



# **A Wild Justice: The Death and Resurrection of Capital Punishment in America**

*Evan J. Mandery*

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*New York Times Book Review* Editor's Choice

**Drawing on never-before-published original source detail, the epic story of two of the most consequential, and largely forgotten, moments in Supreme Court history.**

For two hundred years, the constitutionality of capital punishment had been axiomatic. But in 1962, Justice Arthur Goldberg and his clerk Alan Dershowitz dared to suggest otherwise, launching an underfunded band of civil rights attorneys on a quixotic crusade. In 1972, in a most unlikely victory, the Supreme Court struck down Georgia's death penalty law in *Furman v. Georgia*. Though the decision had sharply divided the justices, nearly everyone, including the justices themselves, believed *Furman* would mean the end of executions in America.

Instead, states responded with a swift and decisive showing of support for capital punishment. As anxiety about crime rose and public approval of the Supreme Court declined, the stage was set in 1976 for *Gregg v. Georgia*, in which the Court dramatically reversed direction.

*A Wild Justice* is an extraordinary behind-the-scenes look at the Court, the justices, and the political complexities of one of the most racially charged and morally vexing issues of our time.



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