

John H. Scott Biography

John Houston Scott hung his shingle straight out of law school in 1977 in San Francisco. After starting a general practice that included personal injury, family law, immigration, criminal law, probate and conservatorships, he quickly realized that his passion was civil-rights work and the courtroom.

By 1980, he partnered with Rufus Cole and worked with Oliver Jones, Regional Counsel for the NAACP. John devoted his practice to police-misconduct litigation and mental-health-patients' cases involving wrongful death, electro-shock, forced drugging and physical restraints. In 1983, John obtained a \$3 million-dollar jury verdict against the Richmond Police Department, believed to be the nation's largest verdict in a police-misconduct case at that time.

During the mid-1980s, John expanded his civil-rights practice to include employment discrimination and retaliation. He represented over twenty female police officers from agencies all over the Bay Area with claims of sexual harassment, discrimination and retaliation. He also handled over one dozen wrongful-death cases on behalf of heirs of patients who died in Napa State Hospital and other locked psychiatric facilities.

Beginning in 1989, he teamed up with Leroy Lounibos, Jr. (a scholar, teacher, historian, writer and accomplished trial attorney) to pursue complex civil-rights cases on behalf of mental patients, prisoners, public employees, minors and small businesses.

From 1995 to 2002, he partnered with John Prentice and focused on representing public employees, wrongful-death cases and litigation aimed at reforming the California Department of Corrections. In 1999, he negotiated a \$1.7 million-dollar settlement on behalf of whistleblower Richard Caruso who exposed inmate abuse at Corcoran State Prison.

Some of John's more recent accomplishments include teaming with John Burris and Jim Chanin to secure an \$11.5 million-dollar settlement for over 100 persons falsely arrested, and often beaten, by a group of Oakland police officers known as *The Riders*. In addition, he recently obtained a jury verdict against Alex Fagan, Jr. on behalf of Adam Snyder, a victim of the off-duty police beating known in San Francisco as *Fajitagate*. Last year, John teamed with John Burris to obtain a \$2 million-dollar verdict on behalf of a woman who was denied promotion to Captain at the Oakland Police Department because she was pregnant.



Over the past 30 years, John has devoted himself to helping people who are vulnerable and lack the resources to “take on” public entities and big business. Among his many accomplishments, John has:

- Tried more than 130 cases to verdict
- Handled over 100 appeals, including 25 published decisions
- Participated in at least 100 mediations
- Lectured, written and consulted about civil-rights litigation

While he can point to many million-dollar verdicts and settlements, his greatest successes are the cases that have changed public policy or positively impacted peoples’ lives. He now offers his *pro bono* services to the community by acting as a mediator in civil-rights and elder-abuse matters.

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