



# Leaning on the Arc: A Personal History of Criminal Defense

*M. Gerald Schwartzbach*

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*Leaning on the Arc: A Personal History of Criminal Defense* is a memoir by renowned trial lawyer M. Gerald Schwartzbach, who is perhaps best known for successfully defending actor Robert Blake against charges he had murdered his wife. Each chapter details a different trial in the author's illustrious career that run the gamut from murder to malpractice, sexual assault to domestic abuse, from protecting the right of dissent to advocating expanded rights for defendants. Schwartzbach stands at the intersection of some of the key issues of our time and demonstrates how true justice can only happen when we refuse to objectify the defendant, whoever he or she may be, whatever his or her alleged crime.

Finally, *Leaning on the Arc* is a firsthand, material, and applicable account of what it takes to practice criminal defense law at a high level, how it really works, what to watch out for, and how it all feels.

"Gerry Schwartzbach's fascinating book is not only packed with great tales of injustice subverted by intelligence and passion, but it reminds us how the litany of prosecutorial injustices we read about daily, can be overthrown by the old industrial-age values of diligence, deep thought, and a burning commitment to justice. Though many of the cases in this book are about the famous, I met him when he was defending a penniless and unknown close friend of mine. I know a stand-up man when I see one, and you should read this book to gain an introduction."

—Peter Coyote, Actor/Author

"This is the fascinating memoir of an excellent, highly accomplished, practical and idealistic criminal defense lawyer, as committed to his clients, the proper functioning of the criminal justice system and the rule of law as any lawyer could be. The lesson to be drawn is that thoughtful and the most thorough preparation is the key ingredient for success in the practice of law, regardless of one's specialty."

—Robert Helman, Partner, Mayer Brown LLP, Adjunct Professor University of Chicago Law School

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