



DA Argues Menendez Brothers Shouldn't Serve Life in Prison

Description

Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón posits that the Menendez brothers ought not to languish in penitentiary confines for the remainder of their lives.

"Considering the entirety of the circumstances, I contend that they do not merit perpetual incarceration," Gascón articulated during an interview with co-anchor Juju Chang, featured in an episode of *IMPACT x Nightline* entitled "Menendez Brothers: Monsters or Victims?"

The forthcoming episode, set to debut on Hulu on Thursday, October 17, revisits the notorious case of Lyle and Erik Menendez, who were found guilty of patricide and remain imprisoned in California. It incorporates appeals for their exoneration from friends and relatives, alongside interviews with notable figures such as their cousin Karen VanderMolen-Copley, comedian Rosie O'Donnell, and defense attorney Mark Geragos.

This episode emerges in the wake of Gascón's announcement, mere weeks prior, regarding his office's readiness to reconsider the Menendez brothers' petition for resentencing, a development that could potentially facilitate their release.

"My inclinations are not fixed at this juncture," Gascón remarked. "We have seasoned legal professionals meticulously assessing this case. Their recommendations will subsequently be presented to me, yet the ultimate determination rests with me."

While Gascón has the authority to advocate for resentencing, the adjudication rests ultimately with a presiding judge.

In 1996, Lyle and Erik Menendez were adjudicated guilty of murder in the first degree for the deaths of their parents, Jose and Kitty Menendez.

Lyle and Erik Menendez.

AP Photo/Nick Ut

In May 2023, the brothers' legal representatives filed a habeas corpus petition with the Los Angeles County Superior Court, presenting newly-acquired evidence pertinent to their case.

The evidence encompasses allegations of sexual abuse leveled by Roy Rosselló, a former member of the Puerto Rican boy band Menudo, against Jose, who he claims perpetrated acts of rape against him in the 1980s, in addition to a recently uncovered letter authored by Erik to his late cousin Andy Cano, wherein he delineates his father's alleged sexual abuses occurring months preceding the murders.

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Gascón articulated during the aforementioned press conference that his office bears a "moral and ethical responsibility to scrutinize the information presented" to ascertain whether a resentencing is warranted or if a new hearing is appropriate. Gascón further emphasized, "Should evidence which was previously unconsidered come to light, it is plausible that a jury's verdict could have differed."

Kitty and Jose Menendez.

ABC

On August 20, 1989, Lyle, aged 21, and Erik, aged 18, executed the fatal shootings of their parents in the den of their Beverly Hills residence using 12-gauge shotguns.

Jose, then the chief operating officer of RCA Records, was shot multiple times, including a point-blank shot to the head, while Kitty, aged 47, was shot 15 times, with one shot striking her in the face.

According to the brothers, the killings were precipitated by years of sexual abuse inflicted by Jose, which they assert their mother, a former beauty queen, willfully ignored.

In contradistinction, prosecutors at the time contended that greed was the brothers' principal motive, evidenced by their extravagant expenditures immediately following the murders.

Los Angeles County District Attorney George Gascón.

Myung J. Chun / Los Angeles Times via Getty Images

Ultimately, in 1996, three years subsequent to a hung jury outcome in their initial trial, the siblings were found culpable of first-degree murder and sentenced to life imprisonment without the prospect of parole.

Mark Geragos, the Menendez brothers' attorney for post-conviction matters, stated, "Anyone engaging with the facts and circumstances rationally will inevitably arrive at the conclusion that their continued incarceration is unwarranted."

He further asserted, "They have served their time."

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual abuse, text "STRENGTH" to the Crisis Text Line at 741-741 for connection to a certified crisis counselor.

The *IMPACT x Nightline: Menendez Brothers: Monsters or Victims?* episode from ABC News Studios will commence streaming on Thursday, October 17, exclusively on Hulu.

Vocabulary List:

1. **Incarceration** /ɪnˌkɑːrsəˈreɪʃən/ (noun): The state of being confined in prison.



2. **Exoneration** /ɪɡˌzɒn.əˈreɪ.ʃən/ (noun): The act of clearing someone from blame or fault.
3. **Petition** /pəˈtɪʃ.ən/ (noun): A formal written request typically one signed by many people appealing to authority concerning a particular cause.
4. **Allegation** /,æɪ.lɪˈɡeɪ.ʃən/ (noun): A claim or assertion that someone has done something illegal or wrong typically one made without proof.
5. **Circumstances** /ˈsɜːrkəmstænsɪz/ (noun): Conditions or facts affecting a situation.
6. **Contend** /kənˈtend/ (verb): To assert something as a position in an argument.

