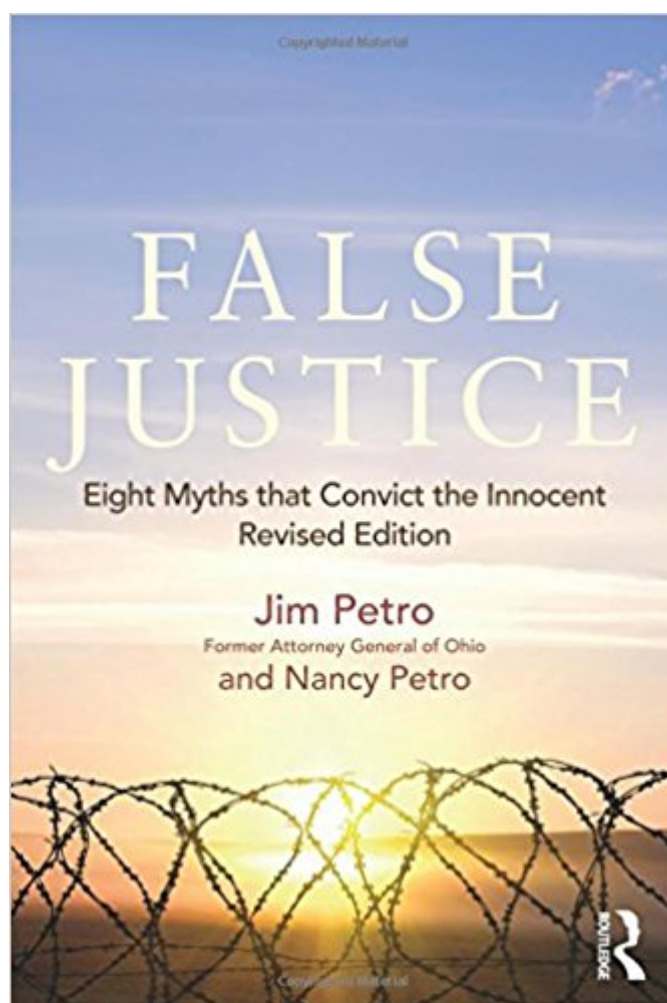




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# **False Justice: Eight Myths That Convict The Innocent, Revised Edition**



## Synopsis

Compelling and engagingly written, this book by former Attorney General of Ohio Jim Petro and his wife, writer Nancy Petro, takes the reader inside actual cases, summarizes extensive research on the causes and consequences of wrongful conviction, and exposes eight common myths that inspire false confidence in the justice system and undermine reform. Now newly published in paperback with an extensive list of web links to wrongful conviction sources internationally, *False Justice* is ideal for use in a wide array of criminal justice and criminology courses. Myth 1: Everyone in prison claims innocence. Myth 2: Our system almost never convicts an innocent person. Myth 3: Only the guilty confess. Myth 4: Wrongful conviction is the result of innocent human error. Myth 5: An eyewitness is the best testimony. Myth 6: Conviction errors get corrected on appeal. Myth 7: It dishonors the victim to question a conviction. Myth 8: If the justice system has problems, the pros will fix them.

## Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Routledge; 1 edition (July 19, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1138783005

ISBN-13: 978-1138783003

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 40 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #478,490 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #206 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > United States > Judicial Branch #858 in Books > Textbooks > Law > Criminal Law #1388 in Books > Textbooks > Social Sciences > Criminology

## Customer Reviews

"Undergraduate criminology students often believe that the criminal justice system is infallible, but *False Justice* very compellingly reveals that much of what they believe are myths. Former Attorney General of Ohio Jim Petro delivers a very powerful message: he has seen the inner working of the criminal justice system and as a result is an outspoken advocate for criminal justice reform. This book is highly accessible, immensely engaging, and has motivated many of my students as future criminal justice practitioners to think critically about justice in the U.S. I highly

recommend this book for anyone teaching a course on wrongful convictions and for anyone who thinks the criminal justice system can do no wrong." Lyndsay Boggess, Criminology, University of South Florida "False Justice is one of the most important--and influential--books on the subject of wrongful convictions. It contains unique insights and perspectives, because it was written by the former top prosecutor for the State of Ohio, who came to realize that the system makes mistakes far more often than most believe. False Justice is ideal for classroom use because it is not only accessible and enjoyable, but it covers all major topics to be related to the subject, from false confessions to police tunnel vision to problems with eyewitness identification. A must-read for any person or student interested in the eye-opening truth of criminal justice." Mark Godsey, University of Cincinnati College of Law, and Director, Rosenthal Institute for Justice/Ohio Innocence Project "Most of us are potential jurors; we are all potential suspects. As such, it is imperative that we each become informed as to how wrongful convictions can be prevented. A comprehensive overview that is both well researched and accessible, False Justice is perfect for students interested in criminal justice, legal studies, and social justice. In fact, I strongly recommend it for anyone wishing for a more just legal system!" Melissa Sheridan Embser-Herbert, Sociology, Hamline University "This book is an excellent text that deals with the errors and mistakes of the criminal justice system. I plan to require it for my undergraduate Contemporary Issues in Criminology class." Steven A. Egger, Criminology, University of Houston Clear Lake "When a prosecutor sends innocent men and women to prison, the usual response sounds something like "We felt certain we convicted the perpetrator, and even in the face of new evidence demonstrating innocence we still feel good about our case." Jim Petro, who served as Ohio attorney general, realized wrongful convictions occur way too often and that they involve common denominators. He and his wife Nancy Petro speak up, with authority, for those who care about justice. And they do so in a way that will bring enlightenment to both students and law enforcement professionals." Steve Weinberg, professor emeritus, University of Missouri Journalism School, and author of eight non-fiction books "Jim and Nancy Petro have written a compelling memoir and an amply supported guide to the tragic vagaries of the criminal justice system, using the stories of the wrongly convicted to identify the root causes of injustice and how we as citizens can cure these ills. Students will find this primer a real page-turner and an accessible how-to for pursuing justice." Margarey Koosed, University of Akron School of Law

