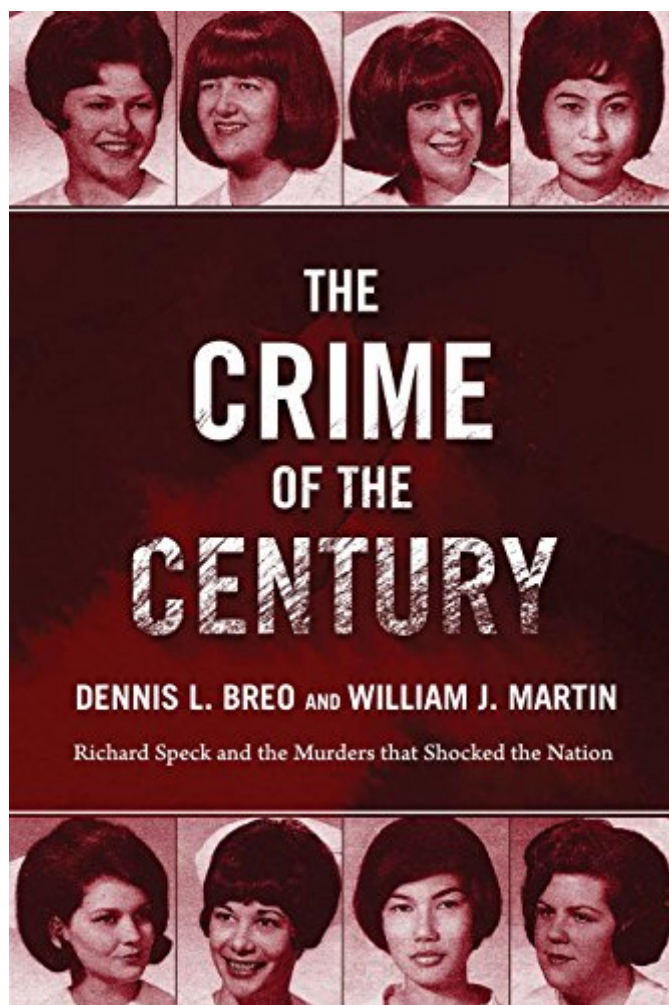


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The Crime Of The Century: Richard Speck And The Murders That Shocked A Nation



Synopsis

"Oh, my God, they are all dead!" On July 14th, 1966, Richard Franklin Speck swept through a quiet Chicago townhouse like a summer tornado and stabbed, strangled, and killed eight young nurses in a violent sexual rampage. By morning, only one nurse, Corazon Amurao, had miraculously survived, and her scream of terror was heard around the world. As the eight bodies were carried out of the small building, the coroner, who had seen the carnage up close, told a gathering crowd: "It is the crime of the century!" Now, on the 50th anniversary of the murders, the prosecutor who put Speck in prison for life (William J. Martin) and the author and journalist who won an award for his coverage of the crime (Dennis L. Breo) have teamed up to re-create the blood-soaked night that opened a new chapter in the history of American crime: mass murder. Their riveting and richly documented account reveals fascinating behind-the-scenes descriptions of Speck, the young nurses, the relentless manhunt and massive investigation, and the bold legal moves and painstaking preparation for the trial that returned a death sentence for Speck. Corazon Amurao, the nurse the killer left behind, confronted Speck at trial and told jurors, "This is the man!" Richard Speck was spared execution by Supreme Court rulings and here is the inside story of how he confessed to the murders in a sordid prison video made three years before his death of a heart attack in 1991. And here, in exclusive interviews and photos, is the life today of the nurse who survived the crime that murdered American innocence..

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Customer Reviews

On June 15, 1966, I was living in a northern suburb of Chicago. The evening paper and the news channels were alive that night - and for days after - about a gruesome, horrible crime on Chicago's southeast side - the murders of 8 student nurses in their townhouse/dorm, the night before. Even in the age before 24/7 news and the internet, the murders by demented loner Richard Speck were news all summer, and later on for his trial. How had one man - armed with a knife - subdued and sexually tortured eight young women before murdering them, one by one? Dennis Breo, in his new book, "The Crime of the Century: Richard Speck and the Murders that Shocked a Nation", gives a measured and non-sensational view of the crime, its victims, and the aftermath. There certainly have been more than one "Crime of the Century" in the US in the 1900's. Two - Speck and the Leopold and Loeb Murders - happened in Chicago. What is it about my hometown that has given rise to such a high murder rate, both before and after Speck? Speck, as the author points out, was a volcano ready to go off in the hot, humid summer of 1966, where race riots were already happening in other areas of Chicago. But this crime was not of a racial nature; Richard Speck and his victims were white and Filipino. Speck was just a drifter - with a special, soft-spoken charm that was reassuring to his victims - who took advantage of the nearness of the victims to ease his frustration with the world around him that just didn't seem to give him a break. And what of the nine student nurses - one hid herself under a bed during the killing spree - who were picked out almost on a whim? Breo gives good biographies of these women and their families. The one nurse who saved herself is highlighted in the book.

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