



Trials of the Century: A Decade-by-Decade Look at Ten of America's Most Sensational Crimes

Mark J. Phillips, Aryn Z. Phillips

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In every decade of the twentieth century, there was one sensational murder trial that riveted public attention and at the time was called "the trial of the century." This book tells the story of each murder case and the dramatic trial—and media coverage—that followed.

Starting with the murder of famed architect Stanford White in 1906 and ending with the O.J. Simpson trial of 1994, the authors recount ten compelling tales spanning the century. Each is a story of celebrity and sex, prejudice and heartbreak, and all reveal how often the arc of American justice is pushed out of its trajectory by an insatiable media driven to sell copy.

The most noteworthy cases are here--including the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, the Sam Sheppard murder trial ("The Fugitive"), the "Helter Skelter" murders of Charles Manson, and the O.J. Simpson murder trial. But some cases that today are lesser known also provide fascinating glimpses into the tenor of the time: the media sensation created by yellow journalist William Randolph Hearst around the murder trial of 1920s movie star Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle; the murder of the Scarsdale Diet guru by an elite prep-school headmistress in the 1980s; and more. The authors conclude with an epilogue on the infamous Casey Anthony ("tot mom") trial, showing that the twenty-first century is as prone to sensationalism as the last century.

This is a fascinating history of true crime, justice gone awry, and the media often at its worst.

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