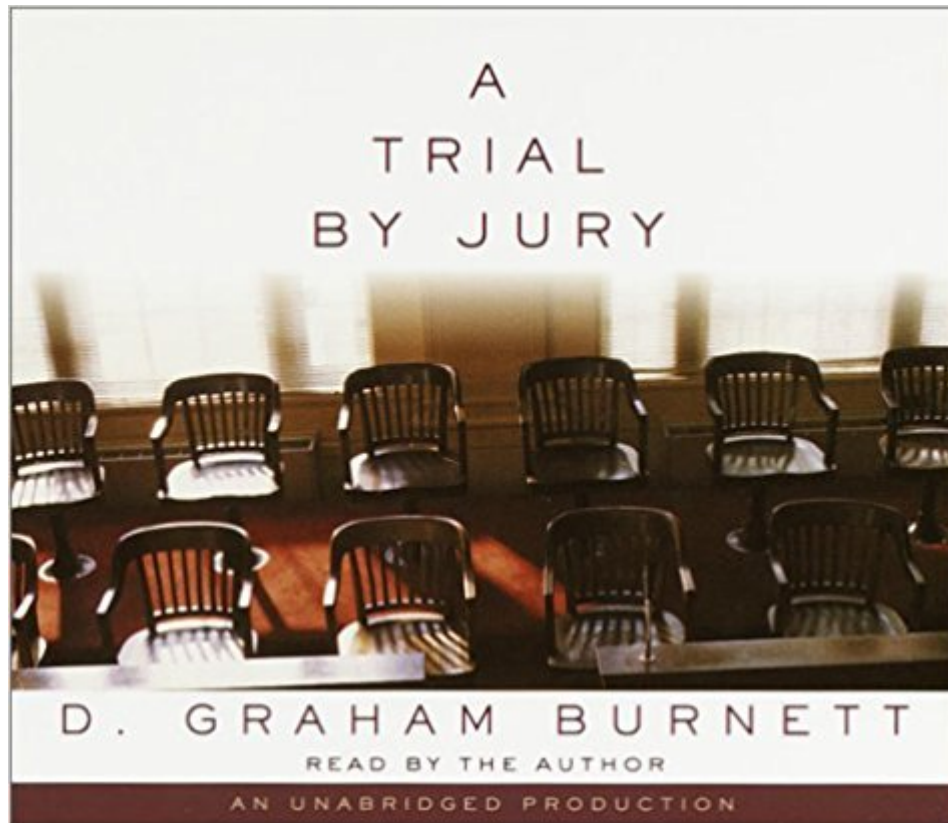




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A Trial By Jury



Synopsis

Read by the author 5 CDs/approx. 5 hours Jury duty happens to everyone. When the call came to Graham Burnett "a young historian and literary journalist" he had a shock in store. *A Trial by Jury* is his startling account of how performing this familiar civic duty turned into one of the most harrowing experiences of his life. Burnett begins the story of the trial: a body with multiple stab wounds found in a New York apartment, intimations of cross-dressing, male prostitution, mistake identity. And then, the unexpected drama: Burnett finds himself appointed the foreman, with the responsibility of leading the increasingly frenetic deliberations within the black box of the jury room. Soon he is sequestered "which is to say marooned" with 11 others, among them a vacuum cleaner repairman cum urban missionary, a young actress, and a man apparently floundering in a borderline between real life and daytime television. Steering the contentious politics of their temporary no-exit society toward the verdict, he discovers for himself the terrifying ultimate power of the state and the agonizing truth of the legal system: law and justice are not the same thing. Part true crime, part political treatise, part contemplation of right, wrong, and the power of words, *A Trial by Jury* is a mesmerizing narrative of one man's encounter with crime and punishment, American style. It profoundly affects one's sense of the privileges and the perils of citizenship.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I found this book in the library and at the time, had no knowledge of its publisher's heavy push, its substantial hardcover printing, or the author's 10-city book tour as mentioned in the PW and other

reviews. It seemed interesting, and the jacket blurbs referring to "Twelve Angry Men" were appealing. Other reviewers have stated simply the differences between what the book jacket promises, and what's in the book. Literature, especially this type, responds to the world; it does not direct it. I've heard dozens of people complain about jury duty, and dozens more say that it's pointless. Despite Professor Burnett's statements to the contrary (after these pages of complete self-obsession and disrespect for his fellow jurors, and every living being in the courtroom with the possible exception of the somnolent history-loving bailiff) - his "affirmations" that the jury system still works, although men like his fellow juror Felipe should not be allowed to sit - this book tells the story of a jury of one. One man who is no better than, and perhaps a bit worse than all those other people who want to weasel out of jury duty, who don't take it seriously, or who think the system doesn't work. Those who read this book will learn what the professor ate during sequestration (fruit, nuts, cheese, bread, fennel bulbs). Blood oranges! A dozen blood oranges in New York City. A blood orange is insipid, an expensive luxury that appeals to the eye, but tastes far less rich than an ordinary Navel. They will learn that men who wear large belt buckles that say "Rodeo" are usually knee-jerk conservative "good 'ol boys." Except sometimes they're not. They will learn that the Professor read The Economist during lunch breaks, while sitting in a pleasant, sunny corner. Eating fruit and nuts.

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