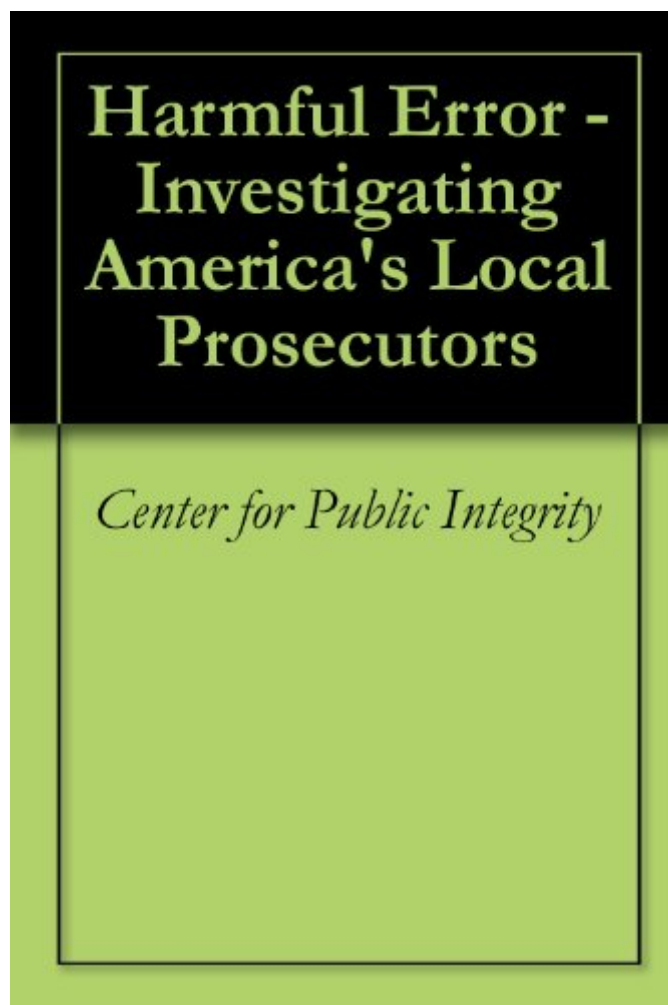


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Harmful Error - Investigating America's Local Prosecutors



Synopsis

A project by the Center for Public Integrity, Harmful Error is about local prosecutors in many of the 2,341 jurisdictions across the nation that have stretched, bent or broken rules to win convictions. Since 1970, individual judges and appellate court panels cited prosecutorial misconduct as a factor when dismissing charges, reversing convictions or reducing sentences in over 2,000 cases. In another 500 cases, appellate judges offered opinions?either dissents or concurrences?in which they found the misconduct warranted a reversal. In thousands more, judges labeled prosecutorial behavior inappropriate, but upheld convictions using a doctrine called "harmless error." Misconduct by prosecutors led to the conviction of innocent individuals who were later exonerated. Guilty defendants have also had their convictions overturned and are placed back on the street. In addition, the Center found many prosecutors who were cited multiple times for misconduct.

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