



# Angela Yvonne Davis

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*Angela, sister, you are welcome in this house.*

— “Angela,” Liberation News Service

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## Biography

Angela Yvonne Davis was born January 26, 1944, to B. Frank, a teacher and businessman, and Sally E. Davis, who was also a teacher. Davis was born in Birmingham, Alabama, at a time of great political unrest and racism in the United States. As a child, Davis’s parents had many Communist friends and she subsequently joined a Communist youth group.

Davis traveled to Germany in 1960, where she spent two years studying at the Frankfurt School under acclaimed scholar Theodor Adorno. From 1963 to 1964, Davis attended the University of Paris. Davis then returned to the United States and attended Brandeis University, in Waltham, Massachusetts. After earning her B.A. (magna cum laude) in 1965, Davis flew to Germany, where she conducted graduate research. Upon returning to the U.S., Davis enrolled at the University of California at San Diego, where she began pursuing her master’s degree, which she received in 1968.

### Quick Facts

- \* Born in 1944
- \* African-American activist, teacher, and author
- \* Member of the Communist Party and the Black Panthers

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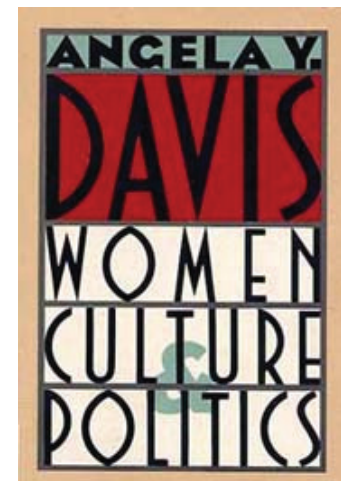
## Biography continued

It was at the University of California at San Diego that Davis began closely studying the Communist Party. In 1968, Davis became a member of the Communist Party, as well as a member of the Black Panthers. It was her involvement in these radical groups that caused Davis to be watched very closely by the United States government. It was also these radical associations that resulted in her dismissal from her position as assistant professor of philosophy at the University of California at Los Angeles after teaching for only one year.

In 1970, Davis became only the third woman in history to appear on the FBI's most wanted list. Davis was charged by the authorities with conspiracy to free George Jackson with a bloody shootout in front of a courthouse in California. The FBI also asserted that Davis armed prisoners in the Marin County courthouse with guns that were registered in her name. After the warrant was issued for her arrest, Davis spent two weeks evading police.

During this time, a sign went up in windows of houses and businesses all across the United States. The sign read, "Angela, sister, you are welcome in this house." Finally, Davis was discovered in a Greenwich Village hotel, and was formally charged with murder and kidnapping, even though she didn't actually take part in the shootout in Marin County, California. Davis spent sixteen months behind bars, until her subsequent acquittal on all charges.

After her release from prison, in 1971, Davis's essays were published in a collection entitled *If They Come in the Morning: Voices of Resistance*. In her essays, she details her belief in Communist theory, as well as her thoughts on racial oppression in the United States. Davis's friends then convinced her that she should draft an account of her life in the 1960s and 1970s. The result was *Angela Davis: An Autobiography*. In 1980, Davis ran for Vice President of the United States on the Communist Party ticket.





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## Biography continued

Davis's next book, *Women, Race, and Class* was published in 1981. *Women, Race, and Class* became an instant feminist classic and a text for many classes on sexism, racism, and classism. Then, in 1989, Davis published the first collection of her speeches, entitled *Women, Culture, and Politics*. This book documents Davis's speeches from 1983 to 1987.

Today, Angela Y. Davis continues to be a strong force for political and social activism, as well as the reformation of the prison industrial complex. She is also an accomplished cultural theorist. Davis is now a tenured professor at the University of California at Santa Cruz, and spends much of her time delivering speeches to eager audiences around the country.

## Biography continued

### Works by the author

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# Angela Yvonne Davis

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