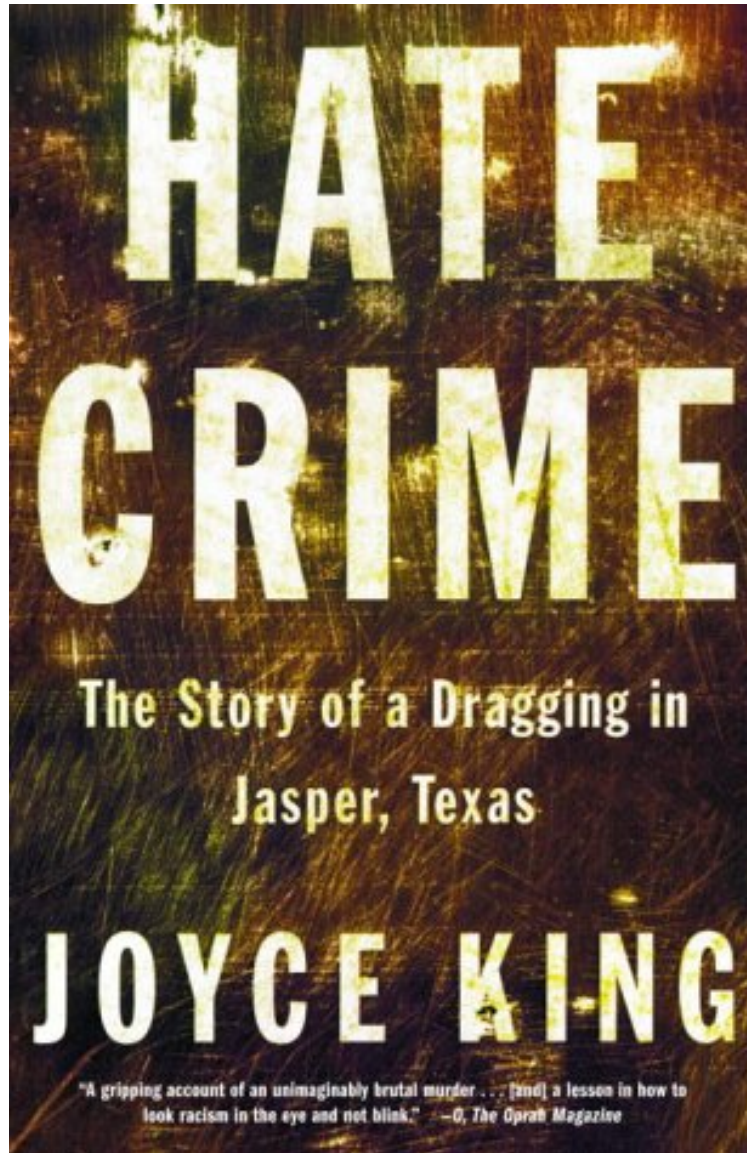


Hate Crime: The Story of a Dragging in Jasper, Texas

Joyce King

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Joyce King : Hate Crime: The Story of a Dragging in Jasper, Texas before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hate Crime: The Story of a Dragging in Jasper, Texas:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A man is slaughtered because his skin is dark.By SolipsoRacism...an ignorant monster. As late as 1998 it rampages in our new South. In Texas, two fellow ex-convicts and a third companion take a drunken joy ride. After chaining a middle-aged black man to the rear of their rickety pickup, they drag him along a dirt road, then along a paved road. He is discovered the following morning, in pieces.Joyce King, a

black radio reporter for CBS, writes concisely, but she provides essential details. We immerse ourselves into the town of Jasper and the events of the critical night, following Joyce's easy step-by-step narration. We learn about the victim and the perpetrators, and how the Texas prison system is partially to blame. Without bogging us down in boring minutiae, Joyce gives us seats in each of the three courtroom dramas. The book's index is well arranged, with helpful subtopics. She should have given us photos of the characters and the locations, but her text satisfies. I am not going to wrack her for a minor deficiency. She refrains from lengthy, boring commentary, and she lets the story convey the message. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good read BUT...By McFlyIt started out really well, but like most books written on similar subjects, it devolves into "See? White people are bad!" If you're going to write a book like this, stay on topic! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy t.tLooks brand new

