

What Does the Impartial Judicial System Mean to me?

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I was ten years old when George Zimmerman went to trial for the death of Trayvon Martin. This was also when I first developed an interest, hope, and trust in an impartial judicial system.

Zimmerman had been charged with second-degree murder in Martin's death. As I watched the case unfold, I developed my own idea of what I thought to be a fitting verdict for Zimmerman. I noticed how he constantly changed his story. To me, this was a sure sign of guilt. It may sound biased to come to a conclusion so quickly—the people watching from the outside do not hold someone's life in their hands. Rather, it is in the jury and judge's hands. It is their responsibility to be impartial.

When the long awaited verdict was announced, I was shocked and confused. Overall, I was deeply saddened. The jury found Zimmerman not guilty. In my mind and heart, Trayvon Martin, an innocent 17-year-old just shy of turning eighteen, suffered a major injustice. This case is what did it for me. After witnessing the Zimmerman trial from beginning to end, I knew one hundred percent that I wanted to be a lawyer when I grew up. Not only because I was extremely interested in case procedure, but also, and even more so, because I knew I wanted to help people and do my part to prevent lives from being destroyed by a partial judicial system.

An impartial judicial system works so that any person can go into a courtroom knowing that, no matter what, they are innocent until proven guilty. It is set up so that anybody, with any problem, can settle disputes in front of a hopefully unbiased and impartial jury and judge. To me, this is a very important part of our legal system. It is in our Constitution, which is the foundation of our democracy. The Sixth Amendment states, "In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State."

The impartial judicial system is in place for every citizen, regardless of race, gender, political affiliation, or criminal background. United States citizens have the right to walk into a courtroom and be treated the same way under the law. Ideally, the judge will not be influenced by her own beliefs or political opinions. She must unambiguously make her decision based on the law and to where the course of the law leads. As Alexander Hamilton said, "This independence of the judge is...requisite to guard the constitution and the right of individuals."

The impartial judicial system is so important to me that I would not want to work in a system that discriminates. I want to work within a system where people can walk inside a courtroom with the assurance and security of knowing they will be treated fairly by the rule of law, not by an individual's preconceived bias.