# [***Valentina Hedvat v. Eugene Merwin; 2006 Mealey's Jury Verdicts & Settlements 3588***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=jury-verdicts-settlements&id=urn:contentItem:4PGP-X1V0-0223-Y55Y-00000-00&context=)

ESX-L-3896-02

Dec. 8, 2006

**Headline:** New Jersey State Jury Awards $240,000 To Auto ***Accident*** Victim After 3rd Trial

**Result:** $240,000 plaintiff verdict

**Injury:** Neck disc degeneration that caused compression of the spinal cord, neck pain and arm and hand numbness

**Court:** N.J. Super., Essex Co.

**Judge:** Ramona Santiago

**Plaintiff Profile**

Valentina Hedvat

**Defendant Profile**

Eugene Merwin

**Plaintiff Counsel**

Louis DeVoto, Rossetti & DeVoto, Cherry Hill, N.J

**Defendant Counsel**

Robert Gardner, David Rehe & Associates, Summit, N.J

**Case Summary**

**Claim:** Auto negligence

**Background:** Sources told Mealey Publications that on Jan. 30, 2002, a ***car*** driven by Eugene Merwin crossed over into oncoming traffic on Roseland Avenue in Essex Falls, N.J., and struck the left corner of Valentina Hedvat's ***car***, causing it to spin around.Hedvat suffered a neck disc degeneration that caused compression of the spinal cord, sources said, and she suffered from neck pain and arm and hand numbness.Hedvat sued Merwin on April 16, 2002, in the Essex County, N.J., Superior Court.

**Other:** The trial lasted four days, and the jury deliberated two hours, sources said.Sources said Merwin stipulated liability but questioned the cause of Hedvat's injuries.The highest offer for settlement from Merwin was $20,000, sources said.This was the third trial in this case, sources said; the first two verdicts were overturned. Sources said that in the first trial the jury found no cause of action, but Judge Marie Simonelli granted Hedvat's request for a new trial based on the findings of a doctor who said she could have suffered temporary injury in the crash. In the second trial, sources said the jury awarded $15,000. Sources said Hedvat's lawyers appealed this verdict because the second trial was limited to damages only. Merwin filed a cross-appeal, claiming that a new trial shouldn't be granted; the New Jersey Appellate Division ordered a new trial, sources said.

**Defense:** Allegations denied.

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