



## The Central Park 5



### Agenda

- History of Policing from 1661 to 1989
- Set the Scene: New York, 1989
- Group Activity
- Charges
- False Confessions
- Racial Disparities
- Role of the Media
- Backlash
- Life after being exonerated
- Takeaways

# Then: History of Policing, African Americans



Barbados Slave Code: 1661



South Carolina Slave Codes: 1740

Enacted a public Act and shall be taken notice of without pleading the same before all Judges Justices Magistrates and Courts within this Province AND be it further Enacted by the Authority aforesaid that this Act shall continue in force for the space of three Years and from thence to the end of the next Session of the General Assembly and no longer.  
In the Council Chamber the 10<sup>th</sup> Day of May 1740  
Approved to  
C. Pinckney  
G. O. G. Currier

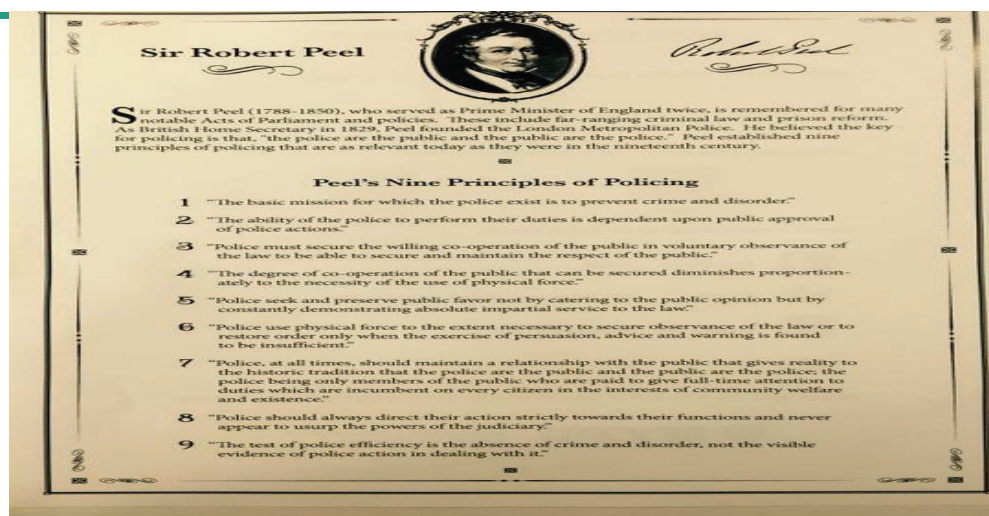
Signed C. Pinckney, Speaker

In the Council Chamber, Commons House of Assembly of Carolina, the 10th day of May, 1740.

## Stono Rebellion: 1739

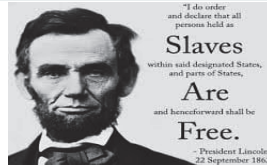


## Robert Peel's 9 Principle of Policing: 1829

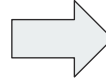




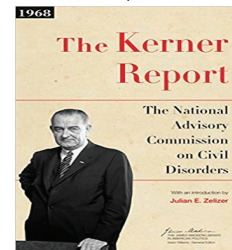
**1838: 1ST ESTABLISHED POLICE DEPT. IN BOSTON**



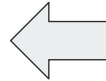
**1862: Emancipation of slavery**



**1865: Reformation of racial control and the founding of the KKK**



**1968: The Kerner Report**



**1988: Willie Horton Case and racialized tough on crime rhetoric**



**Now: New York City, 1989**





## Setting

- In 1989, the murder rate surged 17.8%, robberies rose 7.4%, and motor-vehicle thefts rose 9.9% (NY Times).
- April 19, 1989:
  - 30-40 teenagers assembled in Central Park. Police reports of joggers and bicyclists being attacked.
  - Trisha Meili, a white 28-year old investment banker, was assaulted and raped in Central Park while she was out on a night run.
- Group of teenagers arrested and taken to the police department for questioning.