Jim Petro is a former elected Attorney General of Ohio. Committed to a strong law-and-order platform, he launched a breakthrough effort that added 210,000 criminal DNA profiles to the CODIS

database, solving countless cold cases but also revealing wrongful convictions. He retired from public service in 2013 as Chancellor of Ohio's public colleges and universities to focus on criminal justice reform and advocacy. Nancy Petro pursued a career in marketing, publishing, and business management before focusing in 2008 on writing and advocating for criminal justice reform.

The latest in many books about wrongful convictions, and one of the better ones that I have read. Jim Petro is a former state Attorney General for the State of Ohio, and a law-and-order Republican, so his transformation on this subject should not be dismissed or downplayed. In the true dictionary definition of conservatism, rather than the current political definition, Jim is a seeker of justice, not merely conviction rates. Jim and Nancy do a wonderful job of outlining the absurdity of what can happen in our justice system. They provide real-life cases and guide the reader step-by-step with 'how' and 'why' the process went wrong. They make rational common-sense suggestions to fix the system. I will admit that there were times that I felt he was a little too apologetic for law enforcement and prosecutors, but I have to remind myself that just as they sometimes get jaded and believe that everybody is guilty, I have to remember that most law enforcement officers and prosecutors are indeed basically honest and seeking the truth, and that I need to fight from becoming jaded myself. Unfortunately, there are enough "bad apples" that people need to be aware of this issue and we as a society need to seek reform to minimize errors. However, having said that, I am more convinced than ever that "innocent until proven guilty" is a myth. It just isn't so. The entire system... investigators, district attorneys, judges, even juries... treat people as if they must be guilty of something, lest the defendant wouldn't even be there. We can do better than that. Of special note, I felt that the 8 Myths presented at the end of the book were a perfect conclusion. Myth #6, "Conviction Errors Get Corrected On Appeal" was especially welcome as that aspect is rarely mentioned in other books on this subject. Appeals courts seem to be more rubber-stamp agencies, and are determined to protect the process rather than seek justice. Hopefully, this issue is rising in the public's consciousness the last several years and we can actually get some positive change.

If you read my legal suspense, "Accidental Felon," you know it is based on fact--on prosecutorial misconduct. If you choose to believe it a product of creativity, this book proves otherwise. It is semi-autobiographical, the story of a former attorney general who discovered an innocent man falsely convicted and worked to help get him exonerated. That experience opened the window to the stink that is our so-called justice system. Jim Petro tracked down the source of the stink, as he explains in this book co-authored with his wife, Nancy. Together they vowed to devote their efforts,

their knowledge, their education to help other innocents who were wrongly convicted and to try to change the system as it now exists. This is a very different coming-of-age story, one that may be easier to digest than my novel (which aims to provoke a personal, emotional response from readers). When readers ask me about my book, "Why do prosecutors do this?" and, "What can we do about it?" I refer them to "False Justice" for the answers.

This book is a must read for every American. It definitely opens your eyes to the justice system in our wonderful country. Just like other systems they work for awhile but become corrupted through time and need to be re-structured. Jim and Nancy Petro have given their time and energy to write this book so we can be informed about the system and its flaws and what we can do to make a difference. We the people must become enlightened and educated so we can start the process of making a difference. DNA is a great discovery and can be very instrumental in our justice system. There are over 2.2 million people in the United States in prison the highest population in the world. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM???? This book will explain the (8) myths in our justice system. Please read this book and MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!!!!! Respectfully Sandy Moorehead

This book is powerful because the author is a law-and-order conservative who discovered, after a long career, that the criminal justice system makes far too many mistakes. Petro takes the reader inside the cases of wrongful conviction he has worked to correct. He identifies the root causes of the problem and outlines the improvements he believes will make for a better system. He stresses a critically important point that I have realized over years of reading about these frustrating cases - the system won't fix itself. The public has to get involved and demand that police and prosecutors do a better job of protecting innocent people from unjust conviction and incarceration.

Arrived in great condition. Great gift for a attorney or anyone interested in our justice system.

I found Mr. Petro's book very useful. This is the fourth book I have read on this general topic. He touched on a few areas in more detail than some of the authors. I can identify with how he has come to the realization that our justice system in America needs to be improved. I also understand his frustration with the professionals and elected officials that refuse to take the time to really understand this is a serious issue. I commend he and his wife for pushing politics to the side and trying to do the right thing ! Albemarle County VA. Sheriff J.E.

"Chip" Harding

Great read on the horrors that await you should you be unlucky enough to be convicted for a crime you didn't commit. These myths show how easy it is, despite the good intentions of the justice system, for an innocent person to be convicted of a crime, and then how astronomically difficult it is for that person to attempt to prove his/her innocence. I learned a lot about DNA evidence and how eyewitness testimony can be easily contaminated. I will be carefully monitoring my local elections and encouraging the politicians who serve me to vote for simple things that can help improve the system - like video taping police interrogations. The authors are detailed in their explanations, but the book is not difficult to understand, which is good because you are clearly able to see what the issues are.

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