



# CRIME AND CONSEQUENCE

**By WIN** at M.S. 296  
South Bronx Academy of Applied Media

Behind the Book / New York



# CRIME AND CONSEQUENCE

**By WIN**

M.S. 296

South Bronx Academy  
of Applied Media

Our mission is to develop engaged readers and writers in underserved NYC public schools by designing and delivering programs that are multi-disciplinary, culturally responsive, and promote deeper connections to books and their authors.



Visit us at [www.behindthebook.org](http://www.behindthebook.org)

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In the interest of honoring student voice, Behind the Book presents students' work as received from the teacher.

This book was made possible by a generous grant from The Korein Foundation.

**We would like to dedicate this book to youth who are processed through the criminal justice system and the people who support them.**

Behind the Book Team: Thank you to everyone at Behind the Book. A special thanks to Ms.Keturah, Ms.Jo, and all the workshop leaders. Without your dedication in helping us to create this project, we wouldn't know much about Yummy and his story. We appreciate how you introduced us to the debate of accountability and consequences for minors that commit crimes; it has been eye-opening to us all. Your team has taught us to consider everything to know a full story. Thank you for everything you have done for our WIN class!

KPMG Lawyers: We value the experience of working with this organization. Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to help us organize and learn more about Yummy's story. We enjoyed learning new ways to express our thoughts professionally. We appreciate this so much.

Mrs. Lee and Ms. Green: Thank you both for introducing "Behind the Books" to our WIN class. We wouldn't be where we are and know what we know without you and the partnership you established with BtB. Overall, thank you for choosing our WIN group for this project. We love and have enjoyed it a great deal.

Greg Neri: A special dedication to the author of Yummy, Greg Neri. Without your work and research of Yummy's story and finding the right way to express it, we wouldn't have been able to choose this book to read. Your talent is undoubtedly remarkable. We enjoyed learning about Yummy and doing work around his story. Thank you once again for taking the time out of your busy day to come and see us. We admire your skills and hard work. We hope you continue what you're doing because it is very impactful.

Ms.Brown: Now we couldn't forget about the lady who stayed and helped us through everything. The lady who's stayed late to help us complete our work. The lady who brought everything together nicely. The lady who respected our choices and thoughts. That lady is Ms.Brown. We honor and take into account everything you have done. You are such a fantastic WIN teacher, and we are glad that we got you for WIN. Thank you Ms.Brown, we wouldn't be where we are without your help.





# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Who deserves a second chance? How should young people be held accountable for their actions? Students in Ms. Brown's WIN class wrestled with these questions as they read the graphic novel by Greg Neri, *Yummy: The Last Days of Southside Shorty*. Throughout the program, students explored the impact of age, race, and poverty on the outcome of a life.

Author Greg visited the class and spoke about his inspiration for the novel. He encouraged students to think about the forces that contributed to Yummy's death. The class then thoroughly researched landmark cases involving youthful offenders with the help of lawyers from the accounting firm of KPMG. Through their analysis of case notes from various trials, they discussed the impact of different court decisions. Students were then invited to the midtown offices of KPMG where they continued to refine their arguments about consequences for Yummy. They also learned about different types of lawyers and were treated to a special lunch in the KPMG cafeteria. (Some students even had sushi for the first time.) Behind the Book drama consultant Karen Butler used

