

“The United States of Zimmerman”. The American Legal System is only about Law, not about Justice

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The most important thing about the Zimmerman verdict is that it's a clear demonstration of how the American legal system is only about law.

It is not about justice. It is not even about the consequences of killing another person.

The verdict demonstrates that, despite the protestations of the law that it *is* about justice, that's only a pretense to cover the reality: that when the law produces justice, it's a fluke, an accident, a surprise.

The law is only about the law.

And it's no wonder, when you stop to think about who makes laws and why. Justice is one of the last things on the legislative mind, if it ever gets there at all.



And so the Zimmerman verdict can be seen as a metaphor for the American way of life and death these days, a psychic rorschach blot of our culture, a measure of the zeitgeist in the United States of Zimmerman, *the US of Z*.

In the distorting mirror of the Zimmerman verdict we glimpse all too much of who we are today as a nation – not what each of us is, nor what all of us are, but an inescapable collage of how exceptional we are in so many ways of which we should be ashamed. Here's a sampling of those reflections.

A Rough Guide to Life in the United States of Zimmerman, the US of Z

In the US of Z the law allows people to hunt each other.

In the Us of Z you can be a self-appointed volunteer vigilante, *and* you have permission to decide a person is up to no good based solely on the color of his skin, and maybe the time of day and your own bigotry.

you may racial profile to your heart's content and the judge won't let it be used against you in court.

you don't have to feel remorse if you kill someone, even if that person did nothing wrong, even if you went out of your way to get to kill him. You can just believe it was God's plan.

there is confusion about whether Trayvon Martin is another Medgar Evers or Emmett Till. He might have grown up to be a Medgar Evers. He died an Emmett Till.

the acquittal of someone who stalked and killed a young black man comes as no surprise. But it's still surprising that Zimmerman's defense attorney asserted, in all apparent seriousness, that in the same circumstances, Zimmerman would not even have been charged if he was black

it be no surprise for a black man to go uncharged when he does not survive his arrest. That's not what the defense attorney meant, because in the US of Z, it's the killer Zimmerman who is somehow the victim.

there are white people who believe that black people don't care about dead black boys except when whites kill them.

Is it Ever Fair to Arrest a Judge's Son?

In his US of Z people still think it's unfair that Zimmerman was even arrested 44 days after the killing. They don't believe that George Zimmerman's father, Robert Zimmerman, a retired Virginia Supreme Court magistrate, reportedly talked the police out of arresting George the night he killed Trayvon.

In the US of Z the Zimmerman verdict no doubt gives some hope to Michael David Dunn, 45, a Florida white man who killed an unarmed black teenager in the back seat of a car for having the music too loud, shooting him at least eight times. Dunn has pled not guilty, saying he felt threatened and acted in self defense, and besides the law gives him the right to stand his ground.

In the US of Z having rap music too loud for the guy who drives up beside you in the parking lot is an even worse offense than walking home in the rain with Skittles and iced tea while black.

In the US of Z, WWB - Walking While Black - is risky behavior that sensible people avoid. So is SITBSWB - Sitting in the Back Seat While Black.

"Healing Dialogue" for the Zimmermans Starts with "Blacks Are Bad"

In the US of Z your older brother can go on TV (CNN) and trash talk your victim and pretend he's starting a healing dialogue and the news people will just nod.

your brother's behavior doesn't seem so odd because your father, the retired Virginia magistrate decided to publish an e-book right before your trial started, with the title: "Florida v. Zimmerman - Uncovering the Malicious Prosecution of My Son George."

In the US of Z, Judge Zimmerman makes clear, among other things, that in his view the "True Racists" in the US of Z are all African-American. And the judge names names, including: the Congressional Black Caucus, the NAACP, the Black Chamber of Commerce, the United Negro College Fund, and Trayvon Martin's undertaker.

someone puts up a "Kill Zimmerman" page on Facebook that gets more than 7,000 "likes" in just a few hours, gets reported by an unknown number of people, and doesn't get taken down right away.

perhaps counter-intuitively till you think about it, the Zimmerman verdict, like the O.J. verdict, went to the money side.

In the US of Z there is little appreciation of the dark irony that the Zimmerman verdict was delivered in Seminole County.

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