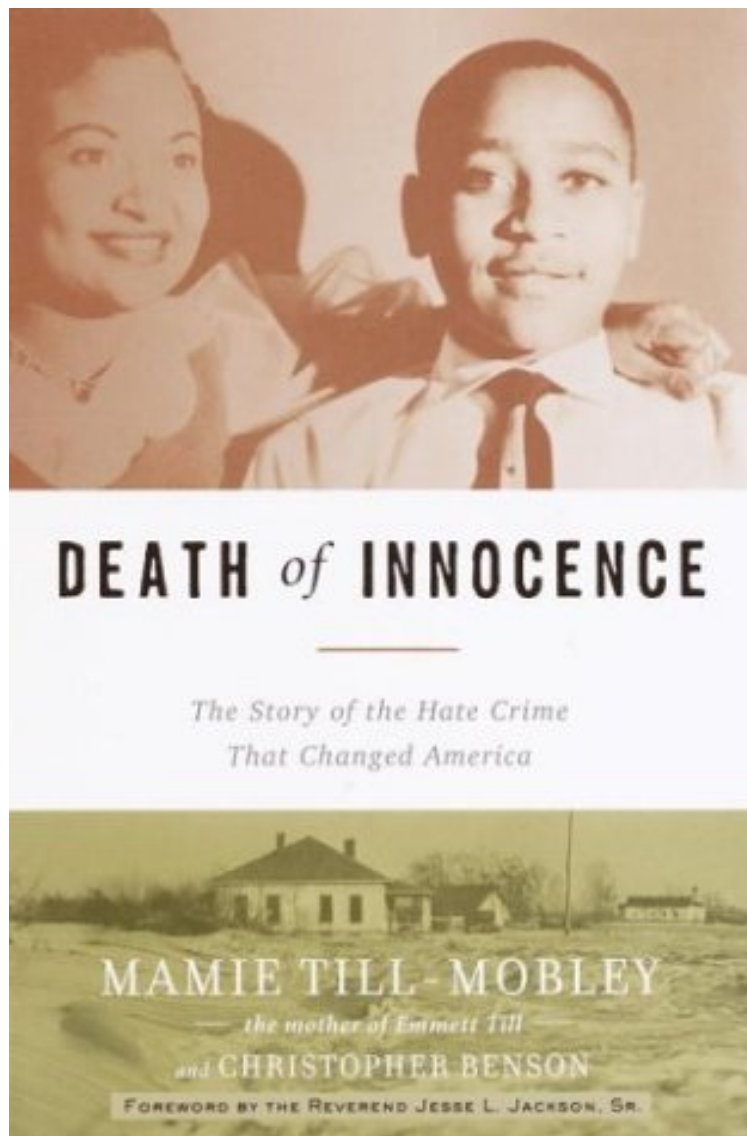


[E-BOOK] Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America

# Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America

*Mamie Till-Mobley, Christopher Benson*  
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**Mamie Till-Mobley, Christopher Benson : Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Finally. . . I Now Know Emmett Till, The Person By Kiwes We live in a world where there are two sides to every story! No matter how you slice it, everyone has different views and their

