

The Bully of Londonistan

by Theodore Dalrymple

A man charged with a crime has the right to the best defense he can make, but his lawyer ought not to offer preposterous arguments in mitigation when he is convicted.

Michael Coe was a violent and persistent criminal, who, under the influence of a jihadist, converted to Islam while serving an eight-year prison sentence for having shot at a policeman during an arrest. He became an associate of Anjem Choudary, an extremist preacher born in Britain who was recently jailed for his support of ISIS. For Coe, Islam was merely the continuation of violent crime by other means—or for other ends.

Earlier this year, Coe was driving down a London street when he saw two 16-year olds, a boy and girl, hugging. Coe stopped his car, and demanded to know if they were Muslims. He called the girl “a whore.” Frightened, the two denied that they were Muslims, which in fact they were. Coe got out of his car, hit the boy, and choked him, apparently to the point of unconsciousness. A passing schoolteacher came to the assistance of the young couple, but Coe attacked him, too.

At trial, Coe claimed to have been acting in self-defense, though the victim in the case was unarmed, slightly built, and at least six inches shorter than his attacker. Not surprisingly, the jury rejected this defense and convicted Coe of religiously aggravated harassment. It wasn't the first time Coe, also known as Mikaeel Ibrahim, had acted in this way. Three years ago, he chastised an 18-year-old girl for speaking to her friends, whom he called “[City Journal](#)”.