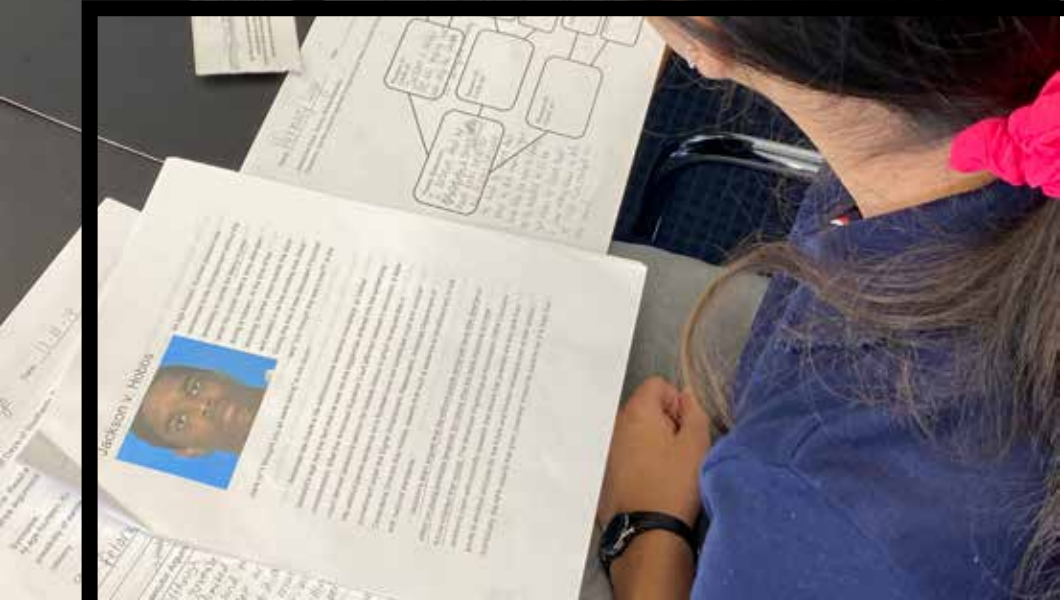




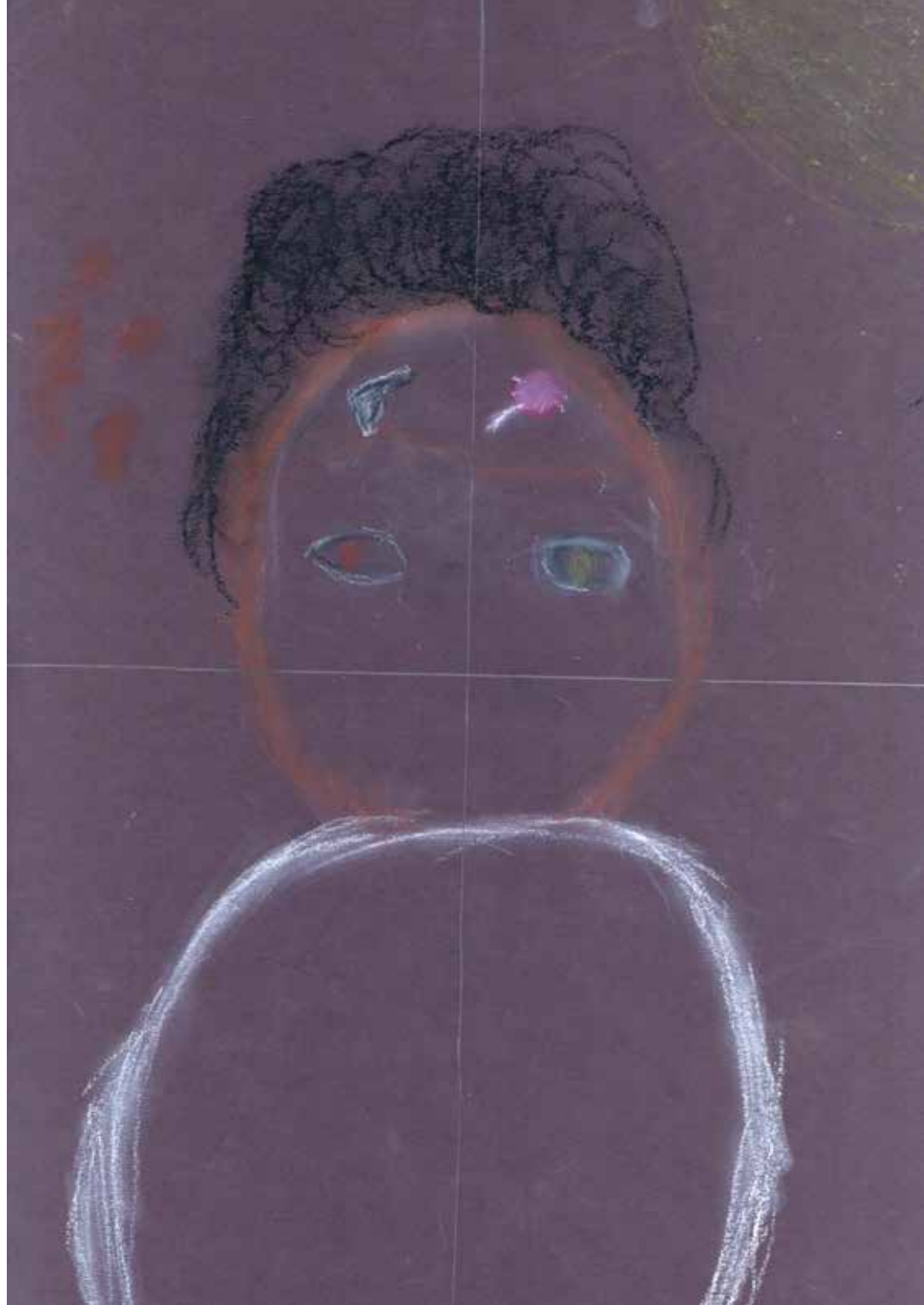
# ABOUT THE PROGRAM (continued)

