



Bryan Stevenson

social justice advocate

5/27/2022

Believes in redemption, justice and mercy. His great grandparents were enslaved. As a child, he experienced segregated and desegregated schools. His experience shows that when schools desegregated, they still held onto the old rules of segregation, keeping separate doors for blacks and whites, separate water fountains, as well as black and white children playing separately. Despite the racism around him, his philosophy was born from the truth that values redemption over revenge.

During his graduate studies at Harvard, Mr. Stevenson worked for the Southern Center for Human Rights (SCHR). There he was engaged in representing death row inmates who were incarcerated throughout the south. After his graduation from Harvard Law in 1985, he was appointed to head the Alabama division of that same organization. His passion continued to grow, resulting in dedicating his life to addressing wrongful incarcerations, criminal justice inequities for people of color, the poor, the disenfranchised and the condemned. He continues to challenge biases in the criminal justice system for adults and special attention regarding imprisoned children under 18 years old. In 2019 he successfully won a ruling protecting condemned prisoners who suffer from dementia. Additionally, he won a landmark case reversing life imprisonment without parole sentence for all children 17 years old or younger. Additionally, he won reversals and release from prisoners for over 135 wrongly sentenced individuals. Mr. Stevenson initiated major new anti-poverty and anti-discrimination efforts that challenge inequality in America today. Mr. Stevenson's achievements are numerous, including addressing the US Supreme Court decisions that prohibit sentencing children under 18 to death or to life imprisonment without parole. Mr. Stevenson has received over 40 honorary doctoral degrees for his work.

The Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) was founded in Montgomery, Alabama in 1989 by Bryan Stevenson, after Congress eliminated funding for the SCHR. EJI is a private non-profit organization that provides legal representation to people of color, especially those who have been illegally convicted, wrongly and unfairly sentenced and endured excessive punishment especially on death row.

The LEGACY MUSEUM FROM ENSLAVEMENT TO MASS INCINERATION, the brainchild of Mr. Stevenson, opened its doors in April 2018. The Legacy Museum is located on the grounds of a former slave warehouse near the Montgomery waterfront, where enslaved people passed through on the long, grueling and punishing journey to the auction block. The museum provides an in depth history of lynching, racial segregation and mass incarceration since the late 20th century. Bryan Stevenson acquired and opened the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, which honors the African Americans lynched from 1877-1950.

To learn more about Brian Stevenson, check out his Ted talk, "We need to talk about injustice" or his various YouTube presentations.

https://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice?language=uk

"Each person in our society is more than the worst thing they've ever done."

- B Stevenson