## What each Child was Charged with:



Raymond Santana(14 years old): Convicted of rape, assault, robbery and riot. Sentenced to 5 years



Korey Wise(16 years old): Convicted of assault, sexual abuse and riot. Sentenced to 5-15 years in jail (completed 12)



Yusef Salaam(15 years old): Convicted of rape, assault robbery and riot. Sentenced to 7 years in juvenile hall



Antron McCray(15 years old): Convicted of rape, assault, robbery and also riot charges. Sentenced to 5-10 years in prison. (completed 6)



Kevin Richardson(14 years old): Convicted for attempted murder, rape, sodomy, assault and robbery. Served 5 years.

# False Confessions: How do they happen?

## “Confessions-Central Park 5” Video

<https://www.pbs.org/video/central-park-five-confessions/>







### 3 Causes of False Confessions

1. Misclassification
  - a. When detectives decide, based on their own discretion, that an innocent person is guilty
2. Coercion
  - a. This is the main cause of false confessions
  - b. Use psychological coercion
    - i. Using techniques that are coercive (ex: deprivation of food, sleep, water, bathroom facilities, false promises)
    - ii. Giving suspect the idea that they have no choice but to comply
3. Contamination
  - a. Pressure the suspects to accept a particular account by suggesting facts of the crime to them



### Risk Factors to False Confessions

1. Youth
  - a. Juveniles are highly compliant to authority figures
  - b. Predisposed to be submissive to police
2. Mental Illnesses
  - a. Can have psychiatric symptoms that make them more likely to agree with, or give false, misleading information to police

## Racial Disparities

- Black and Brown youth of color are highly represented in the juvenile justice system, and are more likely to be arrested as juveniles and be tried as an adult



## The Role of the Media





### Smith v. Daily Mail Publishing Co. (1979)

States cannot restrict a newspaper from publishing a juvenile offender's name unless there is substantial state interest in restricting this information from being revealed.



What has happened to our City over the past ten years? What has happened to law and order, to the respectability of our streets, to the safety of our homes and families, the cops who had the power to protect us from the forces of chaos and violence, safe from those who would prey on innocent lives? What has happened to the respect for authority, the fear of the law, the respect for the rights of others? What has happened to the respect for the rights of the innocent, for those who break the law, who wantonly threaten the rights of others? What has happened to the respect for the rights of the innocent, for those who break the law, who wantonly threaten the rights of others? What has happened to the respect for the rights of the innocent, for those who break the law, who wantonly threaten the rights of others?

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Donald J. Trump

## Stanford v. Kentucky (1989)

Court ruled that it was constitutional for states to execute juveniles between the ages of 16 and 18 at the time of the offense.

### DURING TRIAL

- Depicted as “bloodthirsty”, “animals”, “savages”, “human mutations”, etc.
- From a newspaper *The New York Post*’s “[teens hailed] from a world of crack, welfare, guns, with no fathers...to smash, hurt, rob, stomp, rape. The enemies were rich. The enemies were white.”
  - Suffered not only physical but also emotional abuse

- Out of a penal institution, but still prisoners of their past
  - Limited opportunities
  - Limited resources
  - Limited freedom

## Limited Freedom: PTSD

## Life After Being Exonerated



Was able to receive a high school diploma from the Bronx Prep Academy in 2017. He lives in New Jersey with his wife and his two daughters.



Was the first of the accused to leave New York City. He is married with six children and now lives in Georgia.



Lives in Georgia. He started an apparel company called Park Madison NYC. Has a teenage daughter.



The only member of the Five that still lives in New York City. He founded the Korey Wise Innocence Project at Colorado Law School in 2015



Salaam is a public speaker and published author. As well as an advocate for change in the criminal justice system. He is married with 10 children and resides in Georgia.





## Takeaways

1. Understanding how all these outcomes affected the lives of people
2. Each of the Exonerated 5's experience
3. Post - Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)