Comprehension Questions

Multiple Choice

1. Who posited that the Menendez brothers do not merit perpetual incarceration?
Option: George Gascón
Option: Mark Geragos
Option: Roy Rosselló
Option: Erik Menendez
2. What was the primary motive that prosecutors contended led to the Menendez brothers killing their parents?
Option: Sexual abuse
Option: Greed
Option: Revenge
Option: Inheritance
3. When did Lyle and Erik Menendez execute the fatal shootings of their parents?
Option: August 20, 1989
Option: May 23, 1996
Option: October 17, 2019
Option: April 1, 2005
4. Who was the chief operating officer of RCA Records and a victim of the fatal shootings?
Option: Jose Menendez
Option: Erik Menendez
Option: Mark Geragos
Option: Roy Rosselló



5. Which boy band member alleged sexual abuse by Jose Menendez?

- Option: Roy Rosselló
- Option: Erik Menendez
- Option: Mark Geragos
- Option: George Gascón

6. In what year were the Menendez brothers found guilty of murder in the first degree?

- Option: 1996
- Option: 1989
- Option: 2012
- Option: 2005

True-False

- 7. George Gascón has the final say in the resentencing of the Menendez brothers.
- 8. The Menendez brothers were sentenced to life imprisonment without parole in 1993.
- 9. The Menendez brothers were found guilty of patricide.
- 10. The Menendez brothers killed their parents using knives.
- 11. Mark Geragos believes that the Menendez brothers deserve continued incarceration.
- 12. The Menendez brothers remain imprisoned in California.

Gap-Fill

- 15. The brothers' legal representatives filed a habeas corpus petition with the Los Angeles County Superior Court in _____ to present newly-acquired evidence relevant to their case.
- 16. The Menendez brothers were found guilty of murder in the first degree for the deaths of their parents, Jose and Kitty Menendez, in _____.
- 17. Jose, the chief operating officer of RCA Records, was shot multiple times, including a point-blank shot to



the head, in contrast, Kitty was shot _____ times.

18. Gascón emphasized the need to scrutinize the information presented to ascertain whether a

resentencing is warranted and emphasized the possibility that a jury's verdict could have

_____.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. George Gascón 2. Greed 3. August 20, 1989 4. Jose Menendez 5. Roy Rosselló 6. 1996

True-False: 7. False 8. False 9. True 10. False 11. False 12. True

Gap-Fill: 15. May 2023 16. 1996 17. 15 18. differed

Vocabulary quizzes

Multiple Choice (Select the Correct answer for each question.)

1. What is the term for being imprisoned or confined?

Option: Exoneration

Option: Incarceration

Option: Circumstances

Option: Onslaught

2. What word means to assert or argue a point?

Option: Perilously

Option: Captivate

Option: Contend

Option: Exhilarating

3. Which word is synonymous with strange or unusual?

Option: Peculiar

Option: Solidity

Option: Discontent

Option: Expenditure

4. What term describes the ability to recover from difficulties?

Option: Empathy

Option: Resilience



Option: Poignant
Option: Vindicated

5. Which word describes something complex and maze-like?

Option: Misconception
Option: Labyrinthine
Option: Incapacitated
Option: Culpability

6. A formal accusation that someone has committed a crime is known as an:

Option: Facilitate
Option: Indictment
Option: Allegation
Option: Correspondence

7. Which word means causing intense excitement or happiness?

Option: Exhilarating
Option: Acerbic
Option: Expenditure
Option: Peculiar

8. What term is used to describe the end or downfall of someone or something?

Option: Anticipated
Option: Demise
Option: Solidity
Option: Facilitate

9. Which word means making a permanent mark or impression?

Option: Indelible
Option: Correspondence
Option: Allegation
Option: Facilitate

10. What is a formal request for government action usually addressed to a higher authority?

Option: Petition
Option: Captivate
Option: Onslaught
Option: Anticipated

Gap-Fill (Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the vocabulary list.)



11. The team _____ a tough match against the reigning champions.
12. Despite the challenging _____ she persevered and achieved success.
13. The investigation aimed to determine the party's _____ in the financial scandal.
14. It is essential to address any _____ about the new policy to avoid confusion.
15. The company needs to review its budget to control unnecessary _____.
16. The structure's _____ was tested during the earthquake and it remained intact.
17. The new software is designed to _____ communication between different departments.
18. The evidence presented in court _____ his claim of innocence.
19. The doctor identified the early _____ of the illness and prescribed immediate treatment.
20. The newspaper published the latest _____ of corruption within the government.

Matching Sentences (Match each definition to the correct word from the vocabulary list.)

21. The new movie had a unique storyline that managed to the audience from start to finish.
22. The mountaineers found themselves close to a cliff with strong winds threatening to push them over.
23. Having towards others allows one to understand and share their feelings.
24. The protests were fueled by the growing among the citizens regarding the government's policies.
25. The grand jury issued the against the suspect for multiple counts of fraud.
26. The DNA evidence led to the of the wrongly accused man after years of imprisonment.
27. The film's ending was so that many viewers were moved to tears.
28. The email between the two parties helped clarify the misunderstanding.



29. The long-awaited product launch was by consumers worldwide.

30. The thorough investigation his theory and proved his critics wrong.

Answer

Multiple Choice: 1. Incarceration 2. Contend 3. Peculiar 4. Resilience 5. Labyrinthine 6. Allegation
7. Exhilarating 8. Demise 9. Indelible 10. Petition

Gap-Fill: 11. anticipated 12. circumstances 13. culpability 14. misconception 15. expenditure 16. solidity
17. facilitate 18. vindicated 19. onset 20. allegation

Matching sentence: 1. captivate 2. perilously 3. empathy 4. discontent 5. indictment 6. exoneration 7.
poignant 8. correspondence 9. anticipated 10. vindicated

CATEGORY

1. Entertainment - LEVEL6

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Author

aimeeyoung99

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