FROM 1996 TO NOW: KRISTIN SMART MURDER TRIAL

Trial for murder of Cal Poly freshman Kristin Smart begins 26 years later

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The case that pushed for a safer campus: Murder trial for Kristin Smart, underway 26 years later

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Outside Santa Maria in 1996, two Cal Poly students missed a 10-year-old college classmate’s birthday party. Concerned, they decided to look for him. Since then, 26 years later, the case of Kristin Smart’s disappearance has continued, inspiring students and former students alike to seek answers to the questions that have been haunting them ever since. Kristin’s disappearance was not the only major case to affect the campus, but it was one that forever changed the way the university and its students viewed safety and security.

The Disappearance of Kristin

The trial began on May 26, 1996, with an announcement of an off-campus party that a group of friends had arranged. Minutes into the event, a Cal Poly student named Paul Flores disappeared without a trace.

Now 26 years later, the investigation continues, and questions about Kristin’s disappearance remain unanswered. The trial has been characterized by significant delays, with Flores repeatedly changing his story. The trial has also been marked by the emotional toll it has taken on those involved, including the Smart family, who have been at the center of the case.

Kristin Smart was a 19-year-old student at Cal Poly and a></noscript> <span class="highlight" style="background-color: #b3e8d0;">freshman</span> who disappeared in 1996. She was last seen alive on the night of April 21, 1996, when a group of friends gave her a ride home. The next morning, her family and friends reported her missing, but it would be four months before her disappearance was officially declared a homicide.

Kristin Smart's Case Impacts on Campus Safety

Kristin Smart's case has had a significant impact on campus safety at Cal Poly. Following her disappearance, the university implemented several new safety measures, including a 24-hour security guard presence, increased lighting, and a campus-wide alert system. Additionally, the university has strengthened its policies regarding sexual assault, including mandatory reporting and support services for survivors.

In recent years, the university has continued to prioritize the safety and well-being of its students, with a strong focus on preventing and addressing sexual assault and other forms of violence. The university has also worked to create a campus culture that values respect and inclusion, and has implemented ongoing training and education programs for students, faculty, and staff.

The case of Kristin Smart continues to be a powerful reminder of the importance of campus safety and the ongoing need for vigilance and action. While progress has been made in addressing the issues that contributed to Kristin’s disappearance and death, there is still much work to be done to ensure the safety and well-being of all members of the Cal Poly community.