

## **Sterling Schrock legacy of hatred**

<http://www.bhbanco.org/2011/03/judge-schrocks-legacy-of-hatred.html>

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### **Judge Sterling Schrock's Legacy of Hatred**

The struggle for racial equality suffered a serious blow this week (March 21, 2011) in Berrien County Mich. and the public was treated to a graphic depiction of pure unadulterated discrimination in the very place where racial and/or class origin should impact least: the courts of so-called justice in which punishments are supposedly tailored to fit the crime, not the race of the offender.

On the very same day Judge Sterling Schrock sentenced two young men convicted of murder.

One was a young white man who attacked and bludgeoned to death his mother's boyfriend while the man slept. The crime seemed brutal, premeditated and gruesome as the defendant used his fists and knees to batter this man to death. This young man received no prison sentence but instead was put on probation for three years because as Judge Schrock stated, "In my estimation, prison does not help anybody. People come out of prison worse not better...and that this young man would be better served by the close monitoring probation provided."

The other sentencing involved three black teenagers who were at the scene when a white robbery victim was murdered for a small amount of cash. The very same Judge, Sterling Schrock, sentenced Dequarius Steward (though he had never been in trouble with the law before) to life in prison. The other two teens, Kanisha Dyer and Lavor Coates-- who were not accused of the murder itself-- were given ten year and fifteen year sentences respectively as accomplices. Lavor said he had argued with Steward not to hurt the man and Kanisha had the misfortune of just being present at the scene. Apparently the real "crime" all three of these teenagers committed was being born black and poor in a county run by ruthless rich white people who can openly flaunt their power to favor one racial group over another.

There are many losers in this story, the first being the young people whose chance for any decent future was crushed under the wheel of this "justice" and of course, the families who will lose a child into the maw of incarceration that will very likely destroy them. The society which will have to live with these bitter and dehumanized adults as they emerge from their "just" imprisonment will also, no doubt, bear a huge cost. And of course, the other losers are those who have worked hard for justice and racial equality only to see their cause mocked and discarded so casually by judges such as Sterling Schrock. Lastly, the lack of punishment for the white man can encourage other whites in the community to break the law making the place less safe for citizens.

Actions such these sentences by Judge Schrock build a legacy of hatred for which all our children will pay a huge price, one way or another.