

Political issues in the Karmelo Anthony murder case

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The trial and sentencing of black track-and-field athlete Karmelo Anthony, found guilty of murdering Austin Metcalf, who was white, has become a major political flash point in Texas. Anthony's 35-year prison sentence stands in sharp contrast to far more lenient sentences and outright acquittals given to defendants in similar "self defense" cases, namely those in which victims were political targets of the Trump administration and the far right.

In April 2025, both Anthony and Metcalf, who were both 17-years-old, were competing at a high school track meet in Frisco, Texas, north of Dallas, and which was interrupted by a sudden rainstorm. Metcalf's team, from Memorial High School, sheltered from the rain in their team's tent while Anthony's team from Centennial High School had no such shelter. Anthony sought shelter in the Memorial High School tent as a result. Coaches at the trial testified that the sharing of tents by competing teams is not an uncommon practice even in the absence of severe weather events.

After he entered the tent, Metcalf's brother Hunter told Anthony to leave and was soon joined by several other Memorial High School teammates, including Hunter's brother Austin.

Soon after the initial confrontation it appears that at least one of the Memorial High School students threatened to physically remove Anthony, whereupon Anthony allegedly responded, "Touch me and see what happens."

Austin Metcalf and Anthony, who had no contact prior to the incident, then began shoving each other, with witnesses stating that Metcalf, the physically larger of the two, started the altercation. Anthony then reached inside his backpack and stabbed Metcalf in the chest with a folding knife.

Emergency services were then called and Anthony

confessed the stabbing to police officers who arrived on the scene. The arresting officer reported that Anthony was "crying hysterically" and said "I was protecting myself," and "He [Metcalf] put his hands on me. I told him not to," and asked the arresting officer of Metcalf, "Is he going to be OK?" Metcalf, however, died soon after being transported to a local hospital.

Anthony was charged with murder and transported to the Collin County jail and was released on bond on April 15, 2025. The release was precipitated by the presiding judge lowering his bond from \$1 million to \$250,000 due to his academic and student achievements and a lack of any previous criminal activity.

On January 24, 2026 a grand jury indicted Anthony on charges of murder even though the circumstances of the event clearly pointed to a lesser charge of manslaughter.

The trial started on June 4 with the guilty verdict reached five days later on June 9. The jury deliberated for less than three hours and ignored Judge John Roach's instruction that they could consider charges of manslaughter rather than murder, which would have carried a shorter 20-year maximum prison term.

Anthony's defense team has since filed an appeal and the Anthony family have since created a fundraiser for the appeals process after earlier fundraisers on GiveSendGo and GoFundMe were shut down.

The jury had no black members after all potential black candidates were struck by the prosecution. The trial went ahead nonetheless despite the fact that Frisco is 10 percent black, while the state of Texas as a whole has a population that's 12 percent black. The racial composition of the jury was a significant factor in popular claims that the verdict was racially motivated.

Furthermore, while there's no clear evidence that

hostility towards Anthony by the Metcalf brothers and their teammates was racially motivated, Jeff Metcalf, father of the deceased, who claimed during the trial that “this was never about race”, was recently recorded on a racist TikTok rant, calling Anthony a “watermelon felon,” and saying that black people “get all the free sh*t we give you.”

Moreover, during the course of Anthony’s trial, fascist provocateur Jake Lang, who was pardoned by Donald Trump for his role in the president’s attempted coup of January 6, 2021, and is a champion of the racist Great Replacement Theory, told a local rally that 19-year-old Anthony should be lynched.

Another proponent of the Great Replacement Theory, newly-minted trillionaire Elon Musk, did his part to fan the flames, posting on X, “Murderers should be executed,” in response to an anti-Karmelo Anthony post.

Needless to say, there was no such outrage by Musk, Lang and their supporters after the acquittals of Kyle Rittenhouse, Daniel Penny and George Zimmerman, each of whom had far less legitimate claims of self defense than Anthony since they initiated the confrontations which culminated in them killing unarmed people.

While Anthony’s tragedy was purely the result of unforeseen and unplanned circumstances, the example of Rittenhouse to begin with is particularly instructive as the latter had crossed state lines with an assault rifle with the intended purpose of confronting planned left-wing protests with deadly force. Prior to the shooting in which two people died and one was injured, Rittenhouse was recorded telling a companion, “Bro, I wish I had my f—ing AR. I’d start shooting rounds at them” after he witnessed what appeared to be shoplifters.

Nonetheless, the judge in Rittenhouse’s case specifically disallowed the prosecution to present the recording and other evidence of the young man’s intent to kill protesters and all but openly declared his sympathy with Rittenhouse’s far-right politics.

In the case of Daniel Penny in 2024, the ex-Marine was found not guilty of manslaughter after placing homeless and mentally ill Jordan Neely in a chokehold on a New York City subway after Neely’s erratic behavior and violent outbursts. Penny maintained the chokehold for several minutes, continuing after Neely

clearly no longer posed any threat, leading to his death as a result.

The notorious Florida case in which 17-year-old Trayvon Martin was stalked by self-appointed neighborhood watchman George Zimmerman in 2012, who shot and killed him, also resulted in the acquittal of the shooter despite his clear guilt.

These differing outcomes have made abundantly clear that two systems of justice operate in the United States.

Those perpetrators who can be utilized as foot soldiers of an emerging fascistic movement to carry out extreme violence against minorities, the poor and the political left are to be let off scot free while the working class and student youth are to feel the full force of the law with their crimes exaggerated to enact the most extreme punishments possible.



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