Grand Jury 2.0
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Modern Perspectives on the Grand Jury

Edited by Roger Anthony Fairfax, Jr.

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For Fatima Glovena, Regina Charlene-Elizabeth, and Nadia Alcynthia
# Contents

Acknowledgments xii  
Introduction xv  

**Chapter 1 • Enlisting and Deploying Federal Grand Juries in the War on Terrorism**  
Sara Sun Beale and James E. Felman  

Grand Jury Authority and Secrecy 5  
The USA PATRIOT Act 7  
The Attorney General’s Disclosure Guidelines 9  
The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act 12  
Conclusion 13  
Bibliography 16  
Notes 18  

**Chapter 2 • Grand Jurors Speak**  
Susan W. Brenner  

Issues 26  
   
   Jurors Questioning Witnesses 27  
   Exculpatory and/or Additional Evidence 29  
   Whispers and Notes 30  
   Juror Access to Transcripts 31  
   Juror Access to the Law 32  
   Hearsay 33  
   Jury Nullification 34  
   Passivity? 35  
   Grand Jury Meeting to Discuss Responsibilities 38  

Time Management 39  
   
   Foreperson Issues 40  
   Removing a Grand Juror 42  
   Secrecy Issues: From a Grand Juror 42  
   Secrecy Issues: From a Judge 43  
   Witness Contact with Grand Juror 44
CONTENTS

Length of Grand Jury Service 46
A Court Reporter’s Perspective 47
Taking the Fifth … Responsibly 48
Taking the Fifth … For Other Reasons 49
Conclusion 51
Bibliography 52
Notes 53

Chapter 3 • Does Grand Jury Discretion Have a Legitimate (and Useful) Role to Play in Criminal Justice? 57
Roger A. Fairfax, Jr.

Contextualizing Grand Jury Discretion 59
Categorizing Grand Jury “Nullification” 60
Beyond the Normative Debate 61
The Compatibility of Grand Jury Discretion with Constitutional Design and the Rule of Law 62
Redefining Terms: Contours of the Rule of Law 63
The Structural Role of Grand Jury Discretion 66
Separation of Powers/Checks and Balances 66
Federalism 68
Optimizing the Exercise of Discretion in Criminal Justice 70
Inventorying Discretion in Criminal Justice 70
The Grand Jury as a Locus of Robust Discretion 71
Safety Valve 71
Enhanced Deliberation of the Grand Jury 72
Enhanced Access and Exposure to Information 73
Secrecy 74
Enhancing the Administration of Criminal Justice 76
Crime Control 77
Efficiency 79
The Grand Jury and Individual Rights 80
Conclusion 83
Bibliography 84
Notes 92

Chapter 4 • Honoring the Voice of the Citizen: Breathing Life into the Grand Jury Requirement 115
Michael Daly Hawkins

Bibliography 120
Notes 121
Chapter 5 • Retelling Grand Jury History

Niki Kuckes

The Modern Dogma: Grand Jury Procedure Replicates Historic Practice
The Prosecutorial Nature of Modern Grand Jury Procedure
The Premise that Modern Grand Jury Procedures Replicate History
A Fuller Grand Jury History Is Ambiguous, Contradictory, and Evolving
The Grand Jury’s Origins in Ancient Medieval English “Procedure”
The American Constitutional Grand Jury in a State of Flux
Refuting the Historical Premise of Modern Grand Jury Procedure
Refuting the “No Rules” Premise: Historic Dominance of the Legal Evidence Rule
Undermining the “No Review” Premise: Historic Debates over the Proper Extent of Judicial Review of Grand Jury Evidence
Questioning the “Probable Cause” Premise: Historic Use of the Prima Facie Test for Grand Jury Indictment
Using Symbolic Grand Jury History to Mask Complex Conceptual Choices
Understanding the Court’s “History” as a Conceptual Choice
Risks of Using Symbolic History in Place of a More Nuanced Test
How Historicism Retards Nuanced and Thoughtful Analysis
How the Court’s “History” Freezes Grand Jury Rules in Place
Conclusion
Bibliography
Notes