theater techniques and games to help students develop their arguments by facilitating activities that explored Yummy's character. Students also worked with a Behind the Book teaching artist Barbara Cioccioletti to create abstract portraits of the book's central characters

The underlying question throughout the extensive program was: How should Yummy be held accountable? This book captures students' thoughts, ideas, and even legal opinions. We hope this book inspires you to think holistically and compassionately about youth offenders.



ART BY  
LEILI



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# ANGEL

I believe that Yummy, also known as Robert Sandifer, should be held responsible for his actions just not as harsh as the consequences are for someone of an older age with a better understanding of right and wrong.

One reason that I believe Yummy should be held accountable, just not as severe as others were because Yummy killed Shavon by accident, but Kuntrell Jackson was taking part in a robbery that ended up with someone dead.

Another reason I believe that Yummy should be held responsible just not as harsh as that in the Miller vs. Alabama case is that Evan Miller chose out of his own free will to kill and rob the victim, Cole Cannon. In Yummy's case, he was forced to kill another rival gang member by the Black Disciples' leader, Monster.

The last reason that I believe Yummy should be held accountable just not as harsh is because in the State of Tennessee vs, Cyntoia Brown, we see that Cyntoia, like Yummy, forced to do things she did not want to do by dangerous people. Even though they committed the crime, they should not have to pay for it their whole life.

To end it off, those are my three reasons why I believe people should be given second chances and that Yummy should not be tried as harshly.



# AMIYA

In the book Yummy, Yummy was directed to kill a gang member but instead shot a girl named Shavon. The question to this is if he should be responsible for his actions.

In this case, I think he should be held responsible, but not for as long as you would think. I feel this way because Yummy was pressured and encouraged to do it. Also, he meant to shoot the gang member, not Shavon. My reason for this is if you compare it to Jackson vs. Hobbs, Kuntrell Jackson was accused of a murder he did not commit. While his cousin killed the clerk, Kuntrell was outside. Even though he was out, he did go with his cousin to rob the store. This explains that even though he might not have meant to do the

crime, he still agreed to make the crime a reality. Also, it is said that "young juveniles are more impulsive and less future-oriented than adults." So Yummy did not think about his actions all the way through, and he was too young to understand what he was doing. Kuntrell Jackson was given life in prison for his crime, which I believe is too long. If Yummy were to be punished, he should have a lighter sentence.

Yummy's actions were serious because he killed an innocent girl, but Yummy was young and manipulated. He should be held responsible, but he should not be given life in prison.







# MELANIE

Should young people be held responsible for their actions? Yummy was an 11-year-old boy of color born into a rough life. Both of his parents were in and out of jail. Due to this, he only had his grandma to raise him, but he mainly grew up on the streets. Yummy's street life resulted in him joining a gang. One terrible night in 1994, Yummy was sent to kill a rival, but when he went to shoot, he missed and killed an innocent girl. Should Yummy be held responsible for his actions, or should he be able to get away with it because he was so young? I believe Yummy should be held accountable, but he should only be sentenced to five years in juvenile detention and released on parole for life.

