Monster Social Justice Project

Monster includes heavy social justice issues – particularly that of the American legal system. Steve was loosely involved with a murder/robbery of a local drugstore, and it on trial for the duration of the novel. Although in this case Steve was found innocent, there are numerous cases throughout history where possibly innocent people have been charged for crimes they may not have committed.

For this project we will be researching cases similar to that of Steve in Monster. We will begin with the case of Troy Davis, a man who was recently executed for murder in Georgia. Use the internet as a source in class to search for information for this case.

After you have finished researching the case of Troy Davis and answering the corresponding questions, work with a partner to search for a similar case of either racial profiling or wrongful accusation in the American legal system.

You may use any sources you find on the internet, but make sure to check their credibility. Wikipedia is an excellent source if used correctly – try looking through the links in the references section of a page for clear sources of information.

Use the question handouts to collect information on, and feel free to continue your answers on the back of the page or a new piece of paper if you run out of room.

COMMON TERMINOLOGY: Consider looking up these words to better understand your cases.

Defendant Evidence

Plaintiff Exculpatory evidence

Bail Proceedings

Jury Indicted

Capital Offense Verdict

Conviction Appealed

Deposition

Equitable

TROY DAVIS CASE

Please briefly describe the events that occurred in August of 1989 that led to Troy being arrested:

What evidence is there that Troy was innocent of this crime?

What evidence is there that Troy was guilty of this crime?

After reading about Troy’s case, what do you believe is true? Do you believe that Troy is innocent? Guilty? Or do you believe there is not enough evidence to say either way?

What is the main controversy of this case? What events are most important?

How is this case similar to Steve’s case in Monster? How is it different?

SECOND CASE

Please briefly describe the background information of your case. What happened? When did it occur? Who was involved? Was the defendant found guilty or innocent?

What evidence exists to support the innocence of the defendant?

What evidence exists to support to guilt of the defendant?

What is your opinion about the case and the defendant’s innocence/guilt?

What is the main controversy of this case?

How is this case similar to Steve’s case in Monster? How is it different?