

Police misconduct leading to the wrongful convictions of the central park five



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The Oath Of Honor

We all have a responsibility to abide by a set of rules. As a productive member of society, it is for our best interest that we live by laws. Doctors, lawyers, pilots, police officers, each have to honor regulations when heading into their fields of work. The Oath Of Honor is an oath that each police officer must take when beginning their careers. This Oath is held at the highest standard, it values integrity, trust, and courage; all characteristics of true heroes in a broken society. Unfortunately, we have so many of our police officers not being true to this Oath. Corruption and police misconduct has widely increased in law enforcement, resulting in many unfair trials and wrongful convictions. In this paper, I will discuss the impact that police misconduct had in the Central Park Five Case and how police misconduct still transpires today.

Central Park is just one of many

Police misconduct is a term used to define police disobeying and disregarding the rules and regulations of law enforcement including the rights of civilians stated in America's constitution. It is not a new issue. The press, media, minorities, and other active members of society have taken it upon themselves to talk about this issue, specifically in certain criminal cases that has taken place in history. Throughout the years, there have been many victims of police misconduct. What many don't realize is that police misconduct has existed long before the modern media and press ever cared about covering it. From the Central Park Five to Philando Castile who was shot in his car by a police officer in front of his girlfriend. There have been

thousands of protests since cases like those two listed have taken place. It is due to these protests that a case like the Central Park Five was resurrected. The Central Park Five took place back in 1989 when five teens were in the wrong place at the wrong time. A young woman was raped on the night of April 19th, 1989, and five black teens were held in custody for interrogation on that same night. These underaged boys were interrogated with no lawyers present. Police deprived the boys of food and drinks. When it comes to the interrogation process, the law states that police must follow certain guidelines. Police should inform minors of their Miranda Rights when it comes to underage individuals, police would have to simplify those Miranda Rights for that minor to understand. Police should also make sure that the subject of the interrogation is aware that they can leave at any time during the interrogation process. In the Central Park Five Case, police held the five in custody and coerced false confessions out of the boys and then told them that they were free to go. The case was investigated by detectives who found no DNA evidence and no eyewitnesses yet were determined to put the five behind bars. With no regard to honoring the law, the police officers, in this case, did not think twice when investigating what happened in the park that night. The five's confessions had many holes in their stories but they were forced by police officers to admit to a crime that they did not do on videotape so they were convicted and spent between six and 13 years in prison.

The people's response

This case caused many to be furious about the misconduct of the police officers. The misconduct of Police officers was being shined upon all over the <https://assignbuster.com/police-misconduct-leading-to-the-wrongful-convictions-of-the-central-park-five/>

nation. Many of the African American community fought for the freedom of the Central Park Five. The African American community has become a big part of protesting against police misconduct with movements like Black Lives Matter. On the other hand, many were glad that the five were arrested and convicted because they believed justice was served. Those who sympathized with the victim of the rape did not consider the trauma that those underaged boys were facing through this whole situation.

The resurrection of the CP5: Police misconduct is exposed

In 2014, long after a serial rapist came forth and admitted to the crime and the exonerated five decided to sue the city, the five received a settlement of 40 million dollars. The injustice served by the police officers, in this case, was brought back to the light. Some believed that 40 million dollars weren't enough for the years stolen from these children. In 2019, the hit mini-series *When They See Us* came out on Netflix. This series showed extensive scenes on the interrogation process of the five. The series highlighted the harshness of the police officers and their dismissive attitudes toward black teens.

Throughout the series, it seemed like a bunch of white cops trying to put black kids behind bars because it was easy to do so. The police officers were very lazy in trying to find any actual evidence to prove that the five did it, instead, they were trying to find the best way to make it look like the five did it with or without evidence. The idea of innocent until proven guilty was thrown out the window. The series was trending all over social media, viewers rushed to Instagram to shun the lead detective, Linda Fairstein, that was on the Central Park Case. This led to Fairstein deleting her Instagram

account. Even though the Central Park Five case was over a decade ago, it <https://assignbuster.com/police-misconduct-leading-to-the-wrongful-convictions-of-the-central-park-five/>

had been resurrected to show the disgusting truth behind some police officers in law enforcement. It is because of this case and many more, people refuse to just sit down and let this injustice continue.

Was justice served?

In my opinion, something like the Central Park Five can not be undone. The years that were stolen from those children can never be taken back. The trauma that they experienced at such a young age can never truly be remedied. What we can do, is try our best to never let something like that happen again. Police misconduct has become such a taboo in many black communities because many blacks are scared to question authority afraid that they might end up behind bars for exercising their rights. As a black person myself, I feel that it is very hard not to question Police misconduct given America's history with the treatment of my people. I speak as a person who also comes from a low-income black community, and while I've never been a victim of police misconduct, I noticed that the police are more present and intentional in my friend's neighborhood which is predominantly white. While the area where I live, the police are rumored to be corrupt and reckless with the law when addressing any crime on my street. The utter lack of honoring any rules or regulations on the police's part is not right, having a gun in your hand does not give you power over the constitution of the United States, I mentioned earlier that everyone is subject to a law, just as every civilian must follow the law, police officers must also follow the law. Police officers represent the law and therefore serve as a beacon of hope in times of trouble, we trust them to be honest, fair, and diligent in finding justice for

us and our loved ones. They must be the example, and it is society's right to make sure that police officers remain truthful.

Police misconduct is not over

The Central Park Five case is among many cases that have led to injustice and victims had to pay the price of their lives to expose police misconduct which had been going on for years. Young African Americans are afraid to bring children into this world because they fear that their kids might one day be a victim of Police misconduct. It is understandable, that police themselves have a hard job, but we must acknowledge that when they decided to take this job, they knew of the hardships and the oath that they have to honor. America's black youths do not have to walk in constant fear of the people that are supposed to protect them.

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