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Abstract

It is inherently cruel and unjust to give a minor a death penalty. There are many issues with the United States' justice system, including the systematic racism and refusal to conform to ideas that are in other nations considered are considered basic human rights. Emmett Till and Napoleon Beazley both faced unjust and cruel deaths. Though Emmett Till's death did not come from a court sentencing, the United States justice system did not punish anyone for killing him. Napoleon Beazley committed a crime as a minor and was sentenced to an unfair death. Though the United States ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1992, it fails to uphold the heavily amended treaty that it ratified. Besides the inherent injustice of sentencing a minor to death, the United States also struggles with systematic racism that punishes people of color even more harshly than their white counterparts. There are many disparities in prisons between people of color and white people, showing just how the United States justice system values the lives of people of color versus the lives of white people. Discussed in detail in this thesis is the injustice towards specifically young black men within the justice system. Young black men are punished more harshly and have a harder time socially recovering from a prison sentence. Harsh punishments for these young men can even deny them the chance to socially recover at all, since black minors were much more likely to receive the death penalty or life without parole sentences than white minors. There are many steps that the United States has taken to fix these injustices, such as Supreme Court cases banning the execution of minors or most cases of sentencing minors to life without parole. All of these steps have not fixed the root issue in the United States' justice system, and unfair or harsh punishments continue to be given to people of color far more. By holding the United States' justice system to a higher standard and more closely conforming to the laws set in place or the ICCPR, the country could begin to fix what has made it so unjust since its inception.

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