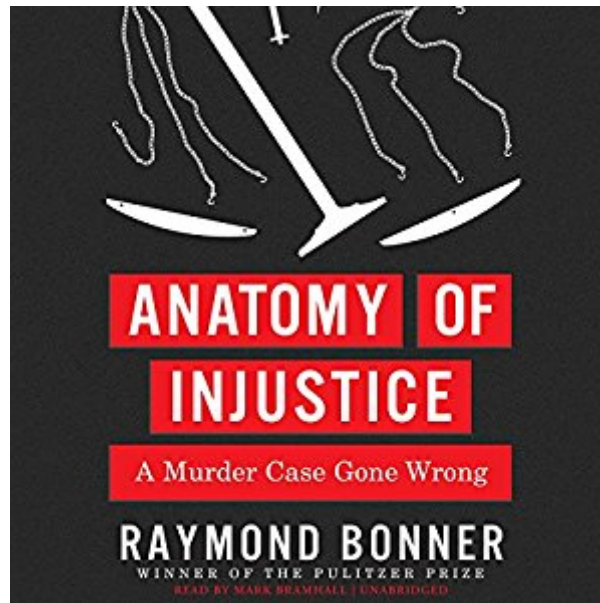


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Anatomy Of Injustice: A Murder Case Gone Wrong



Synopsis

From Pulitzer Prize winner Raymond Bonner comes the gripping story of a grievously mishandled murder case that put a twenty-three-year-old man on death row. In January 1982, an elderly white widow was found brutally murdered in the small town of Greenwood, South Carolina. Police immediately arrested Edward Lee Elmore, a semiliterate, mentally retarded black man with no previous felony record. His only connection to the victim was having cleaned her gutters and windows, but barely ninety days after the victim's body was found, he was tried, convicted, and sentenced to death. Elmore had been on death row for eleven years when a young attorney named Diana Holt first learned of his case. After attending the University of Texas School of Law, Holt was eager to help the disenfranchised and voiceless - she herself had been a childhood victim of abuse. It required little scrutiny for Holt to discern that Elmore's case reeked of injustice - plagued by incompetent court-appointed defense attorneys, a virulent prosecution, and evidence that was both misplaced and contaminated. It was the cause of a lifetime for the spirited, hardworking lawyer. Holt would spend more than a decade fighting on Elmore's behalf. With the exemplary moral commitment and tenacious investigation that have distinguished his reporting career, Bonner follows Holt's battle to save Elmore's life and shows us how his case is a textbook example of what can go wrong in the American justice system. He reviews police work, evidence gathering, jury selection, work of court-appointed lawyers, latitude of judges, iniquities in the law, prison informants, and the appeals process. Throughout, the actions and motivations of both unlikely heroes and shameful villains in our justice system are vividly revealed. Moving, enraging, suspenseful, and enlightening, *Anatomy of Injustice* is a vital contribution to our nation's ongoing and increasingly important debate about inequality and the death penalty.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When I was much younger, in what I refer to as the "College Republican" phase of my life, I supported the death penalty. It has been nearly 20 years since I ceased to do so; when I switched sides on this issue, I did so because I came to understand the flaws in our criminal justice system, and in particular in the administration of the death penalty--flaws which I have concluded are irreparable. This excellent book identifies many of those flaws, and I commend it to any reader interested in our criminal justice system and in trying to make it function in a way that is truly just. The injustice which the title of this book refers to was inflicted on Edward Lee Elmore. In 1982, Elmore, a then 23-year-old African American from Greenwood, South Carolina, was arrested for the murder of an elderly white woman, Dorothy Edwards, for whom he had recently done some home maintenance work. He was convicted of her murder and sentenced to the death penalty. Elmore then spent roughly 30 years in prison, almost all of on death row. While neither I nor any reader can conclude with 100% certainty that he was not guilty, it is hard to avoid the conclusion, after reading Raymond Bonner's book, that Elmore was most likely innocent of the crime for which he spent years in prison and nearly was executed for, and that someone else murdered Dorothy Edwards and got away with it. It is my opinion that this is what happened. Raymond Bonner is an experienced journalist and a very good writer, the author of excellent books on many subjects. He is also a former lawyer and law professor. As such, he is well equipped to write a book like this. He skillfully guides the reader through both the factual record and the potentially confusing legal issues.

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