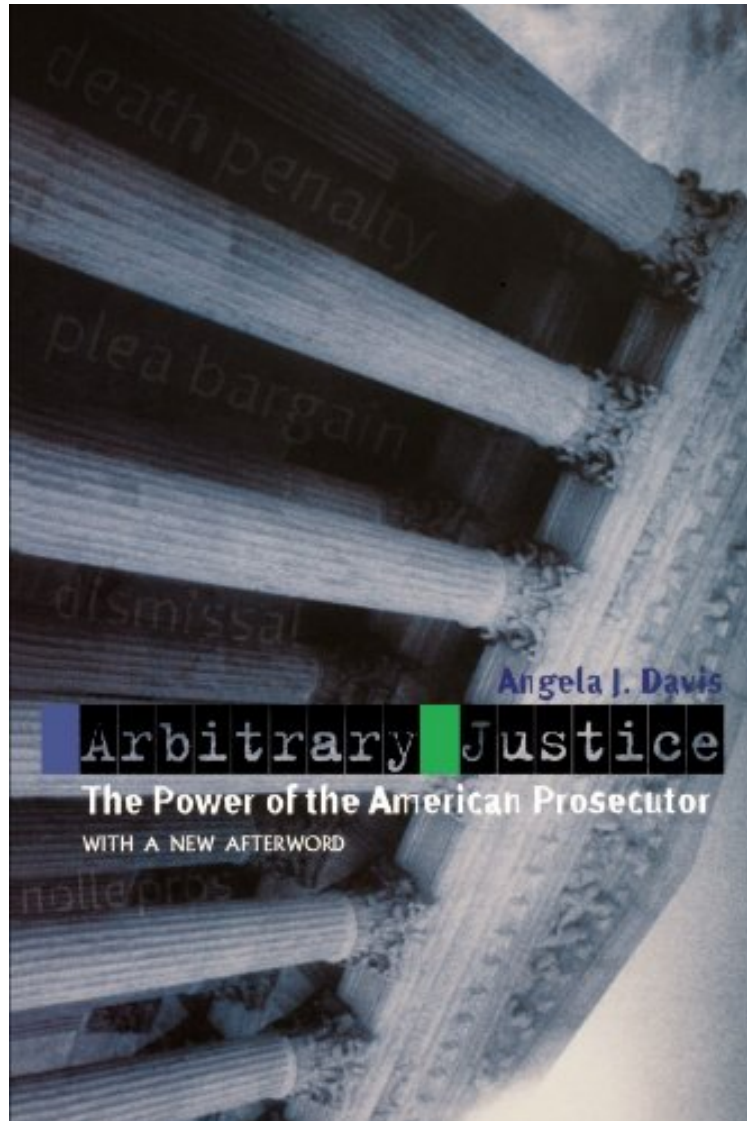


(Library ebook) Arbitrary Justice: The Power of the American Prosecutor

# Arbitrary Justice: The Power of the American Prosecutor

Angela J. Davis

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**Angela J. Davis : Arbitrary Justice: The Power of the American Prosecutor** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Arbitrary Justice: The Power of the American Prosecutor:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Should be required reading for high school graduation in the U.S. By CustomerI would love to see this book as required reading for high school graduations across the county. This book will explain our justice system to non lawyers. I originally expected this book to be rather difficult for the average

reader to understand but the author did a fabulous job of describing a complicated system in simple easy to understand language. It really opened my eyes. Sadly I believe that many Americans are way to influenced by popular television where the government is always on the side of justice. For all of you high school educators : please read and recommend to your students.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Lessons learnedBy Carol wilson-MackI have a family member who is caught up in the system. This book was a great reference for him, he used it to reinforce his statements written in the briefs he prepared in his fight for justice.I had just completed a month long stay with Grand jury and this book made everything make sense to me. I saw what Ms. Davis speaks about in her book up close and very personal.I am grateful for the lessons learned, I am grateful that she wrote the book, I am sharing it with others.Carol0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This is a great book. Read itBy Nigel TuffnailAmerican Justice. District Attorney's need oversight. As it stands now, they have too much power and ruin people's lives based on trying weak cases. The justice system is flawed, far from "just." Something must change. This is a great book. Read it, be informed.