In a similar situation, Kuntrell Jackson was sentenced to life for being an

accessory to murder. In the case known as Jackson vs. Hobbs, it was made clear that even though he was not on either side of the gun, he was most definitely involved one way or another. It was argued that a life sentence would not benefit teens because of their impulsiveness, and they wouldn't understand. Yummy, like Kuntrell, should be held responsible, but the punishment for Yummy should not be as severe because a life sentence does not help teens.



# KADIDIA

I believe Yummy should be held responsible for his actions. He should be charged as a youth and do only five years in jail with the possibility of parole and get out at the age of sixteen.

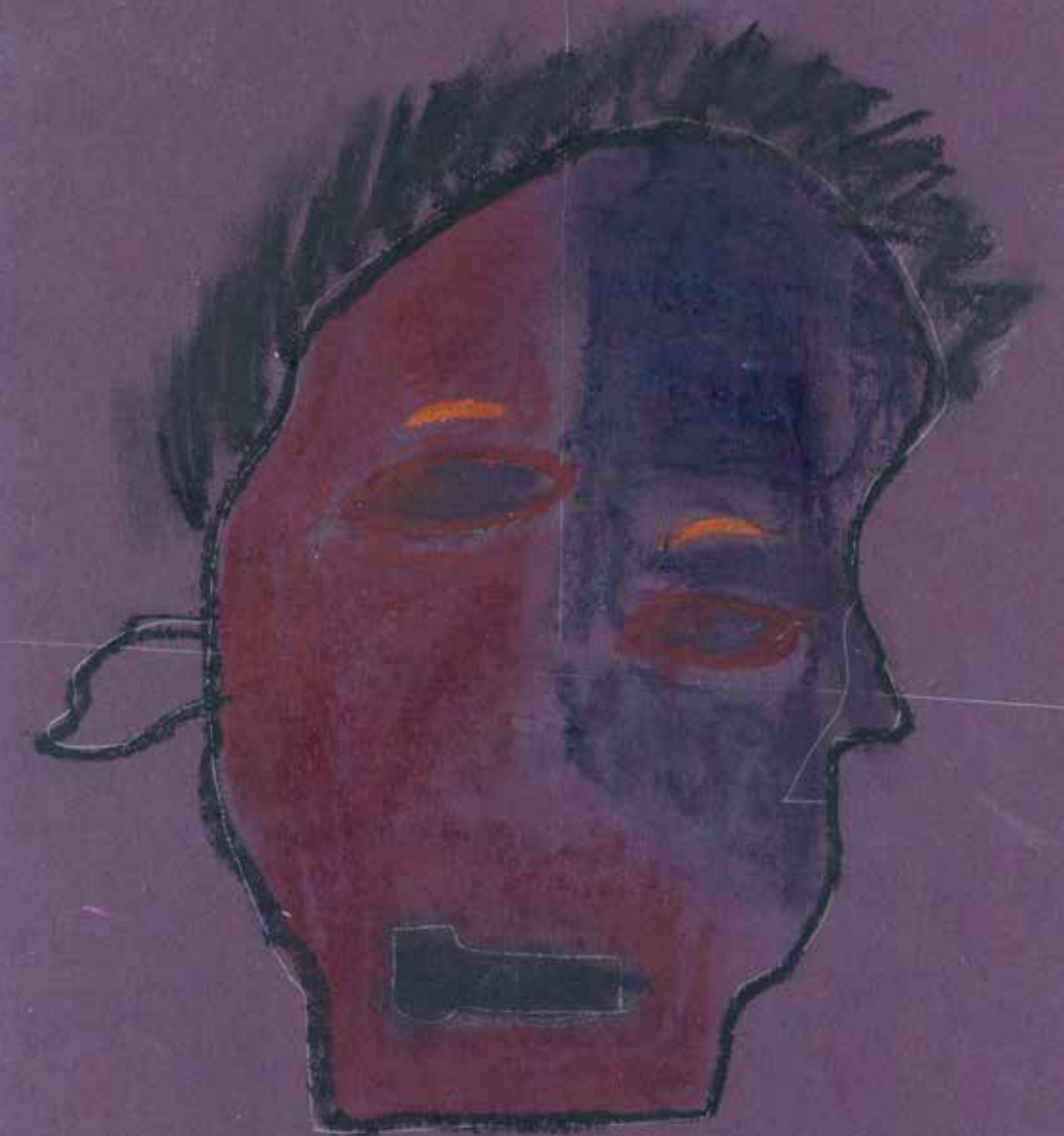
I believe he should only do five years in jail because he would get out of the age of sixteen, there are more programs out there that could help him get back on his feet since technically he is not an adult yet. The programs would help him and hopefully prevent him from going back to his old gang life. Taking everything into consideration with his family, support, community, influences, etc, five years is reasonable, especially since the shot he killed Shavon was an accident.