own take on how something impacted them. What do you really know about Emmett Louis Till? He was a 14-year old teen from Chicago who went down to Mississippi and whistled at a white woman. That's the story I've heard all of my life, but one thing never occurred to me -- just who was Emmett Till? Most people in the African-American community tell the story the same, as if Emmett was some stupid smart eleck kid who thought he could bring his northern attitude down to the dirty south. I've heard about the horrific savage beating and murdering of Emmett. I saw the pictures heard the whispers throughout, never really knowing! If you thought you knew the real Emmett Till story-- guess again! Who other than the person that gave Emmett life could know this story? Who other than the person who had the strength to forge on and change civil rights history in the making, other than a mother--Emmett's mother. Think you know the real story behind why Emmett was murdered? I guarantee you, the reader truly has no idea, but I tell you what, after you read Mrs. Mamie Till-Mobley's story--a story so shocking and horrifyingly gripping, you'll be left in awe! All this time I had been asking the wrong questions. I wanted to know why Emmett Till would whistle at a white woman back in the mid 50s in Mississippi? What I should have been asking is did he actually whistle at a white woman? Did anyone witness him whistling, and if so, why didn't someone kill him after the whistle left between his lips? Did things happen the way the media portrayed his murder? Welp, once again, who better to tell you the story than the one person who lived the nightmare -- Mrs. Mobley. My God, I have never, ever read a story so haunting in all of my life. I've read some of the most gruesome true-crime stories that you can possibly imagine, but they all seem to pale in comparison to what happened to a cute, having-the-rest-of-his-life-ahead-of-him -- Emmett, to go be with relatives down south to learn about where his mother was born and raised and to become one with mother earth, only to go back to Chicago in a pine box. Jesus! I finally learned who Emmett Louis Till was. He was a person before his murder happened. He wasn't just a teen who went down south and ended up dead. He was a human being with real feelings, real kid problems and just trying to grow up and become something--much like all of us have done to be the people we are. Unfortunately, fate wouldn't allow Emmett to ever have hopes or dreams. It wasn't in the cards for him. He will forever be an eternal 14 year old, but at least now I know the real story and I know Emmett. Thank you Mrs. Mobley for telling your story. Your son did not die in vain. I've received your message as you wanted readers to do. I got it! I get it! May you and Emmett rest in eternal peace! Outstanding read and great for Black History month or any month for that matter! You can't know strength unless you've walked a mile in Mrs. Mobley's shoes. If you think you're strong, you can't begin to know what courage is! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A painful look at American ignorance. By sherri fosdick This is such a good book. A life on the right track ended by pure ignorant people. It's sad that there was no punishment for the crime of killing a black boy in Mississippi. Very sad even now. A book about a boy who brought so much joy to those around him and the mother who only wanted to tell his story. Mamie did so much in his memory as well as etch so much more in American history. This book makes you stop and think that not too long ago this was what was happening. I recommend this book to anyone. It should also be a reading assignment in schools everywhere. It makes you think and makes you appreciate what all these people did to help shape America. The land of the free. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent book. By Debbie Very good book, very detailed, but it was very long. This books will make you happy and sad all at the same time.

There are many heroes of the civil rights movement—men and women we can look to for inspiration. Each has a unique story, a path that led to a role as leader or activist. *Death of Innocence* is the heartbreaking and ultimately inspiring story of one such hero: Mamie Till-Mobley, the mother of Emmett Till—an innocent fourteen-year-old African-American boy who was in the wrong place at the wrong time, and who paid for it with his life. His outraged mother's actions galvanized the civil rights movement, leaving an indelible mark on American racial consciousness. Mamie Carthan was an ordinary African-American woman growing up in 1930s Chicago, living under the strong, steady influence of her mother's care. She fell in love with and married Louis Till, and while the marriage didn't last, they did have a beautiful baby boy, Emmett. In August 1955, Emmett was visiting family in Mississippi when he was kidnapped from his bed in the middle of the night by two white men and brutally murdered. His crime: allegedly whistling at a white woman in a convenience store. His mother began her career of activism when she insisted on an open-casket viewing of her son's gruesomely disfigured body. More than a hundred thousand people attended the service. The trial of J. W. Milam and Roy Bryant, accused of kidnapping and murdering Emmett (the two were eventually acquitted of the crime), was considered the first full-scale media event of the civil rights movement. What followed altered the course of this country's history, and it was all set in motion by the sheer will, determination, and courage of Mamie Till-Mobley—a woman who would pull herself back from the brink of suicide to become a teacher and inspire hundreds of black children throughout the country. Mamie Till-Mobley, who died in 2003 just as she completed this memoir, has honored us with her full testimony: "I focused on my son while I considered this book. . . . The result is in your hands. . . . I am experienced, but not cynical. . . . I am hopeful that we all can be better than we are. I've been brokenhearted, but I still maintain an oversized capacity for love." *Death of Innocence* is an essential document in the annals of American civil rights history, and a painful yet beautiful account of a mother's ability to transform tragedy into boundless courage and hope.