On June 7, 1998, James Byrd Jr., a forty-nine-year-old black man, was walking home from a party when three white men in a pickup truck offered him a ride. They drove Byrd out to a lonely country road, tied him to a logging chain, and dragged him three miles to his death. Joyce King, an award-winning journalist and native Texan, was assigned to cover the story, which drew international media headlines. In *Hate Crime*, she provides a chilling re-creation of the slaying and the subsequent trials. But she also moves beyond the details of the case to provide insight into the minds of the murderers, and to investigate the Texas prison system in which they developed their virulent racism. King also explores how the town of Jasper, Texas, endured a tragedy that threatened to divide its residents. A first-rate work of reportage, *Hate Crime* is also a searing look at how race continues to shape life in America.

From Publishers Weekly When William King received the death penalty for the grisly murder of James Byrd Jr. in Jasper, Tex., he became the first white man in 150 years to be sent to that state's death row for killing a black man. Broadcast journalist King covered his trial and those of Russell Brewer and Shawn Berry, the two other young white men convicted of dragging Byrd behind a pickup truck on June 7, 1998. Suspecting that she's assigned the story only because she's black, King arrives in Jasper fearful and doubting her journalistic objectivity. The Louisiana native quickly confronts her own biases about the smalltown South, even as she becomes an "international commentator" on a crime that shocked the world. King reports the case from start to finish and deepens her chronicle by investigating King and Brewer's involvement in racist Texas prison gangs, creating a chilling portrait of racism's brutal breeding ground. But her efforts to tally the case's personal toll are less successful. The disjointed narrative provides very little insight into her character, and unskilled prose undercuts the telling. Particularly vexing are frequent dangling modifiers, such as one that turns a description of a bad tire into an accurate (if unintentional) assessment of the killers' characters: "Already beyond salvage, they decided the best insurance was a can of Fix-A-Flat." Though this account fares better as documentary than diary, King's ultimate rapprochement with the white authorities who deliver justice for Byrd rings true: "This case taught me what my own work on... racial tolerance had not. I was harboring my own insecurities about race and my own tendencies to stereotype. Recycling untruths simply made me more like the very people I avoided." Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal What was possibly the most heinous crime of the last few decades unfolded on a Texas back road in 1998 when three young whites wrapped a chain around an African American man and dragged him to his death behind their truck. Until the dragging of James Byrd Jr. some of us were hopeful (or nave) enough to think that we had seen an end to such virulent racism. African American radio reporter King covers each of the three trials that followed the atrocity. She does not offer much drama the identity of the perpetrators was apparent from the start or much insight into how such a crime could have happened. Certainly, alcohol played a part, as did the racially polarizing prison experience of two of the killers, but past that we get no real perspective on why this horrible event occurred. What King does present, in addition to straight reportage, is her perspective as an African American. She relates her personal experiences as a black in the South and discusses her reactions to the trials as well as to the white authorities who handled the case. Dina Temple-Raston's *A Death in Texas* focuses more on the politics and agendas of various segments of the small town. While King's book does not offer explanations, it does make a strong statement. Recommended for all public libraries. Jim Burns, Jacksonville P.L., FL Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Booklist The heinous crime of three white ex-convicts dragging to death a black man put the spotlight on Jasper, Texas, and the American past of racial animus and lynching. King, a former radio reporter, puts a human face on the crime and all those involved: victim, perpetrators, their families, and the entire town of Jasper. A well-integrated town, Jasper had presented itself as quite tolerant, at least in contrast to a Ku Klux Klan stronghold some 50 miles away. One of the defendants, facing a life of sentence rather than the death sentence of the other two, had had substantial contact with blacks, counting them among his friends. King cites the empathic contact, even embrace between the families of the victim and his convicted killers. While this dragging was hideous and sensational--including a decapitation and dismemberment--the fact is that the failure of the Texas prison system to recognize its racist characteristics is certainly partially culpable for the crime. King, a southern black woman, provides both objective reporting and sensitive insight into the players on both sides of America's racial divide. Vernon Ford Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved