

TV Review: Riveting ‘The Central Park Five’ Debuts on PBS

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on April 16, 2013 - 12:01pm

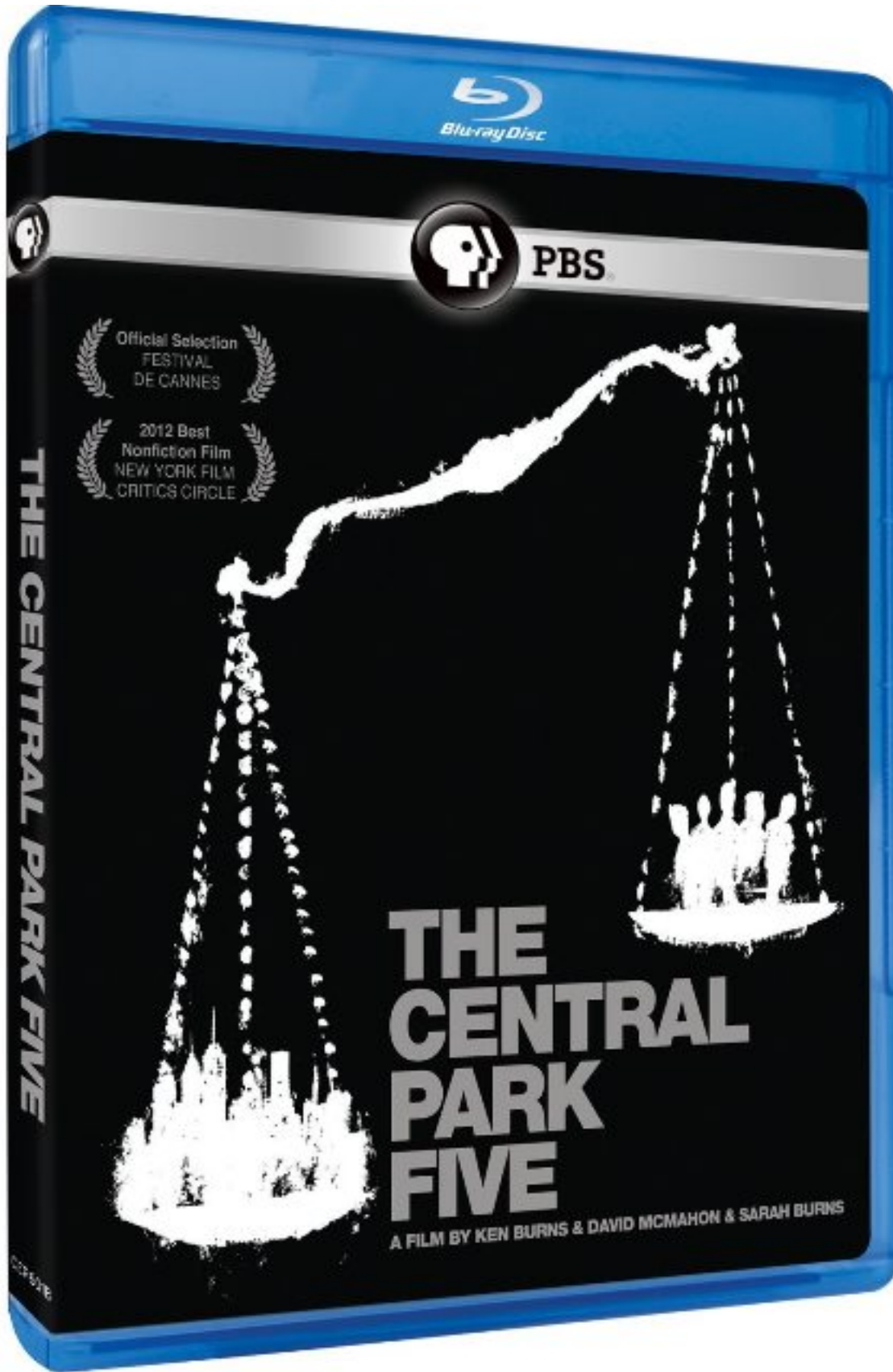
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [David McMahon](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [Ken Burns](#) [6]
- [PBS](#) [7]
- [Sarah Burns](#) [8]
- [Television](#) [9]
- [The Central Park Five](#) [10]

CHICAGO – Almost exactly 24 years ago (on April 19, 1989), Trisha Meili was raped and brutally assaulted in Central Park in New York City. Known in the press as “The Central Park Jogger,” she lay near death as the city let out a wail for justice. Five young men who had been in the park that night were arrested and sent to jail for a crime that they clearly did not commit. So many years later, we’re still left with questions. Why did this happen? Could it happen again? “The Central Park Five,” [the second best documentary of 2013](#) [11], examines the case, placing in perfect context of what was happening in 1989 in NYC and how it led to evil both in Central Park and in the offices of the people trying to keep us safe. The film premieres on PBS tonight in advance of a Blu-ray release next week. Don’t miss it.



Rating: **5.0/5.0**

There have been numerous documentaries about failures of the justice system, corrupt cops, and framed men (another one, “West of Memphis,” was also one of the best docs of last year). “The Central Park Five” rises above standard true crime stories or “Dateline NBC” specials because of the director’s (Ken Burns, Sarah Burns, and David McMahon) incredible ability to place the events of the film in fascinating context. Crime was a daily fear in New York in 1989. Racial incidents were on the rise. Teens were “wilding” in the park, assaulting people at random and creating a tense atmosphere throughout the city. When the jogger case happened, someone had to pay or the city would have exploded. It is in no way to excuse the obvious evidence tampering and testimony revisions that allowed five innocent people to lose their youth in jail but the brilliance of the film is in how it shows us how and why it happened. And how it could happen again.



The Central Park Five

Photo credit: PBS

Synopsis:

In 1989, five black and Latino teenagers from Harlem were arrested and later convicted of raping a white woman in New York City's Central Park. They spent between 6 and 13 years in prison before a serial rapist confessed that he alone had committed the crime, leading to their convictions being overturned. Set against a backdrop of a decaying city beset by violence and racial tension, *The Central Park Five* tells the story of that horrific crime, the rush to judgment by the police, a media clamoring for sensational stories and an outraged public, and the five lives upended by this miscarriage of justice.

Special Features:

- o Interview with the Filmmakers
- o After The Central Park Five

"The Central Park Five" premieres on PBS on April 16, 2013 and the Blu-ray and DVD will be released on April 23, 2013.



[12]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [13]
Content Director
HollywoodChicago.com
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [12]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 24 2024 - 10:31pm):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/21855/tv-review-riveting-the-central-park-five-debuts-on-pbs>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/blu-ray-review>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/david-mcmahon>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ken-burns>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/pbs>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/sarah-burns>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/television>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-central-park-five>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/20927/film-feature-the-10-best-documentaries-of-2012>
- [12] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>