From Publishers Weekly Nearly 50 years after the murder of Emmett Till, his mother, Till-Mobley, has added her perspective on the tragedy. In what came to be seen as a seminal event in the fledgling civil rights movement, two white men abducted 14-year-old Emmett from the home of a relative in rural Mississippi in August 1955. That night they tortured the boy before dumping his lifeless body into the Tallahatchie River. His crime: he inadvertently whistled in the vicinity of a white woman who happened to be the wife of one of his killers. Although the events surrounding the murder have been recounted many times, Till-Mobley fills readers in on her son's childhood in Argo, Ill., and later Chicago. As a single mother, she tried to instill Emmett with self-confidence and a sense of life's possibilities. In her view, these two qualities helped cause his death when he journeyed to Mississippi, where the "code" demanded that blacks efface themselves in the presence of whites. Her memoir, written with Chicago journalist Benson, is told chronologically, with a large portion devoted to the events leading up to the murder and its aftermath. As she puts it, "I wanted to rip the sheets off the state of Mississippi." Till-Mobley, who died last January, spent the final 35 years of her life as a teacher and spokesperson for civil rights. While her accomplishments are admirable, her memoir has a perfunctory quality, except when describing the events surrounding Emmett's murder, and the narrative voice is uneven. Till-Mobley was a social activist but not necessarily a social critic. As a result, the example of her life is far more valuable than the insights that she draws from it. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Booklist The mere mention of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old Chicago boy murdered in Mississippi in 1955, brings horrific memories for Americans. Till, on vacation in the south, was reportedly killed for whistling at a white woman. His murder and mutilation--he was wrapped in barbed wire and thrown into a river--shook the conscience of America and became a central stimulus for the modern civil rights movement. The graphic brutality of the murder and the courage of Till's mother were imprinted on American consciousness as she chose an open casket that displayed the horror of the crime to the world. In this as-told-to memoir, Till-Mobley recalls her son's early childhood through his 14 years of life. The second half of the book focuses on Till-Mobley herself, a woman determined to find meaning in the life and murder of her young son. Relying on the love and support of family, Till-Mobley earned college degrees late in life, works with the church, and makes a career of giving hope to other youth, surely meeting her objective that her son not have died in vain. Vernon Ford Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved Advance praise for *Death of Innocence* "I am so thankful for the bravery and courage Mamie demonstrated when she shared her only child with the world. The news of Emmett's death caused many people to participate in the cry for justice and equal rights, including myself. The respect I have felt for her since 1955 will always live with me. She was blessed among women to carry the mantle with grace and dignity." —Rosa Parks "Death of Innocence reveals Mamie Till-Mobley for what she was: one of the greatest, but largely unsung, heroes in all of African-American history. Her words are powerful; her strength and vision in the face of the unspeakable horror of her son's death are astonishing. The life and work of Mamie Till-Mobley serves as an inspiration to all who love justice." —Stanley Nelson, executive producer and director of the documentary *The Murder of Emmett Till* "Mamie Till-Mobley has written a powerful book in which she reveals to us the life she shared with her son, Emmett Till, and her pride and joy as he became a remarkable young man. This story shows us how the cruelty of a few changed the life of a loving, caring mother and the history of a nation." —Kadiatou Diallo, author of *My Heart Will Cross This Ocean: My Story, My Son, Amadou* "An epic drama of despair and hope. The most powerful personal story, so far, from the civil rights movement." —Morris Dees, Southern Poverty Law Center "Mamie Till-Mobley has always deserved our admiration for her insistence that the world know her son's terrible fate, and for her determination to confront his killers in a Mississippi courtroom. Now, in the final act of her life, she gives us an account of the crime, its victim, and its aftermath that is as historically valuable as it is inspiring." —Philip Dray, author of *At the Hands of Persons Unknown: The Lynching of Black America* "In the pantheon of Black women I love and admire, Mamie Till-Mobley stands tall. Throughout her memoir...she is as fearless in sharing her life story as she was when she insisted on an open-casket funeral for her beloved son, Emmett. It was wise of Till-Mobley, who died earlier this year at 81, to wait until she could see the end of her journey to tell her story....Throughout her life, Till-Mobley never tried to cash in on her son's death. Instead, she tried to find a way to make sense of it. None of us can really know her pain, but through *Death of Innocence* we do know her grace. Her book is a story of faith and hope -- but not blind faith and hope; rather faith and hope as action, as being worthy of the challenge." —Nikki Giovanni