

Sending the innocent
in prison is a crime



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Unfortunately, wrongful convictions are a part of the failures of today's judicial system. People have always been too quick to believe that the accused is guilty, even if there is no sufficient evidence to prove it without reasonable doubt. This translates to misplaced perspective of justice, and many innocent people are imprisoned for this carelessness. Wrongful conviction can even be considered a crime because its consequence include robbing innocent people their freedom and justice.

To emphasize it more clearly, " such error often results in many years of unwarranted punishment and serious damage to the lives of the wrongly convicted, while the actual offenders in those cases are free to commit additional crimes, thus compromising public safety" (Huff, 2004, p. 108). Because people are too quick to believe in the guilt of a suspect, even if there is no proper amount of evidence, there is a great risk that offenders are left free while those who are innocent are robbed of the chance in life. There is no accurate or even a clear estimate of the cases of wrongful convictions in America and around the world.

But the reality that many innocent people are getting imprisoned should still be very alarming to the government. " Pursuit of the guilty, acquittal of the innocent, proportionality, and equality are some of the goals of our government" and they are all violated in the event of wrongful convictions (Cunningham, 2005, p. 21). Those people who have died or lost a large part of their lives in prison because they were accused of crimes they did not do are victims. They are innocent people who tasted the bitterness of injustice. There are several reasons why people are often imprisoned despite their innocence.

The error could come from the eyewitness, the prosecution, the evidences, or the police force handling the case. But the most influential reason why people are too quick to put the blame on the accused is because of how the presumption of one's guilt and personal prejudices overtakes their chance of being presumed innocent. And the truth is, innocent people inside the prison are also living proofs of the faults of the justice system because " the longer it takes to solve a crime, the more likely the defendant is not guilty" (Liptak, 2008).

It is very important to reduce the occurrence of wrongful conviction and understand the injustice it entails so that no innocent person would lose his or her chance in life and for the protection of the public too. The guilt of a person should be expertly and critically examined before creating decisions. Often times, the people who are wrongfully convicted are those with mental illness or those who come from different races. There are also instances when the police force has personal connections to a crime which it passes to a person and stages the evidence that is not really present.

The existence of Innocent Projects and Innocent Committees prove that sending innocent people to jail is considered a crime against that person. Also, " prosecutors have had a significant impact—positive and negative—on the outcome of prisoners' claims for post-conviction relief" because they are the key people in ensuring the freedom of the wrongfully convicted" (Cunningham, 2005, p. 19). Being very objective of the cases prosecutors are handling is among the most important sources of guarantee that accused people have.

Prosecutors are very significant if an accused would receive the right conviction. It is observable today that “ federal, state, and local governments and courts have done far too little to adopt proposed criminal justice reforms that could reduce the number of innocent people convicted” (Taylor, 2007). In 2003, the government came up with the Innocence Protection Act that aims to counter the crime of wrong convictions. Technology has helped in making the aim of the Innocent Projects more effective.

One of the most recent advancements is the “ DNA exonerations” that make use of DNA testing as evidence of one’s innocence or guilt (Taylor, 2007). These steps are all essential in creating a safety net for those who are wrongfully accused of crimes they did not do. People quickly believe that an accused is guilty even without evidence because it is in the nature of men to want fast results from the police forces especially when a grave crime is committed. But this is wrong and it should be considered a felony itself.

It also endangers the public even more because real criminals remain in the open and could potentially do more crimes again. Although there can never be a hundred percent assurance of no more wrongful convictions in today’s judicial system, there is more that could be done to improve the chances that innocent people would be saved from being sent to prison. Aside from improving court proceedings, sending innocent people to jail should be treated as a grave crime so that when a wrongfully accused man is set free, he would have a chance of gaining justice for himself.