At the age of eleven, Yummy aimed to kill an enemy from another gang, but missed and shot and shot a fourteen-year-old girl from his neighborhood. The gang hated the attention they were receiving after Yummy's mistake. So they sent out two young brothers from the gang to kill Yummy. Sadly, they did, and Yummy died at the age of eleven. There were so many opinions on Yummy and the real one remains a mystery.

In this essay, I will use evidence from one specific case similar to Yummy's to support my claim on his punishment, which is his sentence.

The Jackson vs. Hobbs case is about a kid named Kuntrell and his cousin who committed a robbery, and at the time of the robbery, his cousin killed a shop attendant. Kuntrell was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. At the time of the shooting, Kuntrell stood outside the store, keeping watch; he walked in as the shooting took place. However, Kuntrell and his cousin were charged with murder and given a life sentence. In Kuntrell's case, his lawyers argued and stated the fact that "life without parole sentences have little deterrence effect on young juveniles because by nature, they are more impulsive and less future-oriented than adults." In other words the lawyers are just saying juveniles are less likely to think about their future and are less controlled and disciplined than adults. The lawyers brought in, "The American Psychological Association (APA) which helped bolster and support the claim. The APA uses scientific

research to show and prove that juveniles are less able to plan and envision the future than adults and don't foresee the consequences of their actions. Also, the APA states that juveniles did not experience life like adults; juveniles cannot fully comprehend the potential negative effects of their actions because of their limited ability to control their emotions. Therefore, they act impulsively especially if influenced by community and peer pressure. Kuntrell's team argues that it is pointless to impose such harsh sentences on a group that still does not fully comprehend their actions. Also, giving them these types of sentences unfairly denies them any opportunity to do better and to reform. This case and its focus on age and responsibility supports my sentencing on what Yummy should get because he was young and did not comprehend his actions.





# JOEL

Yummy should be responsible for his actions. My first reason for holding Yummy responsible for his actions is that Yummy wasn't killing for self-defense. My second reason for holding Yummy responsible is that Yummy was trying to kill a rival gang member and accidentally killed someone else. For the intention of killing someone and for actually killing a different person, Yummy should be held responsible.

In the State of Tennessee vs. Cyntoia Brown, the defense tried to prove that Cyntoia killed Alan for self-defense because Cyntoia said that he had a gun and wanted to kill her. This case is different from Yummy's because she killed for self-defense, and Yummy didn't. Even though Cyntoia claimed to kill for self-defense, she was still sentenced to life in prison. Yummy went out to kill someone; therefore, he should be held responsible for his action because he chose to kill someone.

My second reason why Yummy should be held responsible for his actions is Felony Murder. If you commit a crime and if somebody is killed during the crime, you are as responsible as the one that pulled the trigger. In the case of Jackson vs. Hobbs, Kuntrell Jackson was told to help

commit a robbery and be a lookout, but during the robbery, somebody was killed. Kuntrell was convicted of murder because of his role in the crime in which someone was killed. Yummy was ordered to kill somebody, but he missed and killed somebody innocent, so the gang should also be held accountable for what happened. Even so, because Yummy had the intention and tried to kill somebody, he has to be given a punishment. The rule is that it's illegal to kill somebody or try to kill somebody.

In the case of the State of Tennessee vs. Brown, Cyntoia Brown killed Alan for self-defense, was convicted and got a life sentence. So Yummy should be held responsible for his actions because he actually intended to kill someone, but accidentally killed the bystander, Shavon. In Jackson vs. Hobbs, we see that if a murder takes place during the crime, everyone involved is responsible for the killing. Even though it was the gang that ordered Yummy to kill, Yummy was the one who accepted the order and acted. For these reasons, Yummy should be held responsible for his actions.





# CINDY

Yummy should be held responsible for his actions for three reasons. First, incarceration for dangerous criminals limits them from doing additional harm. Second, punishment both expresses society's condemnation of the act and provides peace of mind for the family. Third, even if he goes to jail, he would not necessarily be there for the rest of his life.

In a similar situation to Yummy's, Kuntrell Jackson was a fourteen-year-old sentenced to life in prison for murder. Jackson did not kill the person, but he was a part of the crime, so he was punished for the felony. In Jackson vs. Hobbs, it was argued that "it does not take much maturity for a fourteen-year-old to know that killing someone or allowing the person to be killed is wrong." Yummy tried to kill the rival gang member, and when he killed Shavon, he knew that he had to run. From this, we can assume that he knew it was wrong. Being put in prison would keep him from doing a crime like this again.

In another case, Miller vs. Alabama, we see another teen commit murder. Evan Miller was sentenced to life without parole. In this case, it was argued, "A complete ban on sentencing juveniles

to life without parole would unnecessarily result in the victim or victim's family being unable to obtain final resolution because of the fear the juvenile could someday be paroled and cause further harm." If Yummy isn't punished, then his victim's family will not get peace of mind.

Lastly, in the State of Tennessee vs. Cyntoia Brown, it shows how Brown was sentenced to life in prison for murder but could have the option for parole after serving a certain amount of years. "Tennessee law would allow Brown to pursue parole after 51 years." According to the law, Yummy would be allowed to pursue parole. Even if Yummy goes to jail, he could eventually be released.

In conclusion, Yummy should be held responsible for his actions because it will be a way of preventing him from doing a crime similar to this again, and it will give the victim's family peace of mind. Yummy will be given a consequence, but with parole could have a chance to change his life.



# HAMIM

I think that Yummy should be held responsible for his actions because the damage that he caused cannot be reversed. I believe that Yummy should receive a sentence of 5-7 years in juvenile detention because he is a minor.

One reason I believe that Yummy should be held responsible for his actions is the Jackson vs. Hobbs case. In the case, Kuntrell Jackson was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole when his cousin killed a shop attendant during a robbery. Kuntrell Jackson was convicted because he took part in the robbery. Yummy's actions were gang-related, but it was Yummy who acted alone. He should be held responsible, but his sentence should not be for life like it was for Kuntrell.

Another reason I believe that Yummy should be held responsible for his actions is the Miller vs. Alabama. In this case, Evan Miller, along with Colby Smith, killed Cole Cannon by beating Cannon with a baseball bat and robbing him. To hide any evidence, Miller and Smith burned down Cannon's trailer while Cannon was inside. Evan Miller was sentenced to a mandatory term

of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. Evan Miller was convicted because he took part in the beating of Cole Cannon along with the robbery and the burning of Cannon's trailer. Yummy's actions resulted in a murder, even though it was not who he intended to kill. Like Miller, Yummy should be given a consequence, but it should not be life in prison without parole.

The third reason I believe that Yummy should be held responsible for his actions is the State of Tennessee vs. Cyntoia Brown case. In the case, Cyntoia Brown was convicted of first-degree murder and aggravated robbery, Cyntoia Brown was sentenced to life because she committed those crimes. Similarly, Yummy should be held responsible for his actions and punished, but not as severe a sentence as Cyntoia Brown's.

These are the three reasons that I believe that Yummy should be held responsible for his actions and should receive a reduced sentence of 5-7 years in juvenile detention.







# HERMARY

I believe that Yummy should be held responsible for his actions, but not with a harsh sentence. He should be sentenced to six years in jail. Taking into consideration Yummy's young age at the time the crime was committed and the influence of the gang, Yummy's consequences should match the crime and allow him an opportunity to change. There are three other cases in which minors committed crimes and were punished. These cases will show and support why Yummy should be held responsible.

The first case was the Jackson vs. Hobbs case. This case is about how Kuntrell Jackson, at the age of fourteen, was sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole. He was accused of felony murder when he was with his cousin robbing a shop attendant, but all Kuntrell truly did was stand outside and watch for anyone coming. His cousin killed the shop attendant during the robbery. In comparison to Yummy's case, he was around the same

age as Kuntrell was when he committed the crime. They didn't consider his age, and even though he didn't kill the person, he was sentenced to life without parole. You could see how though he didn't commit the murder, he was still held responsible for being apart of the crime.

