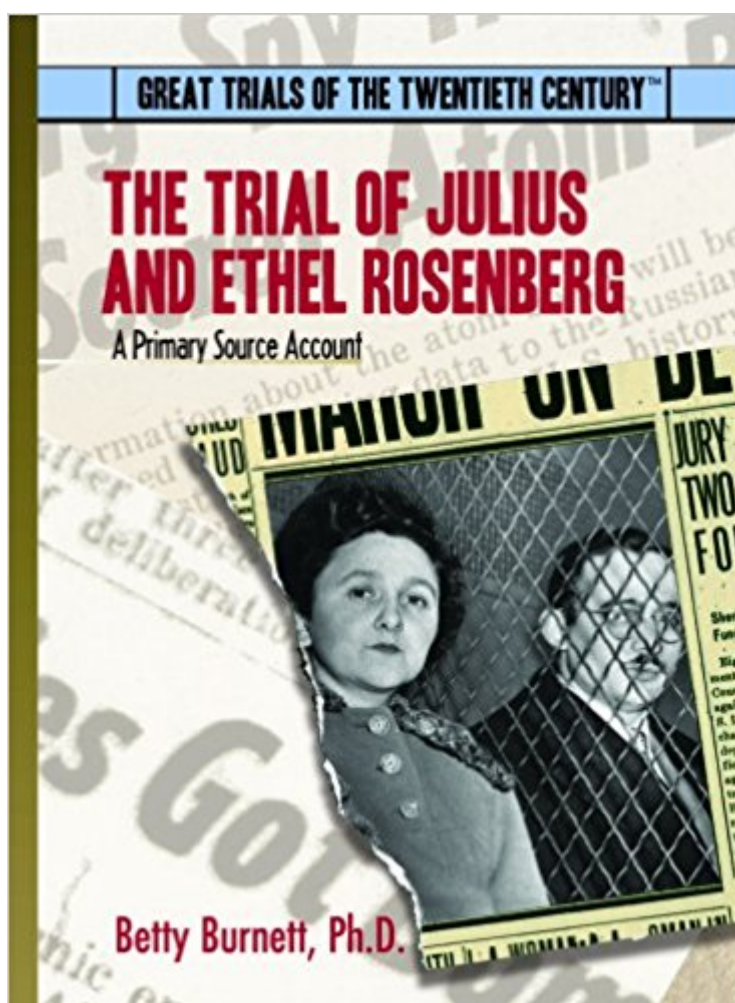


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The Trial Of Julius And Ethel Rosenberg: A Primary Source Account (Great Trials Of The 20th Century)



Synopsis

The trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg cannot be considered without looking at the time during which it occurred. It was the 1950s and the Cold War was raging. This book focuses on the background of the Cold War and the political beliefs of the Rosenbergs, showing how each impacted the trial and the verdict.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

great book

This book is written on a level that makes me think it is intended for eight or nine year olds. It has a lot of pictures, but little text. And it doesn't confuse anyone with tedious little things like facts. The story as told here is full of gaping holes, and leaves out immensely important details: e.g., a couple of casual references to Joel Barr and Al Sarant (whose name is misspelled "Savant") fail to mention that Julius Rosenberg recruited Barr for espionage, that Barr and Rosenberg recruited Sarant, that Barr and Sarant were highly productive espionage sources, and that both fled to the Eastern Bloc in 1950 and spent decades working for the former Soviet Union on various armaments projects (altogether Julius was responsible for recruiting himself and at least five other information source, plus three assistants to aid in photographing and transmitting classified documents, and gave the Soviet Union a working proximity fuse at a time they were still top secret). Nor would you ever know

