

# OP-ED American Justice Or “Jus” “Us”

## A STATEMENT AMERICAN JUSTICE OR "JUS" "U.S."

The Berkshire County Branch of the NAACP is very concerned and disturbed with a recent event in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

As a community working towards safety and Justice for all people, we are profoundly disappointed and upset.

However, not surprised! History is full of miscarriages of Justice in our criminal legal system that disfavors BIPOC humans when applied and favors white wealthy, middle-class, and the poor!

### **White Legal System in America:**

We should all be concerned with "Vigilantism." (add but another "ism" facing marginalized human beings) Becoming the new form of "American Justice!"

"Vigilante" justice dates back throughout our history:

- February 19, 1851, San Francisco "Vigilante" Justice.
- May 1930, White Man's "Vigilante" Justice for Black Man's Crime
- August 28, 1955, Emmett Louis Till Murder by "Vigilante" Justice
- February 26, 2012, Trayvon Martin, Murdered by "Vigilante" George Michael Zimmerman
- February 23, 2020, Ahmaud Marquez Arbery, Murdered by Vigilante, Travis & George McMichael and William "Roddie" Bryan
- August 25, 2020, "Vigilante" action result in death in Kenosha, Wisconsin Anthony Huber, Joseph Rosenbaum.

Only in America can a 17-year-old White Boy with an unlicensed, unregistered AR-style semi-automatic rifle; patrol the streets carrying the rifle openly! Violate curfew, along with groups of armed civilian "White" men with the approval of some on-duty police officers – seen handing out water.

What has driven all of these actions by "Vigilantes;"? Race! Racism continues to be the catalyst for perpetuating hate and fatal violence in our country. Our country is going backward; we all need to do our part to stop this spread of hatred and violence in our country – because if we don't, **climate change will be the least of our worries!**

Added to this verdict are the actions of some Republican Party lawmakers who are "trying to profit on Rittenhouse's acquittal! " They're raising money on it, and you have all these Republican congressmen saying come work for me," Rittenhouse's lawyer said. "They want to trade on his celebrity, and I think it's disgusting." It is disgusting – but this is what America is looking like to the world; "Disgusting!"

### **"Jus" "Us" /Justice in America**

Blacks in America have always looked at the justice system in America as being designed to criminalize Black People; **"Jus" "Us"** style of "Justice!"

Going back in history, "Black Men" have been falsely accused of sexual assault (usually a "White Woman")! Along with murder and robbery, many of the convictions were due to criminal actions of law enforcement or the word of "White People" more valuable/believable than a "Black Person!"

- In Scottsboro, Alabama, in 1931, Scottsboro Boys nine black teenagers falsely accused of raping two white women: one of the most notorious cases of racial injustice in U.S. history. **"Jus" "Us"**
- Sentenced in 1970, Black Panther Party member Geronimo Pratt spent 27 years behind bars and maintained his innocence throughout the whole time. On June 10, 1997, his sentence was vacated when they found out that the prosecution had concealed evidence that might have exonerated Pratt. **"Jus" "Us"**
- In 1970 Barney Brown was a 13-year old convicted of raping a "White Woman" and robing her husband and sentenced to life in prison. After

thirty-eight years of wrongful incarceration, he experiences freedom! **"Jus"**  
**"Us"**

In 1989 the Central Park Five, accused of rape of a "White Woman" Yusef Salaam, 16, Anthony McCray, 16, Kharey Wise, 18, Kevin Richardson, 16, and one Hispanic, Raymond Santana, 15, all from New York! Reported at the time; there was no blood on their clothing; there was no match for semen; the DNA tests came back negative. Nothing linked the boys to the crime. The evidence did not matter; the boys were **"Black"** the victim was **"White"** – **"Jus"** **"Us"** was the **Justice** that prevailed – 5 – 15 years was the sentence! In 2002 the actual assailant confessed, and the DNA was a match, the Central Park Five were released! **"Jus"** **"Us."**

- Anthony Graves was convicted of murder in 1994, spent 18 years on death row. In 2010 he was acquitted of the charges when the court found that the prosecution withheld information from the defense and elicited false testimony. **"Jus"** **"Us"**
- Raymond Towler was convicted to a life sentence for alleged rape, kidnapping, and felonious assault of two teens on September 18, 1981. Twenty-seven years later, his sentence was vacated when DNA tests proved him innocent of the alleged crimes. **"Jus"** **"Us"**
- James "Jimmy" Bain was 19 years old when convicted on kidnapping, burglary, and strong-arm rape. He maintained his innocence in prison and handwritten four motions in 2001 to have DNA testing, but they were all denied. After filing a fifth motion, he was granted a hearing on the case. He was permitted to get the DNA testing, which proved he was not guilty of the crime– **35** years after his conviction. **"Jus"** **"Us"**
- Ronnie Long spent 44 years in a North Carolina prison for a crime he maintains he did not commit. Evidence, which included semen samples and fingerprints from the crime scene that did not match Long, was deliberately withheld by law enforcement. **"Jus"** **"Us"**
- Muhammad Aziz, 83, and Khalil Islam, who died in 2009, were cleared of the 1965 assassination of Malcolm X. Based on "newly discovered evidence and a failure to disclose exculpatory evidence," according to joint motion Cy Vance's office filed with the defense. (Seth Wenig/AP) Vance said that "certain witnesses, acting under orders from then-FBI Director J.

Edgar Hoover, were ordered not to reveal they were FBI informants. (Seth Weinig/Ap) "**Jus**" "**Us**"

### **American Justice of White People**

- Vigilantes – Zimmerman, Rittenhouse commit murder no conviction, no loss of freedom to the prison system!
- Vigilantes, Travis & George McMichael, William "Roddie" Bryan,

A judge gives Christopher Belter (a "White" Boy) in 2018 probation. Belter was charged with first-degree rape, third-degree rape, and sexual abuse. In 2019, he pleaded guilty to lesser felony charges of third-degree rape and attempted first-degree sexual abuse and two misdemeanor counts of second-degree sexual abuse as part of the plea deal, according to NBC News.

As a result, the news reports that judge Sarah Sheldon retired, placed him on two years of probation.

This same "White" person, now a man, is convicted of sexually assaulting four teenage girls in his family mansion in New York, State. These assaults occurred when he was a teenager; instead of going to prison, he was placed on probation by Judge Matthew J. Murphy III. The Judge decided that "Prison" would be "inappropriate" for this wealthy "White" man.

*This ruling is a class "A" example of "White Justice" vs. "**Jus**" "**Us**." Nine "Innocent" Black teenager lose their lives "**Jus**" "**Us**." One wealthy "Guilty" White teenager receives two probations for years of sexually assaulting teenage girls "**White Justice**."*

***It is the responsibility of all of us to address "Vigilantisms" It is, eroding our country, our community, our lives, the lives of our children. If we do not come together to rid this plague of hate and violence towards ourselves and all human beings, climate change will be the lease of our worries!***

***Wait (weight), broke the wagon! The time to act is now!***

***Peace!***

***BCB NAACP President,***

***Dennis L. Powell***