Chapter 6 • Implementing the Neighborhood Grand Jury

Adriaan Lanni

The Problem: Powerful Prosecutors and Political Pathologies
Reforming the Grand Jury
Selection
Individual Charging Decisions
General Charging Policies
Conclusion
Bibliography
Notes
### Chapter 7 • Prosecutorial Charging Practices and Grand Jury Screening: Some Empirical Observations

**Andrew D. Leipold**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screening and Overcharging</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Grand Jury’s Restraining Hand</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor Screening and Overcharging: Do We Care?</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charging Practices Measured</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data and Results: Indictment Versus Outcome</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge Disposition</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Dismissals?</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things Change</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiplicity</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Charging Practices</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Type of Charges Fail?</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Grand Juries Screen?</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 8 • The True Goals of the Modern Grand Jury— and How to Achieve Them

**Ric Simmons**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Jury Power</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing Re-Presentation</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowing Hearsay Testimony</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Defendant’s Right to Testify</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial Review of Grand Jury Proceedings</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The True Function of the Grand Jury</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defendants</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Witnesses</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Jurors</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reforming the Grand Jury?</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 9 • Restoring the Grand Jury

**Kevin K. Washburn**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing the Grand Jury: The Grand Jury in Context</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why Juries?</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Grand Jury in American Narrative 257
The Meaning of the Conventional Rhetoric and the
Historical Narrative 258
Grand Juries Versus Trial Juries in Contemporary Policy 258
Plea Bargaining, Citizen Participation, and the Grand Jury 259
Trial Jury Nullification and Grand Jury Discretion 260
Scholarly Criticism of the Modern Grand Jury 261
Reconsidering the Role of the Grand Jury as a Check on
Prosecutorial Power 262
The Grand Jury as Barometer of Legitimacy and a Theory of
What Went Wrong 263
A Theory of What Went Wrong With the Grand Jury 264
The Failure of the Cross-Sectional Ideal 266
The Perniciousness of the Cross-Sectional Ideal in the
Grand Jury Context 267
Restoring the Independence of the Grand Jury 268
The “Neighborhood Grand Jury” or the “Grand Jury
by Zip Code” 269
The Advantages of Neighborhood Grand Juries for
Local Offenses 271
Expanded and Improved Educative Benefits of Jury Service 271
Improved Community Representation and Legitimacy in
Criminal Justice 272
Increased Power of Community Relative to the Prosecutor 273
A Colorblind Solution to Racial Problems in Criminal Justice 273
Potential Disadvantages of Neighborhood Grand Juries 274
The Neighborhood Grand Jury 276
Conclusion 277
Bibliography 277
Notes 282

Chapter 10 • Grand Juries and Expertise in the Administrative State 293

Ronald F. Wright
A Brief History of Grand Juries as Administrative Bodies 294
Grand Jury Administrative Functions in a Frontier Democracy 295
Early Evaluations of the Grand Jury 296
Shrinking the Grand Jury’s Administrative Role 298
How Citizen Panels Became Unthinkable 301
Problems with Excluding Citizen Participation 303
Current Forms of Citizen Administration 305
Structuring an Administrative Grand Jury 307
Panel as Ombudsman 307
Veto over Policy Priorities 308
Leadership on Agency Information Policy 309
Transition from Criminal to Administrative Context 310
Antidotes for Grand Jury Passivity 310
Degree of Reliance on an Adversarial System 311
Conclusion 312
Bibliography 313
Notes 318

Chapter 11 • Remaking the Grand Jury 323
Roger A. Fairfax, Jr.

Grand Jury 1.0 324
Classic Grand Jury Critiques 324
Costliness 325
Ineffectiveness (Over-Compliance) 325
Redundancy 326
Traditional Grand Jury Reform Proposals 327
The Case for Grand Jury Innovation 330
The Grand Jury’s Susceptibility to Innovation 331
The Grand Jury as an Appropriate Vehicle for Criminal Justice Innovation 332