What happens when public prosecutors, the most powerful officials in the criminal justice system, seek convictions instead of justice? Why are cases involving well-to-do victims often prosecuted more vigorously than those involving poor victims? Why do wealthy defendants frequently enjoy more lenient plea bargains than the disadvantaged? In this eye-opening work, Angela J. Davis shines a much-needed light on the power of American prosecutors, revealing how the day-to-day practice of even the most well-intentioned prosecutors can result in unequal treatment of defendants and victims. Ranging from mandatory minimum sentencing laws that enhance prosecutorial control over the outcome of cases, to the increasing politicization of the office, Davis uses powerful stories of individuals caught in the system to demonstrate how the perfectly legal exercise of prosecutorial discretion can result in gross inequities in criminal justice. For the paperback edition, Davis provides a new Afterword which covers such recent incidents of prosecutorial abuse as the Jena Six case, the Duke lacrosse case, the Department of Justice firings, and more.

From BooklistDavis, an experienced public defender, provides an excellent critique of prosecutorial power in the American criminal justice system. Davis' analysis is quite balanced, respecting both historical precedents and the value of the power of discretion. She argues that the prosecutor's duty is more than one side of an adversarial process; the duty is to justice. Yet, as reflected in this work, Davis shows how "ordinary" prosecutorial discretion often leads to injustice. Injustice too often comes from practices hidden from the public that, even when revealed, are accepted as articles of faith. Most abuses are tied to practices of both federal and state prosecutors, reflected in their application of the death penalty, basic charging, victim's issues, and plea bargaining. Davis also examines intentional prosecutorial misconduct and how the courts, including the Supreme Court, have created a context that appears to facilitate abuse and nonaccountability. Davis makes a sound argument that fundamental reforms are necessary to again make prosecutors as accountable as any others granted a public trust with power and responsibility on which we all depend. Ford, Vernon "This book is not simply timely. It is timeless. It chronicles the expansion of prosecutorial powers and, better yet, offers a compelling set of reforms that all can agree will help to curb unnecessary abuses of power. Public officials, law enforcement, and everyday citizens will all find this book informative and accessible. It is a must read, and a phenomenal read."--Charles J. Ogletree Jr., Jesse Climenko Professor, Harvard Law School"Finally, a book by a scholar that not only describes what's really going on in the trenches--a dangerous shift in power from judges to prosecutors in sentencing and charging decisions--but provides a sensible agenda of reforms that will protect victims and defendants alike. This is a very important work."--Barry Scheck, Professor, Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, and Co-Director, Innocence Project"In Arbitrary Justice, Professor Davis reveals how the primary mechanism of accountability in our democracy--elections--has failed to hold prosecutors accountable to the people they serve. She offers practical progressive ideas for reform that will improve our democracy and help to eliminate the unacceptable class and race disparities in our criminal justice system."--Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. (D-IL)"Angela Davis sheds searing light on the long-veiled power wielded by American prosecutors and shows that a fair criminal justice system is an illusion unless we demand transparency and equality from this oft-overlooked arena."--David Cole, author of No Equal Justice"With this book, Professor Davis throws down a gauntlet to prosecutors; some district attorneys will roar in opposition to her proposals while others, deeply concerned with equal justice, will take to heart her trenchant observations on racial issues in the prosecutor's office and will carefully consider her proposals for needed reforms."--E. Michael McCann, former Milwaukee County District Attorney"Using powerful examples, Angela Davis discusses the often misunderstood scope of prosecutorial discretion, and her book should make an excellent supplemental text in a judicial and court related course."--The Law and Politics Book About the AuthorAngela J. Davis is Professor of Law at American University Washington College of Law. Prior to becoming a law professor, she was a public defender at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia for twelve years. She has appeared on various TV and radio programs, written op-eds for the Washington Post, and is often invited to speak to national legal organizations.