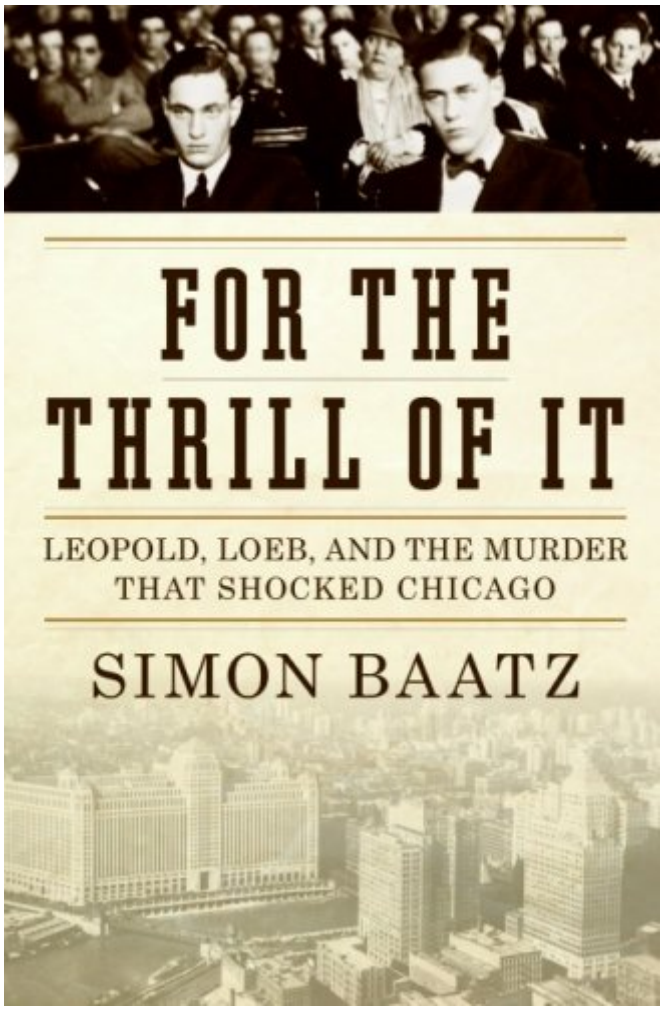
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For The Thrill Of It: Leopold, Loeb, And The Murder That Shocked Jazz Age Chicago



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Synopsis

It was a crime that shocked the nation: the brutal murder in Chicago in 1924 of a child by two wealthy college students who killed solely for the thrill of the experience. Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb were intellectualsÃ¢â ¬â •too smart, they believed, for the police to catch them. When they were apprehended, state's attorney Robert Crowe was certain that no defense could save the ruthless killers from the gallows. But the families of the confessed murderers hired Clarence Darrow, entrusting the lives of their sons to the most famous lawyer in America in what would be one of the most sensational criminal trials in the history of American justice.Set against the backdrop of the 1920sÃ¢â ¬â •a time of prosperity, self-indulgence, and hedonistic excess in a lawless city on the brink of anarchyÃ¢â ¬â •For the Thrill of It draws the reader into a world of speakeasies and flappers, of gangsters and gin parties, with a spellbinding narrative of Jazz Age murder and mystery.

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Customer Reviews

I have read a few accounts of the Leopold and Loeb case over the years, but from this book I learned many, many details I did not know about their lives before the murder, the murder and the trial. Well written and obviously well researched, I recommend this book for all those interested in

the facts, as opposed to the myths, of one of the 20th Century's most infamous crimes and its perpetrators.

Proclaimed "The Crime of the Century" - until sadly superseded by more heinous murders as the 20th century progressed - the "Thrill Killing of Bobby Franks" shocked Chicago and the country in May, 1924. The 14 year old son of wealthy parents was kidnapped and murdered near his home and school on Chicago's South Side. When his murderers were caught, they turned out to be 19 year old boys, from the same social milieu as the victim. When asked why they committed the murder, Richard Loeb and Nathan Leopold answered, "For the thrill of it".There have been a few books and movies based on the Leopold and Loeb "thrill murder", but Simon Baatz's "For the Thrill of It: Leopold, Loeb, and the Murder That Shocked Chicago" is one of the better ones. I've read them all, beginning with Meyer Levin's, "Compulsion", a fictional accounting of the relationship between the two killers and the murder and subsequent trial. Levin writes his novel in the first person, as a fellow student at the University of Chicago and an acquaintance of the Nathan Leopold character. Baatz's book, is a straight non-fiction account and he goes into great detail about the boys' families, the twisted relationship between the boys, the crime, the psychiatric findings, and the trial. Baatz also highlights the lawyers, law officers, and doctors involved. His writing is non-sensational and the book includes plenty of pictures of the people involved in the case and maps of the area.One of the previous reviews I read states that Simon Baatz was wrong about the number of children in the Franks' family. Baatz writes there were four, including Bobby, and the reviewer says there were only three. I was intrigued by that error - if it was indeed an error - and started checking in on-line genealogical sites and I can't find anything that says there were four children. So I think you might read this book with a bit of caution.

This is a good account, but if you're really interested in the Leopold and Loeb story and I can only recommend one book, it would be "The Crime of the Century" by Hal Higdon.

Just finished the book. It's well written overall, and mostly an easy and intriguing read. The author uses footnotes and indicated sources, which I appreciate. The extensive use of documentation adds a lot to the story. That said, the book could have used some additional editing to remove repetition. There is also extensive detail about, for example, Clarence Darrow's personal history that is not, strictly speaking, necessary. There were also a ton of places where additional analysis and commentary would have been valuable to help readers understand how the procedures and beliefs

of the past have changed over time. In particular, the section about the "alienists" findings really needed commentary. Fascinating overall, though. I'm glad to have read it.

I had always heard about Leopold and Loeb but never thought about the background of the case. I didn't really expect too much from this book but I was amazed at how absorbing it was to read. I like to go back and forth reading several books at a time on my Kindles, but once I started this one, I went back to it very frequently. I actually haven't finished it yet - but I'm up to the trial which includes the famous Clarence Darrow. I must disagree with several people about the Kindle edition - I found it to be great on both my big HD Fire and my Paperwhite; both the print and the pictures were fine and error free. This book was a great bargain and I encourage you to pick it up if you are interested in true-crime nonfiction books.

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