

Witness Statement for Social Justice

I have always known, to some extent, about social injustice. I grew up in a part of Baltimore that was middle class. My parents had pictures of the neighborhood during World War II. It looked pretty nice, but it gradually went a bit downhill. The street I lived on was all white, but if you walked about 6 blocks away, it was all black (some magic line!). We never went past that part of Hanover Street as you had to make a turn off of it to get downtown or anywhere north.

One day we mistakenly went straight. The difference was amazing! The houses looked like they were about to fall down. The people sitting on their steps were dressed very poorly. The whole place was depressing. Of course, all of the people were black. I was quite young and it never occurred to me that I could do anything about it.

About 2 years ago, I read a book: Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson. I saw how corrupt and terribly one-sided the criminal justice system is! I saw how black people were treated by the police and how they were suspects just because they were walking or driving

by. I saw how everything was stacked against them. That's when I realized there IS something we can do. We can become politically active. Then, I read another book, *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore (who is currently running for Baltimore Mayor, by the way!) That added to my knowledge of how things are run and how biased the legal system is to an even greater extent.

Both of these books have been made into movies. I highly recommend both books and both movies...and calling or writing your legislators! Now, we have another way of doing something ... via the South Baltimore Community Land Trust.

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