In the Miller vs. Alabama case, Evan Miller, along with Colby Smith, purposely beat Cannon with a baseball bat and robbed him. Evan had suffered from depression and tried to commit suicide multiple times. Miller was fourteen years old when he committed the crime, which relates to Yummy, who was also young when he committed his crime. He was sentenced to life in prison. Between Yummy and Miller, there are a few differences in their cases. Miller purposely wanted to kill Cannon and knew precisely what he wanted to do. Both Yummy and Miller murdered a person, but Yummy didn't kill who he intended to. Plus Yummy was pressured by and under the influence of others in the gang. Miller's case supports reasons for holding Yummy responsible for his actions because it shows how a minor that commits a serious crime should serve time. Instead of serving a life

sentence, however, a minor should serve less time because they are young and they should still have an opportunity to change.

In the State of Tennessee vs. Cyntoia Brown, Cyntoia was defending herself and killed a man. Even though she was sixteen, she was tried as an adult for first-degree murder and other crimes and sentenced to life in prison. Cyntoia had a horrible upbringing, and she was caught up in prostitution. Being sentenced to life in prison means that a person will never have a chance to change. If Yummy were sentenced to life in prison, like Cyntoia, he would not have the opportunity to change because all he knew was the gang and his unstable childhood.

In conclusion, the three cases compare to Yummy's because they were all around the same age, they did not have a good upbringing, and they committed crimes for which they were sentenced to life. They show that Yummy should be held responsible, but not with a harsh sentence.



# TAKHII

In 1994, Yummy, an eleven-year-old gang member, shot and killed Shavon, a 14-year-old girl. Shavon was a good person that Yummy accidentally killed while he was trying to kill a rival gang member. Even though Yummy did all of this, it was not on purpose. So he should be held responsible for the murder, but he should not be tried as an adult.

Yummy was too young, he was not appropriately raised, and he was abused. His parents were in and out of jail. This resulted in him having to move and live with his grandmother and the foster care system. Eventually, Yummy joined a gang. Like Yummy, Evan Miller had a difficult upbringing. Evan Miller and Colby Smith

were charged for the murder of Cole Cannon. Evan Miller was age 14 at the time, and he was sentenced to life in jail without the possibility of parole. Just like Miller, Yummy, should be held accountable, but he should not be punished as harshly. My opinion is that Yummy should be charged with attempted murder and accidental murder.

Just like Miller, Yummy should be held accountable but not tried as an adult. Yummy should get five years of prison and then be out on parole. While Yummy is in prison, he should be taught how to live a good life without the gang. He could then have an opportunity to be released on parole at the age of seventeen. He should be monitored in a house with cameras. With the right guidance, Yummy could become a good person without the need to join a gang.





## ZHAEBREON

Yummy should be held accountable for murdering Shavon and doing all the other harmful things that he did. If Yummy were still alive, his case would be related to Kuntrell Jackson's, Evan Miller's, and Cyntoia Brown's cases in many ways, such as the prosecution, arguments, and how young they are.

Yummy's case would be similar to Miller's because the prosecutors said, "which was the age that does not illuminate culpability." I know this because, in Miller's document, it states, "Alabama argues that a 14-year-old is no less culpable than a 15, 16 or 17 years old, all of whom may also receive life-without-parole sentences." It also states, "lastly, to directly refute Miller's argument, Alabama contends that there is no research to support the argument that a 14-year-old had a lesser capacity for exercising sound judgment than an older adolescent criminal." These pieces of evidence show how Yummy's and Miller's case would be similar because the prosecutors explained that age does not eliminate culpability.

Cyntoia's case and Yummy's case would be similar because of the prosecutors as well.

The prosecutors explained that their actions prove intent. According to Cyntoia Brown's document, "Prosecutors have argued that the motive was not self-defense as she claimed, but robbery." According to the graphic novel about Yummy by Mr. Greg Neri, Yummy missed his shot while trying to kill a rival gang member and shot Shavon. My evidence from both texts explains how the prosecutors justified that even though they are saying different things, what they did makes them guilty.

