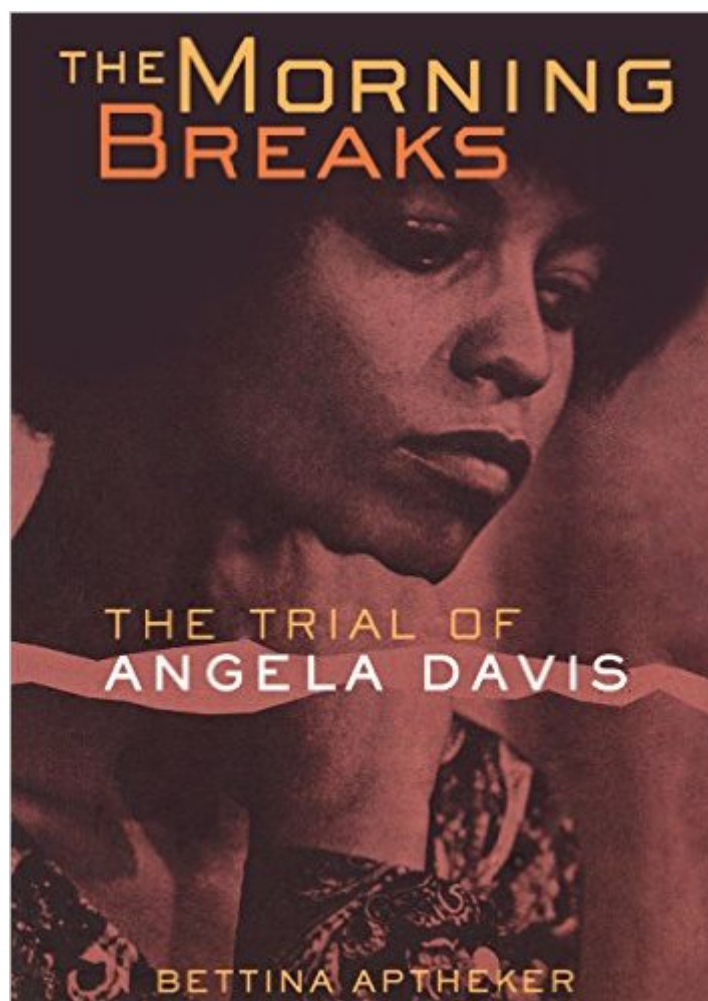


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The Morning Breaks: The Trial Of Angela Davis



Synopsis

On August 7, 1970, a revolt by Black prisoners in a Marin County courthouse stunned the nation. In its aftermath, Angela Davis, an African American activist-scholar who had campaigned vigorously for prisoners' rights, was placed on the FBI's "ten most wanted list." Captured in New York City two months later, she was charged with murder, kidnapping, and conspiracy. Her trial, chronicled in this "compelling tale" (Publishers Weekly), brought strong public indictment. *The Morning Breaks* is a riveting firsthand account of Davis's ordeal and her ultimate triumph, written by an activist in the student, civil rights, and antiwar movements who was intimately involved in the struggle for her release. First published in 1975, and praised by *The Nation* for its "graphic narrative of [Davis's] legal and public fight," *The Morning Breaks* remains relevant today as the nation contends with the political fallout of the Sixties and the grim consequences of institutional racism. For this edition, Bettina Aptheker has provided an introduction that revisits crucial events of the late 1960s and early 1970s and puts Davis's case into the context of that time and our own—from the killings at Kent State and Jackson State to the politics of the prison system today. This book gives a first-hand account of the worldwide movement for Angela Davis's freedom and of her trial. It offers a unique historical perspective on the case and its continuing significance in the contemporary political landscape.

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Customer Reviews

In the 1970s every one knew of Angela Davis' travails, trials and tragedy. If her expulsion from teaching and trial symbolised Frankenstein, then her freedom symbolised unrelenting and unending

struggle against Abraham Lincoln's country's racist practice of rule of law. This minute by minute account of Bettina Aptekar (the world knew about her and her father, Herbert as well) is an eye opener even for those who were then part of the World Peace Council Movement in Defence of Angela Davis. This heart wrenching account bares the tentacles around the bodies of Black people's lives, psyche and existence. It is an expose of academic bodies' biases and prejudices eating into people's jobs and freedoms-both white and black dissenters. The revocation of the sentence against Angela Davis was then considered a victory for the Left Movement of the 1960s and seventies. In addition, it also lays bare the alienation and ennui in advanced societies of those decades, initially symbolised by the theatre of the absurd beginning with Kierkegaard, Becket and Ibsen. Lovers of freedom in the Neo-liberal era awake and read this part of liberals' dark tragedy with all its shades. Life is not a dark chocolate on shelves that consumers are dealt with. It is devilish.

This book is undoubtedly rewarding reading, and yet it very much strikes the informed reader as having been created under [Communist Party, USA] discipline. As Aptheker notes in her introduction, she was a member of the CPUSA's national committee when she wrote this book in 1973; it was first issued by the party's International Publishers two years later. Ironically, Aptheker lauds the socialist countries, especially the USSR, throughout her narrative. It's deeply regrettable that Aptheker and her comrades protested the political incarceration of Davis and other U.S. militants and yet passively supported the repression meted out to Soviet and Czech dissidents during the same period. During an official visit to Czechoslovakia in 1972, Davis herself insisted that imprisoned rebels of the 1968 Prague Spring "deserved what they got" and should remain behind bars. As you read this book, I encourage you to keep the duality of such positions foremost in your mind.

A fascinating account of the legal maneuvering that quite possibly saved the life of this extraordinary woman. The fact is there should never have been a trial in the first place. Aside from that we are given an inside view of the strategy invoked by the defense team. Howard Moore and Margaret Burnham are the main players in the defense team. Angela's sister Fania headed up the national movement. I was most impressed with the tremendous outpouring of support from all over the country. The book goes into great detail concerning Angela's connection with the Soledad brothers. It was her interest in their trial that started this whole farce in the first place. If you believe as I do that this beautiful woman was singled out because her views ran contrary to those of Richard Nixon and

Ronald Reagan then you will love this book. It will make you mad and yet you will see that perhaps justice can prevail after all.

Once you get past the communist/revolutionary rhetoric of the 60's-70's, a portrait of a bright, intelligent human being is exposed. The case of Angela Davis is important for many reasons - but most importantly the right to free speech and to believe as you wish. That is what makes this country great.

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