

The nfl player's protest and black lives matter



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It all started August 26, 2016 when Colin Kaepernick was first noticed not standing for the national anthem, instead he was sitting on the bench. Many people criticized Kaepernick for not standing for the national anthem and the media wanted to know why he did so. Kaepernick then explained to the media saying he sat during the national anthem because of police brutality and oppression of people of color. This created a spark throughout the whole NFL and soon we see many other players on other teams protesting by sitting, kneeling, or putting up a fist during the national anthem. This topic quickly became controversial and created issues not only for the NFL players and teams but in our society as well. The whole country took notice and later on it wasn't only NFL players protesting the national anthem, we start to see high school football players, soccer players, and even NBA players start to protest the national anthem. Many people found kneeling during the national anthem disrespectful by saying it is disrespecting the country, the flag, and as well as the men and women who were in the military that died defending this country and our flag. When Kaepernick started kneeling during the national anthem it made people realize even more than before that there is something wrong with this country when it comes to people of color and the police. People started using their voice and freedom of speech more on police brutality ever since Kaepernick kneeled. There is many of horrific statistics that back this up and those statistics and our racially biased justice system is why I agree with the NFL player's protest and why I also agree that reforms need to be made to stop police brutality.

We would hope to believe that now in 2019 there is no racism but the fact is, racism is still one the biggest problems in my eyes that we have today. You

don't even have to take it from me, watch the news and look at the statistics and you will see how racism is a big issue in our country. Let us look at how likely a black person is to get pulled over by a cop compared to a white person. An article by the Washington Post interviewed Frank R. Baumgartner and Kelsey Shoub who wrote the book "Suspect Citizens." In that article by the Washington Post they say that, "Blacks are almost twice as likely to be pulled over as whites- even though whites drive more on average." They also say, "Just by getting in the car, a black driver has about twice the odds of being pulled over, and about four times the odds of being searched." Just by looking at those two statistics you can see that black people are targeted more. The study found by Baumgartner and Shoub shows that white people drive more than black people, so how come black people are getting pulled over more? This clearly shows that black people are more likely to be searched while white people on average drive more. Some people may say there has to be a reason why cops are pulling over black people more than white people. Maybe they are caught with illegal drugs and weapons more than whites, who knows. According to the Washington Post, "Black people in Ferguson, Mo., accounted for 85 percent of vehicle stops, 90 percent of citations and 93 percent of arrests, despite comprising 67 percent of the population. Blacks were more than twice as likely as whites to be searched after traffic stops, even though they proved to be 26 percent less likely to be in possession of illegal drugs or weapons." This just proves that blacks are less likely to have illegal drugs and weapons in Ferguson, Missouri. We can clearly see there is something wrong when a certain race is being targeted more for things, they are less likely to do compared to other races.

By looking at the statistics above, we see that black people are being searched more than any other race. Which makes me wonder why, because when looking at the statistics it shows that black people are 26 percent less likely to have illegal drugs or weapons in Missouri. It makes me believe that they are being searched unreasonably and because of their race. We are protected from unreasonable searches and seizures as stated in the 4th amendment of the constitution. It seems that cops may be violating the rights of black people by searching their vehicles unreasonably based on the fact that black people are less likely to have illegal drugs or weapons. If there isn't no probable cause then cops don't have the right to search the vehicles, and I feel like cops are getting away with this especially when they search black people's vehicles. The fact is there is more white people driving than black people but for some reason black people are twice as likely to get pulled over. This isn't a coincidence, black people are being racially profiled even when they are not the majority race driving. For example, let us say if majority of people who ride bikes are kids, then kids are more likely to get hurt from riding a bike. You would think it is simple to understand, the more there are of a race driving vehicles the more likely they should get pulled over, but that isn't the case. We are all human we all make the same mistakes when we are driving no matter what race we are, and we should all be hold accountable the same way. It is more like cops are relying on black people as the race to give tickets and as well as the race to give arrest to. By just looking at the statistics, it is easy to agree why the NFL players are kneeling during the national anthem.

Another reason why I agree with the NFL player's protest, is because our justice system is biased and racist. According to an article by the Washington Post, " The supreme court made it illegal for prosecutors to exclude prospective jurors because of race in the 1986 case Batson v. Kentucky." Looking at history, the law that was made in the 1986 case of Batson V. Kentucky has been going unenforced. We can find proof of this by looking at some regional studies at which prosecutors strike black jurors. According to the article by the Washington Post, " between 2003 and 2012 prosecutors in Caddo Parish, Louisiana, 46 percent of prospective black jurors with preemptory challenges, vs. 15 percent of nonblacks." This clearly shows that our justice system is biased and racist. Look how big of a difference the percentage is from black jurors to nonblack jurors. Only 15 percent of people that aren't black has to mean that our justice system is racist, my argument is the fact that there are more people that are not black than black people. Meaning that there should be more people from other ethnicities than blacks when it comes to prospective jurors with preemptory challenges and in crimes in general. Another statistic that I found interesting from the Washington Post Article is that a 2017 study shows that out of the 48, 000 criminal cases in Wisconsin, white defendants were 25 percent more likely than black defendants to have their most serious charge dismissed in a plea bargain. The first thing we have to understand is that mostly all criminal cases are resolved with a plea bargain before ever getting to trial. So, if most criminal cases are resolved with a plea bargain before getting to trial shouldn't that mean everyone should have the same chance of getting a plea bargain no matter what race you are? Instead we see that white people have a better chance of getting a plea bargain before going to trial than

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black people. What makes it even worse is that white people are 75 percent more likely to have those charges dropped. This cannot be a coincidence, white people may be getting away with the same crimes as black people just because of their skin color. This clearly shows that there is bias and racism to black people in our justice system.

Another thing that bothers me is the people who are making the decisions that account for the statistics that I stated above. There have only been 2 African American justices and only one sitting. This means that majority of the supreme court justices are white. Another thing is that most supreme court justices are in their 50's. Knowing that most supreme court justices are white could be the reason behind the biasness. It can explain why white people are getting away with more crimes than black people. We all can relate to people that are from the same race as us and we may even treat those people better than others. I feel like that is what the majority of supreme court justices are doing, they treat people that are the same race as them better and different. Knowing that majority of the supreme court justices are usually in their 50's can be the reason behind the racism. The fact that supreme court justices grew up in a time where segregation was still allowed can be the reason why black people have a less chance to get a plea bargain before trial. There is still biased and racism in our justice system just by looking at our supreme court justices. We need to have more diversity in our supreme court justices to fix part of the problem when it comes to our justice system.

As I mentioned above, I agree with the NFL player's protest because of the statistics I found and as well as looking at our biased and racist justice

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system. We can see why Kaepernick did what he did. It's not a surprise that police brutality is usually coming from the African American race. We need to start with training officers better by letting them utilize all their other weapons before using their guns in situations where it isn't in need. Another thing we have to do is to get a variety of ethnicities in our supreme court justices so it doesn't seem the decisions made are racist and biased. I think if we get those things fixed then it will reduce the numbers in police brutality and show that our justice system isn't racist. That is why I agree with the NFL player's protest to kneel during the national anthem.

Work Cited

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