, and he takes the job for the publicity, and because he’s sexually attracted to the client.

The story ends with the framed wife being set free from prison. She is described as having grown personally while incarcerated, and realizes “a primal part of her yearned for a dominant master. A man to take control.” The defense attorney, she realizes, is “a man worthy of being called daddy.” She agrees to wear the closet full of dresses and high heels that he bought her, because she wants to make him happy.

In the book acknowledgments, Gosney thanks his friends, including online followers with account names like Legal Vices and Let’s Go Brandon.

Gosney told his Rumble audience that he moved with his wife and son to Miami from Daytona Beach. He said Fernandez Rundle’s office “crafted a position” for him.

“They’ve been looking for a defense perspective,” Gosney said of Fernandez Rundle’s office on his Rumble program. “It’s almost a dream job. ... They said we need you here. We’ll make you an offer you can’t refuse.”

Gosney said he’ll be writing policies, offering his ethics expertise, training young prosecutors and maybe being part of a prosecution integrity unit. Fernandez Rundle did not announce creation of such a unit, though [it had been requested](#) by local defense attorneys; Gosney said his work focus is “up in the air.”

“Everybody says Miami’s great,” he said on Rumble, “except for the traffic.”

This story was originally published July 3, 2024 at 8:03 PM.

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Exhibit “B”

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Lawyer who wrote sadomasochistic novel is cutting ties with Miami State Attorney's Office

By **Brittany Wallman**

Updated January 2, 2025 4:17 AM Gift Article

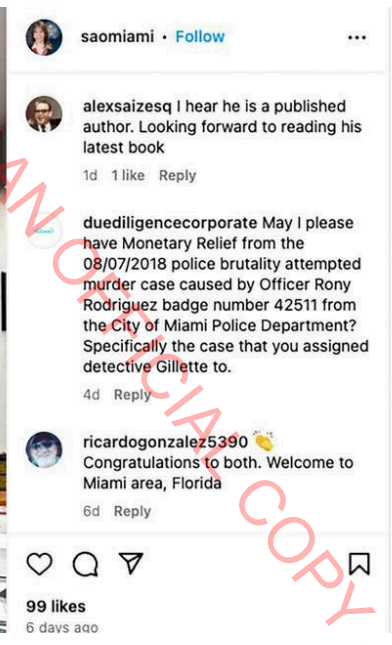


Photo of Steve Gosney, left, being sworn in as an assistant state attorney by Judge Cristina Miranda, right, in a post shared on the official State Attorney Office Instagram account. *Instagram*



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Two months after the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office hired a lawyer to train new prosecutors, he is leaving the job amid controversy over his recently self-published novel rife with sexual violence and misogyny.

Steve Gosney, a Daytona Beach public defender, moved his family to Miami to start a job training new prosecutors and helping shore up some of the ethical issues that have encircled the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office this year.

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But Gosney's hiring became a controversy all its own when [the Miami Herald reported](#) on his recently self-published sex novel, *Death Penalty Desires*. The fictional book is full of crude sexual violence, including descriptions of a transgender person as a "man beast" with a "mutilated crotch," and depicts female characters as having an intrinsic need to submit to a masculine man. Prosecutors in the book are craven

and corrupt. A homeless person is a “grubby bum,” and an “Arab looking” doctor is referred to as a “camel jockey.”

The terms of Gosney’s departure are unclear. Spokesman Ed Griffith said in an email that “Mr. Gosney will be separating from our office in the upcoming weeks.”

Gosney, 56, was hired at a \$105,000 salary — increasing to \$110,000 after six months of probation — to bring a defense lawyer’s perspective at a time when the office is beset with accusations of cheating in trials, including by [withholding evidence](#). Gosney was hired to train incoming classes of prosecutors, and to be involved with ethics, evidence issues and conviction integrity.

The local defense lawyers’ group that has been [agitating for reforms](#) reiterated Friday their desire for a prosecutorial integrity unit that addresses past misconduct and current ethical concerns.

“We sincerely hope that she will take seriously the search for the next person hired to address ethical concerns within the office,” said attorney Lauren Field Krasnoff, president of the Miami chapter of the Florida Association for Criminal Defense Lawyers. “There are countless well-qualified attorneys from outside of her office who could contribute to changing the culture at the office in a way that benefits the entire community.”

