

Trump refuses to apologise for demanding Central Park Five be executed: 'They admitted their guilt'

Clémence Michallon

Independent, June 20, 2019

In 2014, the City of New York settled a wrongful conviction lawsuit with the five men for \$41m

[Donald Trump](#) has refused to apologise for saying the [Central Park Five](#) should be executed, 17 years after they were exonerated with DNA evidence.

The president was asked about the case on Tuesday, in light of Ava DuVernay's four-part Netflix series about the 1989 case.

"You have people on both sides of that. They admitted their guilt," Mr Trump said after a reporter asked him whether he would apologise to the five men.

Raymond Santana, Kevin Richardson Antron McCray, Yusef Salaam and Korey Wise, five black and Latino teenagers, were convicted of attacking 28-year-old white female jogger Trisha Meili, who was raped and beaten almost to death during a run in Central Park on 19 April, 1989.

Authorities vacated their convictions in 2002, after convicted murderer and serial rapist Matias Reyes confessed to the attack and said he had committed it alone. DNA evidence backed up his confession.

Trump 2020 launch: Fascist Proud Boys, baby blimps and Uncle Sam



In 2014, the City of New York settled a wrongful conviction lawsuit with the five men for \$41m.

“I want to hate these murderers and I always will,” the ad reads in part. “I am not looking to psychoanalyse or understand them, I am looking to punish them.”

The five convicted men have said their confessions were coerced, as portrayed in DuVernay’s series, which premiered on Netflix in May and brought renewed attention to the case.

Linda Fairstein, who headed Manhattan’s sex crimes unit at the time, has long been criticised for her role in the suspects’ interrogation.

Fairstein has stood by the investigation and maintained that the men’s confessions were not forced. Fairstein has also criticised DuVernay’s series and her portrayal in the TV programme.

On Tuesday, Mr Trump referenced Fairstein.

Fallout from the Netflix show has led to the former New York City prosecutor, who is also an author, being dropped by her book publisher, Dutton.

Support free-thinking journalism and subscribe to Independent Minds

Fairstein also resigned as a Board of Trustees member at Vassar College and from the victims-services agency, Safe Horizon.

Additional reporting from agencies