Grand Jury 2.0: The Grand Jury as a Tool to Facilitate 333
Cutting-Edge Criminal Procedure 333
Plea Bargaining and Sentencing 333
Plea Bargaining 333
The Grand Jury as a Tool for Increased Popular Input into Criminal Sentencing 335
Diversion and ADR 336
Deferred Prosecution Agreements 336
Drug Courts and Problem-Solving Courts 337
Criminal Alternative Dispute Resolution: Victim-Offender Mediation 337
Guiding and Regulating Prosecutors 339
Guiding Prosecutorial Priorities 339
Regulating Prosecutorial Conduct 340
Conclusion 341
Bibliography 342
Notes 347

About the Authors 357
Index 363
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xiii
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Roger Anthony Fairfax, Jr.
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Introduction

Many believe the grand jury—one of the oldest protections known to the American constitutional order—has strayed from its moorings and has eroded beyond recognition. A common criticism is that the grand jury’s central purpose has morphed from the protection of individual rights to the facilitation of governmental investigative power. Others echo Jeremy Bentham’s 19th century critique that the grand jury is unnecessary and redundant in a modernized criminal justice system. Although commentators differ as to the degree of the grand jury’s atrophy, most scholars, lawyers, and judges paint a fairly bleak portrait of the grand jury’s present utility as the bulwark of liberty it was designed to be. This book challenges the American legal culture to re-imagine the grand jury, both by restoring its proud heritage and adapting it to modern realities.


This volume, thus, seizes the opportunity to update the discussion and offer modern perspectives on the grand jury—all of which lead to a coherent vision for reforming and remaking the grand jury. Each of the chapters represents a fresh contribution to the grand jury literature by leading criminal law
and procedure scholars and commentators. The book’s synthesis of constitutional theory and history and concrete policy proposal make it required reading for any scholar, student, jurist or lawyer interested in the past, present, or future of the American grand jury.

In Chapter 1, “Enlisting and Deploying Federal Grand Juries in the War on Terrorism,” Sara Sun Beale and James E. Felman explore the role the grand jury—an ancient law enforcement investigative tool—plays in the modern counterterrorism efforts.

In Chapter 2, “Grand Jurors Speak,” Susan Brenner takes us inside the “black box” of grand juror deliberations. As a result of operating an informational website devoted to the grand jury, Professor Brenner has received numerous unsolicited communications for sitting and former grand jurors. Their queries and statements give is a rare peek into how grand juries operate and how grand jurors think.

In Chapter 3, “Does Grand Jury Discretion Have a Legitimate (and Useful) Role to Play in Criminal Justice?,” Roger Fairfax illuminates grand jury discretion and places it in its constitutional and historical context, arguing that the grand jury can assist prosecutors in the exercise of their discretion in a way that enhances crime control, criminal justice efficiency, and the protection of individual rights.

In Chapter 4, “Honoring the Voice of the Citizen: Breathing Life into the Grand Jury Requirement,” Judge Michael Daly Hawkins, the author of an influential Ninth Circuit opinion explaining the grand jury’s historical role and function, makes a compelling case for revitalizing the modern grand jury.

In Chapter 5, “Retelling Grand Jury History,” Niki Kuckes challenges the conventional wisdom that modern grand jury law and practice are firmly rooted in historical practice.

In Chapter 6, “Implementing the Neighborhood Grand Jury,” Adriaan Lanni proposes a reengineering of the grand jury as an organ of local democratic influence on prosecutorial charging practices.

In Chapter 7, “Prosecutorial Charging Practices and Grand Jury Screening: Some Empirical Observations,” Andrew Leipold mines empirical data to attempt to shed light on the question whether the grand jury is an effective screen for criminal charges in a system driven by guilty pleas.

In Chapter 8, “The True Goals of the Modern Grand Jury—and How to Achieve Them,” Ric Simmons sets forth a blueprint for helping the grand jury to fulfill its true potential in the modern criminal justice system.

In Chapter 9, “Restoring the Grand Jury,” Kevin Washburn advances a community-based conception for restoring the grand jury’s original purpose.
In Chapter 10, “Grand Juries and Expertise in the Administrative State,” Ronald Wright proposes the grand jury as a model for greater utilization of lay citizens in the oversight and administration of government.

Finally, in Chapter 11, “Remaking the Grand Jury,” Roger Fairfax sketches a blueprint for the grand jury’s functional makeover designed to make it relevant and responsive to the needs of modern criminal justice.