Gosney could not be reached for comment late Friday afternoon. But he’d expressed frustration in recent social media posts, and told the Herald he didn’t understand why female readers would take offense.

“We live in a time when intelligent people are being silenced so that stupid people won’t be offended,” says a meme posted on his Facebook page two days after the Herald article published.

In an interview with the Herald for that report, Gosney said he used salacious material to make his topic interesting. The book’s theme was that an innocent person

can be sentenced to death.

His sex novel contained few positive depictions of women.

“Try not to psychoanalyze the author,” said Gosney, who has been married 25 years.

“My wife if you wanna know the truth, she’s quite the tough cookie and she’s professional and working.”

In a series of X posts in July, Gosney called it “a ridiculous leap” to suggest he endorses the actions of his fictional characters.

“One of my favorite authors is Mary Shelley who wrote Frankenstein. Does this imply Ms. Shelley endorsed re-animation of the dead?” his post says.

He also posted a Biblical scripture, the Parable of the Sower from the New Testament. The parable, told by Jesus, describes seed falling on rocky or thorny ground and bearing no fruit, versus seed falling on “rich soil” where it can produce fruit.

How the State Attorney’s Office could be surprised by Gosney’s book is unclear. Hiring records obtained by the Herald show that Gosney was upfront about it — a little too upfront for some.

“Very self promoting about the books he has written and encouraged us repeatedly to purchase,” wrote Christine Zahralban, though still recommending he move forward in the interview process.

“Has blog and livestreams re cases,” she wrote after the March 29 interview. And he is “very Catholic” and opposed to the death penalty.

Interviewer Reid Rubin, a prosecutor, wrote that Gosney “tends to go off on tangents and was self promoting of his books.”

Both gave him high marks on legal knowledge, honesty, judgment and communication.

It does not appear that anyone advised Gosney that he might have to give up his activity as a “media personality,” the label he gives himself in a social media bio. But after his hire, Gosney indicated on social media that he was awaiting a ruling about it.

Besides selling his books from a personal website, Gosney participates in podcasts, and hosts live-streams that feature him drinking cocktails while discussing his books and legal issues with online friends. The office does not have a social media policy, but it does not allow prosecutors to “communicate with the press regarding any case” without permission, a written policy says.

A month after his initial interviews, Gosney was brought in to the office for interviews with the top echelon in Fernandez Rundle’s office: Howard Rosen, Nilo Cuervo, Steve Talpins, Kathleen Hogue and Deisy Hernandez, records show.

All were enthusiastic about him, giving him high marks and effusive compliments in their interview notes. Gosney had spent time as a prosecutor in Daytona Beach, until a new state attorney was hired and required that Gosney leave, records show. He immediately was hired as a public defender, where he was working when he applied in Miami. Gosney and his wife wanted to relocate to follow their son, who had decided to attend college in Miami.

“Affable, entertaining, yet humble. Let’s get him onboard,” Rosen wrote. “We need this guy!!”

With the thumbs-up from her closest advisers, the state attorney interviewed Gosney a week later.

On May 6, Fernandez Rundle noted that he “does YouTube” and Rumble, a conservative video-based social media platform.

"I really like him. He's dynamic, mature and experienced," her handwritten notes say.

Later, she was contacted directly by the local chapter of the Florida Association of Women Lawyers.

Miami Chapter President Angela Benjamin issued a brief statement to the Herald last week saying Fernandez Rundle is a longtime supporter of their organization and a recipient of the organization's Mattie Belle Davis award, named for the first female Bar-admitted lawyer in Florida.

"Ms. Rundle graciously took our call," Benjamin's written statement said, "and assured us that she is appropriately addressing the issue in a manner that will be satisfactory to MDFAWL and its members."

This story was originally published August 2, 2024 at 7:06 PM.

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Brittany Wallman joined the Miami Herald in 2023 as an investigative journalist. She has been a reporter in South Florida for 25 years, and shared in the South Florida Sun Sentinel's 2019 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service, for coverage of the Parkland school shooting. She grew up in Iowa and Oklahoma. Brittany is a graduate of the University of Florida.

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