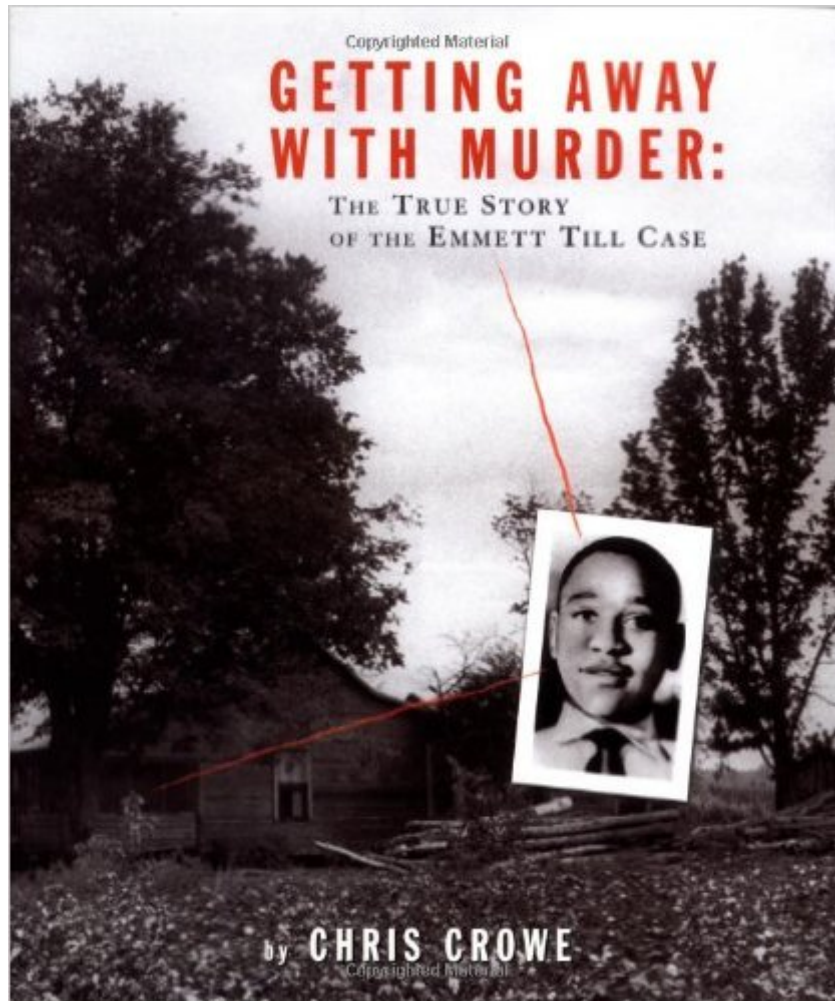


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Getting Away With Murder: The True Story Of The Emmett Till Case



Synopsis

The kidnapping and murder of Emmett Till is famous as a catalyst for the Civil Rights Movement. Emmett Till, a fourteen-year-old Black teenager from Chicago, was visiting family in a small town in Mississippi during the summer of 1955. Likely showing off to friends, Emmett allegedly whistled at a white woman. Three days later his brutally beaten body was found floating in the Tallahatchie River. The extreme violence of the crime put a national spotlight on the Jim Crow ways of the South, and many Americans-Black and white-were further outraged at the speedy trial of the white murderers. Although the two white men were tried and acquitted by an all-white jury, they later bragged publicly about the crime. It was a galvanizing moment for Black leaders and ordinary citizens, including such activists as Rosa Parks. In clear, vivid detail Chris Crowe investigates the before-and-aftermath of the crime, as well as the dramatic court trial, and places it into the context of the nascent Civil Rights Movement. With lively narrative and abundantly illustrated with forty fascinating contemporaneous photographs, this impressive work of nonfiction brings fresh insight to the case in a manner that will be accessible and eye-opening for teenagers and adults alike.

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: Preschool and up

Customer Reviews

Emphatically, no. Emmitt Till was a black child who was kidnaped, tortured, and murdered by white men on the account of one of the men's wives' upset. Eyewitness testimony disagrees with the

official record, and after their acquittal, the murderers sold their story for money to a national magazine, and admitted the crime. Emmitt Till was a 14-year-old child who was taken in an act of horrifying violence, tortured, and murdered. I thought that would be clear from reading this book. But oddly, Chris Crowe did little to introduce us to Emmitt Till, and wrote a surprisingly sympathetic context for his murderers' actions. I'm happy that a book like this exists to tell about the murder and the non-punishment of the murderers. It includes photographs, including the shocking photograph of the corpse, along with many photos of the mourners. The photographs of the murderers tell part of the story, too. But all along, this is portrayed as the story of a black boy from Chicago whose Mama TRIED to warn him to humble himself in the south, whose Uncle SHOULD HAVE put him on a train back north when he heard the rumors, whom everyone agreed DESERVED a whipping or other severe punishment for speaking to a white woman... DID Emmitt Till really deserve it? If he truly spoke to Carolyn Bryant as rumored, did he deserve punishment? Did he deserve to die? This book presents all the facets of the point of view that would answer that question with a YES. It shows the segregated south on the defensive against the Supreme Court and pushy "outsiders." It discusses the south's "Way of Life" over and over. I'm not saying Chris Crowe did this on purpose: I suspect he honestly was holding a mirror up to the shocking state of affairs in the south and expecting his readers to deplore the racist you-know-whats. But because he spent so many pages laying out the defense's case in the murder trial and trying to give us context, context, context -- he ends up justifying the bad guys. He made sense of it for us. That's a shame. Did Emmitt Till deserve to die? Chris Crowe writes well -- more history should be written this well. But cold objectivity on this subject? No thanks.

This book leaves out or does not address facts of the case. First, Till did not whistle at Bryant's wife. It was reported he said "bye baby" as he was pushed to say by his cousins and local friends. It was idiotic on their part to encourage Till to do something that was as a minimum punishment by severe beating. Bryant's wife did not tell her husband about what happened. It was actually two local black men that were sitting on the porch of the store during the incident. They were jealous of Till's nice clothes (his mother had a good job in Chicago) and basically sent the boy to his death. Yet nowhere do these two idiots get called out for once again idiotic behavior that doomed the boy. Clearly Till's uncle Moses Wright made a huge error not getting Till out of town and made a bigger error letting the men take him in the middle of the night. However, Wright was a respected Pastor, knew Bryant to be reasonable and somewhat friendly towards blacks. Wright did not think they would come after Till and figured due to his status in the community, he could handle the situation. Milam and Bryant

described Till as being quiet and unafraid which enraged them in a Life Magazine interview a few years later. They initially said the goal was to scare him but that changed by Till's lack of fear about what was happening. But Bryant and Milam did get acquitted they were convicted in the court of public opinion. Bryant's store was boycotted and he went bankrupt. His wife left him soon after the killing and Milam had to move away yet was a pariah the rest of his life. Till's mother did not speak to her family for years as she blamed them for his death and even more because they did not tell her until Emmett had been missing for 3 days. If you want a better account of what really happened read the book written by his cousin Simeon and/or Death of innocence that was written by Till's mother.

I do recommend this book because there is still racism in the United States of America today and many people need to stop because nobody wants to be insulted because of their race. The book's plot was how people were treated back in the 1940's and 50's and gave me many reasons why not to be a racist. I would not like to read another book by Chris Crowe again because this book was extremely sad. This book is perfect for people that are trying to improve themselves and are trying to put themselves in someone else's shoes way back when.

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