

Presumed Guilty

Martin D. Yant



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The American judicial system is far too often a source of injustice for the innocent rather than justice for the guilty. Despite all the alleged protections built into the trial process, a person facing criminal charges is virtually presumed guilty until proven innocent - not the reverse. Presumed Guilty is about thousands of innocent Americans who each year are convicted of serious crimes they did not commit. Many are convicted of crimes that did not even occur.

Journalist Martin Yant vividly and dramatically explains the process by which American justice is miscarried, providing carefully researched details about more than 100 wrongful convictions.

Yant's writing reveals both passion and frustration as he explains how most mistaken convictions could easily be avoided. "No criminal justice system is infallable," he writes, "but most errors aren't the result of carefully considered decisions that happen to be wrong." He cites examples of outrageous carelessness, investigations that conform facts to predetermined theories, the use of long-discredited investigative techniques, rampant prejudice, and the desire of police and prosecutors to "win" convictions at any price - even if evidence is fabricated to do so.

Yant goes on to propose achievable solutions that would not only prevent years of imprisonment for the wrongfully convicted but also save the lives of innocent individuals who face the increasingly used death penalty. Presumed Guilty reveals not only how often the American justice system goes awry, but how easily - and how quickly - it is possible to become its victim.

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