their NKGB case officer, Aleksandr Feklisov, wrote a book about the Rosenberg case (The Man Behind the Rosenbergs; recommended) in which he discusses the great amount of information the seven passed to the Soviet Union through him. In fact, Feklisov's name doesn't appear at all. The book is filled with errors that anyone familiar with the case can immediately identify: e.g., David Greenglass was NOT "ready to talk" when the FBI called first interviewed him, and did NOT serve fifteen years in prison. The 1995 release of "CIA-National Security Agency decoding of secret Soviet reports" was code named VENONA, not VERONA, and it released much new information concerning the Rosenberg case; Klaus Fuch's espionage was discovered through a VENONA decrypt, not "some papers from the Soviet Consulate's office in New York City," and the statement that "To everyone's surprise, Fuchs didn't try to hide anything" is the exact opposite of the truth. Frankly, I'm embarrassed for the author and publisher that they issued something this bad. Worst of all, the book is as biased in favor of the Rosenbergs as it dares to be. The author does come out and say that Julius was a spy (which is why I give the book two stars instead of one), but she does her best to minimize his guilt. The statement on p. 28 that in the former Soviet Union, there was "Shelter, education, and medical care provided for all by the government," fails to mention the millions who died when they were DELIBERATELY denied food, clothing, shelter, medical care and education while working as slave laborers, as a means of crushing political resistance and "building socialism." The statement on p. 14 that "Being a member of the Communist Party was not against the law then" implies that it became illegal later, which is untrue. The fact that the Bolsheviks began killing and imprisoning people for political reasons as early as 1918 is never mentioned. Neither does the author tell the reader that books telling the world just how bad the Soviet Union really was appeared as early as 1935; the books were ignored, and their authors were vilified. Author Burnett tries to cast doubt on Ethel's guilt, and implies that Ethel was executed only because David Greenglass perjured himself (David testified that he remembered Ethel typing, because his wife said she remembered it; in fact, he wasn't sure if she did type anything or not. But Ethel did plenty of other things that made her guilty of conspiracy to commit espionage). Ruth's testimony at the Rosenberg trial is reduced to two sentences: "Ruth Greenglass claimed that Ethel Rosenberg typed up David's notes. Ruth's testimony strengthened the argument that Ethel was a conspirator with Julius and knew as much as he did." I'd guess that even more damaging to Ethel, in the jury's eyes, was Ruth's 'claim' that she was recruited for Soviet espionage by Julius and Ethel, in their apartment, with both of them present, at a meeting the Rosenbergs specifically called for the purpose of making their pitch, during which Ethel admitted knowing Julius was a spy, and urged Ruth to persuade her husband, David, Ethel's younger brother, to start passing information on the

atomic bomb project to the Soviets. This conversation was confirmed in detail by VENONA decrypts of messages sent Sept. 21st, 1944 ("LIBERAL [Julius Rosenberg] and his wife recommend her as an intelligent and clever girl."), and Nov. 3rd, 14th ("OSA [Ruth] has agreed to cooperate with us in drawing in ShMEL[David] . . . Before OSA's departure LIBERAL will conduct two briefing meetings), and 27th, 1944 ("Information on LIBERAL's wife. Surname that of her husband, first name ETHEL, 29 years old. . . . Knows about her husband's work,". Deletions and bracketed material by me). They can be viewed at [...]. Feklisov, in his book, confirms that Ethel knew of her husband's espionage activities, and recounts Ethel helping Julius at least once besides the recruitment of Ruth. The Rosenbergs were guilty as charged, Julius and Ethel both. They got a fair trial. The reason their defense was so weak was that the govt. had the proof needed to convict them. The reason Communism kept getting mentioned at the trial was because the Rosenbergs were Communists, and they committed espionage against the U.S. because they were Communists, more loyal to the USSR than the U.S.A. The reason so many people were afraid of the Soviet Union was because it was a deadly threat, from its founding in 1917 until it came apart in 1989 (OOH! I just LOVE typing things like 'the Soviet Union came apart in 1989! OOH!!!'). Trying to insinuate otherwise in this day and age is disgusting, unless your last name is Meeropol. If you want to read good books on the case, get Radosh and Milton'sÂ The Rosenberg File: Second EditionÂ or Louis Nizer'sÂ The Implosion Conspiracy.

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