

Audience defy police threats to see "Injustice" film

Keith Lee
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Defying a threat of legal action by solicitors acting for the Police Federation, an audience of around 150 barricaded themselves inside a room at Conway Hall in London to watch a screening of the documentary *Injustice*. The film highlights the high number of deaths in police custody and identifies eight police officers it alleges as being guilty of murder. No police officer has been convicted of any crime in connection with the deaths.

At 6pm on July 11, 150 people had assembled at Conway Hall, expecting to see the documentary. They were met by the manager of the hall, who pleaded with them to call off of the screening in light of a legal threat from the police.

When Conway Hall staff refused to show the film, the audience took over the projector and began to play the film. Staff at the hall attempted to stop the showing by opening the skylight and switching on lights to make viewing difficult. After the police were called people began to barricade the exits.

Ken Fero, the director of *Injustice*, acknowledged that Conway Hall had received legal threats, but thought the film should be shown. Tariq Mehmood, who worked on *Injustice*, said, "When we booked the place they knew what the film was about."

Injustice was to have been shown on Friday July 7 at the Metro Cinema in London's West End. However, 20 minutes into the film, the cinema turned off the projector after receiving a fax from solicitors acting for two of the police officers involved.

Myrna Simpson, whose daughter Joy Gardner was killed in 1993 by a police deportation squad, spoke out at the showing: "I don't see anything wrong with the film. Why would anybody want to stop it? It's just the facts that have happened and people are just speaking their mind. Since 1969 no police officer has been

prosecuted for a death in custody, while officers have been prosecuted for cruelty to their dogs."

Deborah Coles, co-director of the group Inquest, said, "The film is incredibly moving testimony, which for the first time documents the struggles faced by families to get justice. They are so angry that the screening was cancelled because it was a chance to tell the truth."

Interest in the film has been shown in the United States, South Africa and Australia. *Injustice* is also due to run for a fortnight at the Ritzy cinema in Brixton, South London in September.



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