

## PROFILE OF RESISTANCE

### Angela Davis

professor, writer, activist

*"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.  
I am changing the things I cannot accept"*

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#### Background

Born: January 26, 1944

Angela Davis was born in Birmingham, Alabama. Her mother was a civil rights activist. As a child, she saw bombings in her neighborhood. White people were bombing the houses of Black people. They wanted to scare them and make them move away. This inspired her to want to fight for social justice.

Davis studied at Brandeis University, where she was one of three Black students. She also studied at the University of Frankfurt in Germany, and the University of California. She earned many college degrees. <sup>1</sup>

#### Davis's Resistance

After college, Davis became an activist. She worked with the Black Panther Party to fight for Black civil rights. She also fought for women to be treated equally. In the 1960s, Davis was known as a "radical feminist" because she would say things about women's rights that other people were afraid to say.<sup>2</sup> An important issue Davis fought (and continues to fight) for is **abolishing**<sup>3</sup> prisons.<sup>4</sup> She believed that prisons were a new type of slavery in America. She pointed out African Americans were the majority of people in prison even though they were a small part of the overall population in the United States. This showed her the prison system in the United States was not fair.<sup>5</sup> Davis believes that America should spend money on things like education and healthcare instead of spending money on building prisons.

#### Achievements

Angela Davis continues to teach, advocate, and inspire new generations of activists. Davis's legacy lives on through her own writings and the many books, songs, and documentaries have been created to tell her life story.

<sup>1</sup> Angela Davis. (2019, July 9). Retrieved from <https://www.biography.com/activist/angela-davis>.

<sup>2</sup> The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2019, April 16). Angela Davis. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Angela-Davis>.

<sup>3</sup> **Abolish(ing)**: to completely do away with (something). *Abolish slavery, Abolish a law*

<sup>4</sup> Kelly, Kim. *"What the Prison-Abolition Movement Wants"*. *Teen Vogue*. Retrieved April 24, 2020

<sup>5</sup> *"Freedom Struggle: Angela Davis on Calls to Defund Police, Racism & Capitalism, and the 2020 Election"*. *Democracy Now!*. Retrieved October 2, 2020.

## Essential Questions

1. How did Angela Davis' childhood experiences influence her work later in life?
2. Are there any things you are outspoken about? How do you get your voice heard?
3. *"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept"*
  - a. What social problem is unacceptable to you? What can you do to help fight for change?