

MY WINTER VACATION PROMOTING THE MOVIE JUST MERCY

In January, I had the amazing benefit of participating in the promotion of the movie Just Mercy, which is based on the book by the founder of Equal Justice Initiative Bryan Stevenson--an attorney who has dedicated his skills to saving people from wrongful capital convictions & juveniles from life imprisonment. In the movie, Michael B. Jordan plays Mr. Stevenson, & Jaimie Foxx plays his client, Walter McMillian, a man wrongfully condemned to death.

For the promotion, organizers built a "greenhouse" across the street from the Crenshaw Mall--where the movie was playing--on L.A.'s famous Crenshaw Blvd. Inside the greenhouse, I was one of 3 incarcerated individuals featured. For my part, an artist created a collage-portrait of me out of different photographs. The portrait was set in a foliated background--symbolizing growth through hardship--& a gold frame--symbolizing our innate nobility. A pay-phone, refurbished by, locally & Black-owned, Leimart Park Telephone Company, was placed next to my portrait for visitors to access my interview on being wrongfully convicted & sent to death row; &, my family member's--Dr. Zipporah Brown--interview on how this prosecutorial & judicial misconduct has affected the family. (**Pictured in photo**, w/the owner of the Leimart Park Telephone Co.). The exhibition was on display from Jan. 17-26. Tragically, Kobe Bryant & his daughter transitioned on the 26th, so the last day was also a memorial for him--Kobe had screened the movie at various Boys & Girls Clubs.

In his book, Mr. Stevenson, frequently emphasized how PROXIMITY-- i.e., being close up--to victims of injustice can not only awaken others to the unfairness & inequities of the U.S. criminal system, but can also cause





them to take action:

[PROXIMITY reveals] our system's disturbing indifference to inaccurate or unreliable verdicts, our comfort with BIAS, & our tolerance of unfair prosecutions & convictions.... how our system TRAUMATIZES & VICTIMIZES PEOPLE when we exercise our power to convict & condemn irresponsibly--not just the accused but also their FAMILIES, their COMMUNITIES, & even the VICTIMS of crime....

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Now, the world, by way of its PROXIMITY to the Ku Klux Kops' lynching of **George Floyd**, has become acutely aware of how nefarious this "justice" system actually is; &, as a result, has begun to stand-up against this continued depravity.

Lastly, in a merciful effort to bring more people into PROXIMITY to my plight, the organizers of the promotional event has placed a synopsis of my wrongful conviction on their website, which one can find @ proximityis.care (click on **"Mo"**--my nickname).

ADDENDUM

Another benefit I received from the movie promotion was an offer to submit a presentation for a press conference on the 1st anniversary of CA Governor Gavin Newsom's moratorium on the CA Death Penalty. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 epidemic, the event was cancelled; therefore, my following post is my presentation: