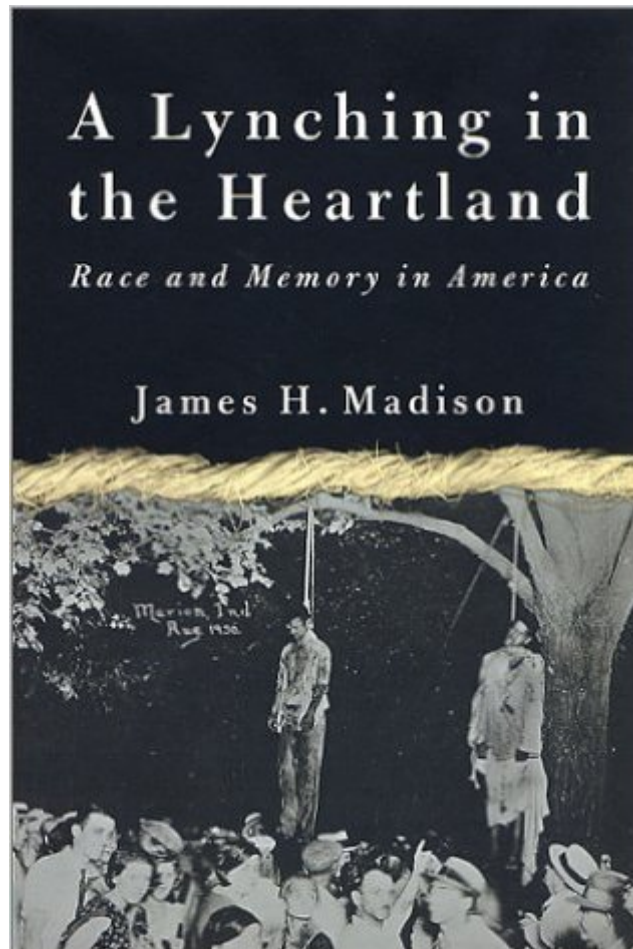


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A Lynching In The Heartland: Race And Memory In America



Synopsis

On a hot summer night in 1930, three black teenagers accused of murdering a young white man and raping his girlfriend waited for justice in an Indiana jail. A mob dragged them from the jail and lynched two of them. No one in Marion, Indiana was ever punished for the murders. In this gripping account, James H. Madison refutes the popular perception that lynching was confined to the South, and clarifies 20th century America's painful encounters with race, justice, and memory.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In August of 1930, a lynching took place. It would not be uncommon for one to assume that the lynching took place in the deep south, but in this instance, the assumption would be incorrect. The lynchings of Tom Shipp and Abe Smith took place in Marion, Indiana, America's Heartland. This event is responsible for one of the most famous photographs of an American lynching. The author demonstrates how stereotypes and fear contributed to the lynching. The mere suggestion that a White woman was raped and a White man was murdered by three Black men, provided enough inspiration to turn a normally cordial, if not friendly, small town into a lynch mob. Madison outlines how a community dealt with the chilling reality that such mob violence had taken place in their small town. Because of shame, guilt and even fear, this tragic event was buried in Marion, Indiana's collective memory. Flossie Bailey, a prominent African American woman in the community, as well as others, worked hard to mobilize the community in an attempt to make sure that at least some of the people involved in the murders would be held responsible for the crimes while fear kept other

African Americans in the community quiet. Unfortunately, no one was held responsible for the crime. Madison also highlights the history behind what is considered by many to be the most famous lynching photograph in American history. The photograph, taken by Lawrence Beitler the night of the lynching, has been reproduced and widely circulated. During the time immediately following the lynching, some people bought copies to serve as a "trophy", while others felt it was an abomination.

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