

Vigilante kills two sex offenders in Bellingham, WA

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0:00:05.3 Speaker 1: Welcome to The Outspoken Offender Podcast. I'm a filmmaker, podcaster, dog dad, and of course, an advocate. I encourage people forced to register and their family members to move beyond stereotypes and social ostracism. Welcome to the show.

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0:00:31.0 Speaker 1: Welcome to the podcast, I'm The Outspoken Offender, a little different episode today. I am actually on location right here on the street Northwest Avenue in Bellingham, Washington. I'm about 85 miles north of Seattle in a nice community, a little busy road here, but a nice neighborhood in Bellingham, which is about 80,000 people. The reason why I'm here today doing kind of a remote podcast is I wanted to discuss something that happened in 2005, I'm gonna start walking here down to this house where a vigilante killed two people on the registry, Hank Eisses who was 49 and Victor of Vazquez, who was 68, they were shot and killed by a single gunshot wound to their head by Michael Mullen. Michael Mullen, his story, well, he was upset by a child abuse case in Idaho that involved a repeat sex offender, so what Mullen did is, I guess he basically just went nuts and took his anger out on these two registrants Hank and Victor. Vigilantes against people forced to register is increasing in the United States, when you post people's information online about their crime, their location, what they drive, where they work, where they go to school, whatever it may be, it doesn't solve any issues and in a lot of cases, it causes more problems as I walk towards this house here where the murder occurred, I look at this e-advocate study, it's called Sex Offender Laws, Collateral Consequences Killings and Murders.

0:02:23.3 Speaker 1: Now, the report essentially covers from... It goes back way to 1991 through 2012, during which they documented 432 deaths, vigilante murders, and the deaths by natural causes and death penalty cases were not included in the study. So they reported 432 of them. Wow. And what's interesting to note in this study is what they found in 2006, we know that the Adam Walsh Act came out, the number of deaths went up seven-fold folks, sevenfold over the next six years, 2006 to 2012. And another interesting note, deaths were a rare event before 2003, so it gives you a little bit of a background on how this has progressed across the United States, a more recent study, it's called Sex Offender Stigma: An Exploration of Vigilantism Against Sex Offenders. I am going to leave that link here in the show notes so you can check it out, it gives you a lot of good information and statistics about this huge issue. One thing I wanna point out is the collateral effects of this. If you can just imagine if these two gentlemen have family members there or children or whatever, this murderer, okay? Mullen could have shot the whole family, so think about that, I mean the two people that were murdered is bad enough, it's horrible, but then you throw in the mix, family members.

0:04:08.6 Speaker 1: Okay, and the collateral effect is outrageous. Okay, I'm almost to the house here, and it's a small... Here we go, it's a small house, a fairly small house on the corner of these two busy roads, and there's a pretty tall fence, I don't know how long that fence has been here, it looks fairly new. I'm sure the house has changed quite a bit since 2005, but probably about an eight-foot fence around the front yard, you really can't see the house from the road, but it's just a typical small cottage home where this occurred.

0:04:45.6 Speaker 1: Now, if you are concerned for your own safety because you're on the registry, or maybe perhaps you have a loved one on the registry, remember there is a law called Stand Your Ground or a no duty to retreat law. And what this says is it provides that people may use deadly force when they reasonably believe it to be necessary to defend against deadly force, bodily harm, things like that, so you're allowed to defend yourself, obviously. How can you defend yourself? Well, if you have a felony record, we know that you cannot own a firearm, but you can own certain things, there may be some knives that you can own, depending how long the blade is, and from my understanding, a crossbow is fully legal, legal to own with a felony, you may wanna research that a little bit more, but that's definitely what I've heard, some other tips, just the basic things, be hyper-vigilant, don't be paranoid, just be aware, install some security cameras. Maybe take a self-defense course. Get a dog.

0:05:54.5 Speaker 1: As you know, I have an awesome dog that has been by my side, and it's interesting because any time there's some movement outside or the UPS truck drives up or whatever it may be, he gives me some barks, he knows what's going on out there, so he's like a security camera himself, he is really paying attention to the surroundings. Okay, I am leaving the house here, outside the house, walking down the main road, and I just wanna mention one other thing before I close this on location podcast, the neighbors, as I look at the homes right now around where the murder occurred, the neighbors knew about Hank Eisses and Victor Vazquez, they knew about them, they knew about their crimes, they didn't like it, they didn't like them living there per se, according to the reports, but they didn't have any issues with them. These were two gentlemen that were law-abiding citizens that were rebuilding their lives, caused no issues in the neighborhood, did not re-offend and then were shot and killed randomly out of the blue, a vigilante came in and shot them dead.

0:07:14.4 Speaker 1: It's a very sad situation. And as a personal note, I honestly think that a lot of people don't care that these two people died except for their family and friends, of course, but the general public, "They committed a crime. They did this to these kids. Who cares?" That type of attitude is not a fair response, I mean, what that says to me is that everybody can get redemption, everybody can be forgiven, everybody can rebuild their lives, except for people on the registry that have committed sexually-based crimes. That shouldn't be that way. That should not be that way. Everybody deserves to rebuild their lives, and unfortunately, Hank Eisses and Victor Vazquez will not be able to do that because they were killed in 2005 right here where I'm standing. If you like this episode please like it, you can share it. I'm also on YouTube and Twitter. Thank you for listening to this on location podcast with me I'm The Outspoken Offender and I hope to talk to you next time.

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0:08:23.5 Speaker 1: Thanks for listening to this podcast episode, I'm The Outspoken Offender. Helping people forced to register and their family members move beyond stereotypes and social ostracism. I'd love to hear from you. You can connect with me on YouTube and Twitter and remember you are not a label.

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