

The ride



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Ride The Ride is the story of the heinous and gruesome murder of ten year old, Jeffrey Curley, a case that is familiar to many in the Massachusetts area. The book works its way from the grisly crime to the years afterward. It focuses on the family of Jeffrey, heavily weighted on the life of Cambridge Firefighter Bob Curley, Jeffrey's father. Charles Jaynes and Salvatore Sicari, both from Jeffrey's neighborhood were convicted of the murder.

Within this essay I will demonstrate from The Ride the relationship between reporting and suffering that may have been brought on for the crime victims of this case, the relationship between the victim profiles and the victim family profiles, the role in which the family may have played in the crime, relationships that developed between the victim and the victim's families of this event and how the Restorative Justice Model would have better served the victims of this crime. The indirect victims, The Curley's, as a result of this crime experienced a magnitude of media sensation from the very onset of the event.

Some of it being in helpful, useful ways and some times in negative ways. Once it was reported that Jeffrey Curley was missing, the media went to great lengths to get his information publicized and to bring awareness to the Boston area of his disappearance. Hundreds of community members gathered and started conducting their own searches. Fliers were made depicting a young Little League player and posted in almost every business and on every street pole. Persons who were not familiar or an acquaintance of the Curley's offered their help and services in the search for the missing boy.

The innocence of the young boy portrayed in the fliers tore at the heartstrings of all Boston residents. Along with all the positive outpouring from the community and the media, also came negative aspects. Nearly every media outlet in the Boston area took up camp on the streets in and around the Curley home, often times confining the Curley's to their home. If they were able to leave, they were bombarded with request for interviews, which I believe can lead to further victimization at such a tragic and terrifying time. The Curley's grief was widely publicized and sensationalize after the crime occurred.

In the book, the Curley's were depicted as an average lower income, divorced family. Shortly after the disappearance and murder of Jeffrey Curley rumors also began spreading throughout the community about the Curley's and their parenting tactics. It was mentioned in the book that people questioned why Jeffrey would be allowed to roam around the neighborhood unsupervised throughout the day. A lower income neighborhood, where often times young adults and teenagers were seen gathering at street corners, the sort of places where petty crimes and mischievous behavior took place.

The Curley's felt scrutinized by some of the comments that were being passed around, thus leading to further victimizations of the family. It was mentioned that the Curley's felt responsible in some way for Jeffery's disappearance, rape and murder. They agonized over all the " what ifs" and if they could have made a difference. The abovementioned rumors only added more guilt to their already traumatized lives. As a result of this crime, many relationships were established between the victims and numerous

agencies, social groups, special interest groups, and politicians, as well as the criminal justice system.

Some of these relationships were positive and some were negative. Bob Curley and his family went to extreme measures to have the death penalty reinstated in the state of Massachusetts. The Curley's began this journey by contacting Senators and Representatives to help spark a need for the reinstatement of the death penalty. The Boston area had been plagued with vicious and heinous crimes for years, and the Jeffrey Curley murder put the wheels in motion for changes to be made in the criminal justice system.

In a heated battle for the reinstatement, lawmakers who once opposed the death penalty were changing their stance, but in the end certain lawmakers that proposed it changed their stance too. In the end opponents were able to kill the death penalty bill with an 80-80 tie. The Curley's were outraged at the decision, as they thought there was hope of getting this bill passed. They had lobbied, protested, gathered petitions, and worked day and night during this period, only to have it rejected. As proponents of the death penalty, they felt that Jeffrey's murder was meaningless and unregarded to warrant such a penalty.

Throughout the Curley's journey of this crime, specifically for Bob Curley, relationships that he never thought he would have were emerging at every corner. A once advocate for the reinstatement of capital punishment was beginning to form relationships with persons who opposed such. Not the heated debate relationships he was accustomed to, but good open and honest communication. He connected with victims of other heinous crimes,

such as the father of a victim of the Oklahoma City bombing event, which resulted in his daughter's death.

Although suffering the loss of his daughter he was still an opponent of capital punishment. Bob Curley slowly began to change his views on capital punishment and became more open to the idea of opposition. Over a year after his encounter with these victims, Bob Curley changed his stance on capital punishment and now opposed it. Despite backlash from his family, Bob Curley remained firm on his newfound decision and remains that way today. I believe that this change in stance and new friendships he made helped Bob Curley in the healing process.

Charles Jaynes and Salvatore Sicari were tried separately and in separate courts. The book depicts Jaynes as the mastermind behind the crime and Sicari, the accomplice. Jaynes was known to have pedophile tendencies and often was outspoken about such. Jeffrey was a young, naive boy, who was easily persuaded by Jaynes. Sicari was tried first and received life in prison without the possibility of parole. Jaynes on the other hand was convicted of second-degree murder. Once again, the Curley's were outraged with the latter verdict. Jaynes, who had been known to be the mastermind, received a lesser sentence than the accomplice.

I believe any faith the Curley's had in the criminal justice system was greatly diminished by the verdict. Again, the Curley's continued to suffer further revictimization as a result. Bob Curley's personal relationship with his significant other, Mimi, also became strained as a result of this crime. As one can imagine, Bob Curley suffered great depression after the murder of his son. He became withdrawn and distant from Mimi. He also turned to drinking

alcohol on a daily basis as a coping mechanism. As a result, he became violent with Mimi, and was forced out of the home and was estranged from her.

Serving as a wake up call, Bob Curley sought professional help and help from Alcoholics Anonymous. After a significant amount of time apart, Bob and Mimi were eventually able to mend their relationship. I believe that much of the above mentioned information, problems and conclusions could have been prevented with the newly emerging Restorative Justice Model. Bob Curley, as well as the rest of the Curley family carried an extreme amount of hatred, as one can only imagine. However, by doing so they suffered even deeper and were continually revictimized as a result.

Bob Curley often times had courtroom outburst at the offenders, shouting obscenities. If the Curley's had taken part in some type of reconciliation, peacemaking or mediation process much of their suffering and revictimization could have been prevented. Jeffrey's mother, Barbara still has not been able to get closure or peace as a result of this crime. She is no longer able to work a full-time job and lives with one of her sons. Had Restorative Justice been an option and had the Curley's taken advantage of it, I believe much of their suffering and agony could have been avoided.

The term victim is derived from the Latin term, to sacrifice, and the Curley's, unfortunately, hold true to the definition. They have paid the ultimate price for the heinous crime committed against Jeffrey Curley in 1997. The journey they have been forced to travel on has brought suffering to them through numerous agencies, them to labeled and profiled, periods of guilt feelings,

and numerous relationships to formed, both good and bad. References:

Macquarrie, B. (2009) *The Ride*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press.