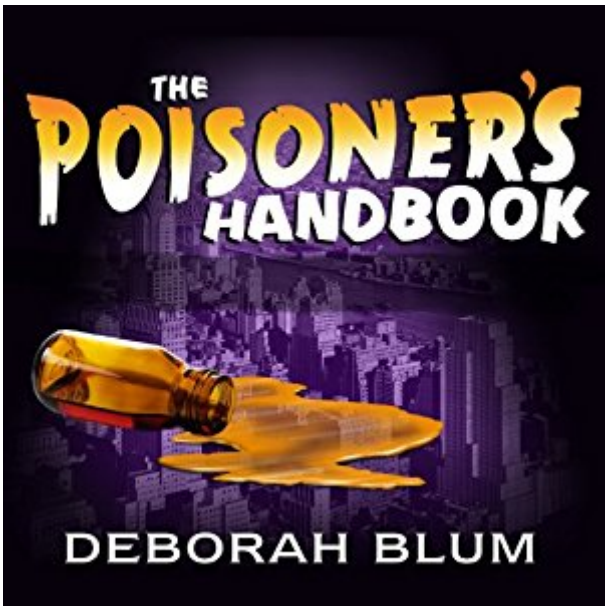
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The Poisoner's Handbook: Murder And The Birth Of Forensic Medicine In Jazz Age New York



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Synopsis

Equal parts true crime, twentieth-century history, and science thriller, The Poisoner’s Handbook is "a vicious, page-turning story that reads more like Raymond Chandler than Madame Curie" (The New York Observer) A fascinating Jazz Age tale of chemistry and detection, poison and murder, The Poisoner’s Handbook is a page-turning account of a forgotten era. In early twentieth-century New York, poisons offered an easy path to the perfect crime. Science had no place in the Tammany Hall-controlled coroner’s office, and corruption ran rampant. However, with the appointment of chief medical examiner Charles Norris in 1918, the poison game changed forever. Together with toxicologist Alexander Gettler, the duo set the justice system on fire with their trailblazing scientific detective work, triumphing over seemingly unbeatable odds to become the pioneers of forensic chemistry and the gatekeepers of justice.In 2014, PBS’s AMERICAN EXPERIENCE released a film based onÃ Â The Poisoner’s Handbook. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition
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Language: English
ASIN: B003954SYC
Best Sellers Rank: #10 inÃ Â Books > Medical Books > Pharmacology > Toxicology #27 inÃ Â Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Law #29 inÃ Â Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Internal Medicine > Pathology > Forensic Medicine

Customer Reviews

Slightly morbid topic I suppose, but the author takes care to add plenty of levity to a fascinating topic. Details of the personalities and lives of the men involved in developing tests to identify poisons used in an era of medical guesswork and scientific hand-waving adds some life to an interesting history of the science behind medical examiners’ ability to determine cause of death. Well written to hold the attention of those who don’t particularly like reading dry scientific texts with some hard science detail to please those who do.

I’m more familiar with the courtroom drama, the Holmesian detective or the police procedural, but this is a different view of a murder mystery. The overarching story is a history of the beginning of forensic science but it’s told as it unfolds in the context of criminal investigations, one murder (or acquittal) per chapter. It’s an easy, light read, despite the subject matter, and the jazz-age language is present enough to sweeten but not cloy. Not a book I’d have picked for myself but recommended to me: good call.Beware the dodgy gin and avoid the "smoke cocktail." You’ve been warned.

The PoisonerÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Handbook is a captivating blend of 1920ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s crime stories and the chemistry that made it all possible.BlumÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s book is easy to read (though it assumes an intelligent reader), the chemistry is never overwhelming, and the two gentlemen that she chose to follow throughout the chemical boom of the Roaring 20ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s led fascinating jobs filled with mystery, murder, death, ground brains and Bunsen burners. And at under 300 pages, it is just the right length.I often use non-fiction books such as this to cleanse my palate (as it were) if IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve had a bit too much fantasy and SciFi. This book did the trick.Also, reading the anecdotes in this book makes me want to quit my job and write murder mysteries because there are just so many sneaky ways of killing people! Fortunately, all yÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢all are safe - I very nearly failed junior Chemistry in high school, and sometimes, even measuring out teaspoons of coffee grounds in too much chemistry for me. I guess IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll need to hire an evil genius assistant...

I absolutely loved this book. It is a highly readable account of the rise of forensic medicine and toxicology in the United States, focusing on the Bellevue lab in New York City. The book talks about a number of homicides (or, in some cases, accidents that were believed to be homicides) that resulted from poisonous chemicals. There are chapters on arsenic, cyanide, carbon monoxide, radium, thallium, etc. Some of the compounds that the author discusses were known to be poisons (like arsenic and cyanide, for example), whereas some were new compounds, discovered in the first third of the twentieth century, that were not discovered to be poisonous until ill effects were reported.The book is not just about crime or homicidal maniacs who use poison as their weapon of choice. It is also about changing technologies, corporate greed, and egregious misuse of chemical compounds that borders on being comical to the modern reader. (Radium health tonics. Blearghhh.)The book is well written (the crisp, non-academic writing is very refreshing - unlike the radium health tonics) and does not get overly bogged down in scientific terms. The author provides

enough medical and scientific background to be relevant, but she presents it in layman's terms. I love reading about the periodic table, but since I am not a scientist, I find that sometimes I get lost when there is too much detail. That is not the case here. I highly recommend this book.

Reads like a tell-all or thriller novel--loved it! I hated to get to the end. Reminds me a lot of Erik Larson's terrific books---going back and forth between historical fact and the private lives of good guys. I learned a lot--might read it again soon.

This book is set as the Cover says, in the Jazzy 1920's, But is also a testament to one of the American Chemist Heroes Gettler who tirelessly solved and fixed Americas Growing pains of the Big City life as it bulged at the seams sewn together by the Gilded Age with Gildings Depth in how far can you go proven every day in that illustrious world of America where some famous Nursery Rimes a books like the Wizard of Oz gave testament to Gilded Corruption, Every page of the Poisoners Handbook to the Section I'm at and cant wait to finish, walks you through a Decade of Deceitful people that gave rise to unsung Heroes,This is a Very good book, I've been through several Doctors offices not as a patient while waiting, reading bits a pieces of itSparking interest in several occasions in a quick review of the book.

I thought this book read like a novel. I had bought it as a reference, and have used it as such, but read it from cover to cover. I've noted there are critiques that say some of the science is incorrect, so I suppose I'd check before I used a specific point in your own novel. I would not let the criticism deter you from buying it. The discussion of alcohol poisoning during Prohibition is enough reason to read this. I don't mention my own books in a review of others,' but in this case it's a compliment to Ms. Blum. Her Prohibition discussion helped me a lot as I wrote Rekindling Motives.Ã Â Rekindling Motives (Jolie Gentil Cozy Mystery Series Book 2)Ã Â I recommend this book for anyone who wants a broad overview of the topic.

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