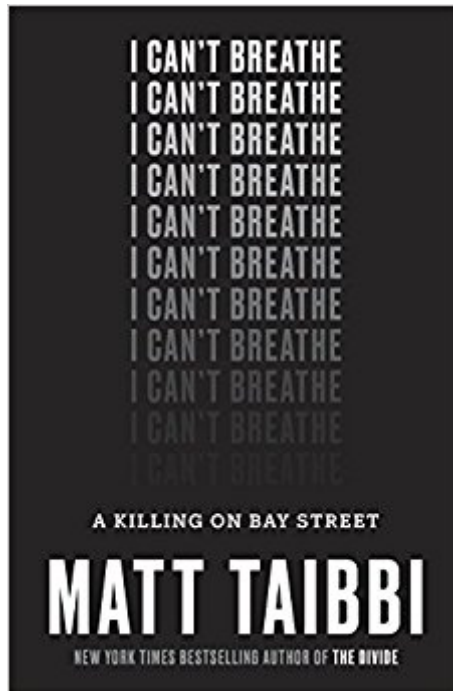




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# I Can't Breathe: A Killing On Bay Street



## Synopsis

A work of riveting literary journalism that explores the roots and repercussions of the infamous killing of Eric Garner by the New York City police—”from the bestselling author of *The Divide*” On July 17, 2014, a forty-three-year-old black man named Eric Garner died on a Staten Island sidewalk after a police officer put him in what has been described as an illegal chokehold during an arrest for selling bootleg cigarettes. The final moments of Garner’s life were captured on video and seen by millions. His agonized last words, “I can’t breathe,” became a rallying cry for the nascent Black Lives Matter protest movement. A grand jury ultimately declined to indict the officer who wrestled Garner to the pavement. Matt Taibbi’s deeply reported retelling of these events liberates Eric Garner from the abstractions of newspaper accounts and lets us see the man in full—with all his flaws and contradictions intact. A husband and father with a complicated personal history, Garner was neither villain nor victim, but a fiercely proud individual determined to do the best he could for his family, bedeviled by bad luck, and ultimately subdued by forces beyond his control. In America, no miscarriage of justice exists in isolation, of course, and in *I Can’t Breathe* Taibbi also examines the conditions that made this tragedy possible. Featuring vivid vignettes of life on the street and inside our Kafkaesque court system, Taibbi’s kaleidoscopic account illuminates issues around policing, mass incarceration, the underground economy, and racial disparity in law enforcement. No one emerges unsullied, from the conservative district attorney who half-heartedly prosecutes the case to the progressive mayor caught between the demands of outraged activists and the foot-dragging of recalcitrant police officials. A masterly narrative of urban America and a scathing indictment of the perverse incentives built into our penal system, *I Can’t Breathe* drills down into the particulars of one case to confront us with the human cost of our broken approach to dispensing criminal justice. Praise for Matt Taibbi “Matt Taibbi is [Hunter S.] Thompson’s heir.” —Seattle Post-Intelligencer

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Praise for Matt Taibbi "Matt Taibbi is [Hunter S.] Thompson's heir." "Seattle

Post-Intelligencer "The Divide "These are the stories that will keep you up at night. . . . The

Divide is not just a report from the new America; it is advocacy journalism at its finest." "Los

Angeles Times "Powerful and shocking . . . an important book." "The Washington Post "A

Captivating . . . The Divide enshrines its author's position as one of the most important

voices in contemporary American journalism." "The Independent (UK) "Griftopia "A

stinging new history of the financial crisis that heralds a return of Menckesque,

dirt-under-the-fingernails American journalism." "GQ "A relentlessly disturbing, penetrating

exploration of the root causes of the trauma that upended economic security in millions of American

homes . . . a full-scale indictment of Wall Street and Washington." "The New York Times Book

Review "Taibbi chronicles the corruption of the political process with indignation and dark

humor. The takeaway? Be angry, but blame the right culprits." "Time

Matt Taibbi has been a contributing editor for Rolling Stone and the author of five previous books, including the New York Times bestsellers The Great Derangement, Griftopia, and The Divide. He lives in New Jersey.

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