In conclusion, if Yummy were still alive, his crime would be very similar to Miller's and Brown's, and if he went to trial, his case would be similar because of what the prosecutors justified. Yummy should be held accountable for his actions, and if he were held liable, an appropriate sentence would be forty years with the option of parole.



# WENDY

I believe Yummy should hold some responsibility for his actions but not have a severe punishment due to his age and his situations. I think that he should serve four years because he wasn't able to have the love and care from his parents. Yummy probably did not know what he was doing and if it is wrong or right because he was still a child. If he gets out before the age of eighteen, he will be able to get his life together so he can learn his lesson and never do it again.

In the Jackson vs. Hobbs case the claim was that he was young, so he didn't have an image or idea of what he is doing. This is very similar to Yummy's case because Yummy was eleven, so, as an eleven-year-old, kids do stupid things, but this was too severe. Due to his age, though, he should not have a severe punishment as he is under the legal age of eighteen, but he has to have a particular form of punishment. The article stated, "Although Hobbs conceded that Juvenile offenders have limited capacity to understand the consequences of their actions, Hobbs argues that it does not take much maturity for a fourteen-year-old to understand that killing someone or allowing a person to be killed is wrong." Yummy was under the age of fourteen, and due to his negative environment he did not have

the mental capacity to understand what is right or wrong. As a result of this he should still be punished but not as harshly as Jackson.

The Yummy case can also be compared to the Miller vs. Alabama case. In the Miller vs. Alabama case, Miller, by his own will, killed Cole Cannon with a bat. Yummy, on the other hand, was under the gang's influence, making him want to do things that were criminal; therefore, Yummy should not have to endure an extreme punishment because he was swayed by the gang. In that article, it states, "The trial court sentenced Miller to a mandatory term of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole." This shows how Miller killed someone and got a very harsh punishment. In my opinion, Yummy shouldn't get as harsh of a sentence as Miller since the gang influenced Yummy, but Yummy is still to blame because he had the decision to do it or not.

Yummy, Jackson and Miller all had difficult childhood experiences and did not receive the support and care that children need. Due to his upbringing and young age, Yummy was not old enough to really understand how bad his actions were. Unlike Jackson and Miller, Yummy should not be sentenced to life in prison for his crime, but he should be held accountable.

CRIMINAL



## ABOUT THE VISITING AUTHOR

G. Neri is the Coretta Scott King honor-winning author of *Yummy: the Last Days of a Southside Shorty* and the recipient of the Lee Bennett Hopkins Promising Poet Award for his free-verse novella, *Chess Rumble*. His books have been translated into multiple languages in over 25 countries. They include the novels *Tru & Nelle*, *A Christmas Tale*, *Ghetto Cowboy*, *Knockout Games*, *Surf Mules*, and the free-verse picture book bios, *Hello, I'm Johnny Cash* and *When Paul Met Artie*. In 2017, he was awarded a National Science Foundation grant that sent him to Antarctica to research a new book.

Prior to becoming a writer, Neri was a filmmaker, an animator/illustrator, a digital media producer, and a founding member of The Truth anti-smoking campaign. Neri currently writes full-time and lives on the Gulf Coast of Florida with his wife and daughter.



## ABOUT THE STUDENT AUTHORS

SBAAM's ELA WIN (What I Need) Class is a cohort of Motivated, Enthusiastic, Dedicated, Intelligent, Achieving Scholars in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. We strive to do our best academically by working on our reading, writing, and speaking skills. Through our hard work and perseverance, our confidence has advanced, and we look forward to impacting others by writing about various issues in society.

## ABOUT BEHIND THE BOOK

Behind the Book creates intensive learning and empowering experiences for New York City public school students. Working with classes from Pre-K through the 12th grade, Behind the Book brings authors and their books into individual classrooms to build literacy skills and create a community of lifelong readers and writers. Each of a series of workshops is designed to bring books to life to inspire and engage the students. Behind the Book programs are part of the class curriculum and meet the Common Core Learning Standards.



# COMMON CORE LEARNING STANDARDS ADDRESSED

## CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.1

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

## CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.7.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

## CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.A

Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

### CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.7.1.B

Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.