

Midnight Assassin: A Murder in America's Heartland By Patricia L. Bryan There was a code of silence among the neighbors any possible abuse was deemed a private matter and not to be spoken about outside of the family especially in rural areas where women in particular often lived isolated lives miles away from the nearest neighbor and rarely having contact with anyone outside the immediate family. But the theme of the book is more about how little most men thought of women - the first verdict was based so much on the defendant's looks - how big she was how unremorseful she seemed to be. I recently read her play Trifles for an American Literature class and loved the fact the reporter used her own experience covering the murder to write a play with a similar theme. Patricia Bryan and Thomas Wolf examine the harsh realities of farm life at the turn of the century and look at the plight of women—legally socially and politically—during that period. What also emerges is the story of early feminist Susan Glaspell who covered the Hossack case as a young reporter and later used it as the basis for her acclaimed work A Jury of Her Peers. Bryan This is an account of a sensational 1900 murder of a farmer the investigation and the court case(s) that followed as well as an examination of the role of women in law and life. The juxtaposition of a woman journalist who covered the first trial (who would later use the case as fodder for a short story and a play) with the severely circumscribed life of a farm wife accused of the murder of her husband is a nice touch. The gift here is that it's easy enough to follow along with the court proceedings if you're a lay person but as an attorney it's really fascinating to look at the trial as a point in time when our rules of evidence were still evolving. It looks like a modern capital case in so many ways especially since the issues that get raised today like chain of custody and foundation of evidence are the same -- but are handled differently.

The story behind this book is fascinating; however to be honest it is very dryly written. This story made me feel like I was reading a case study of the event versus a book published for the general public, Again very interesting book but I thought it called for some more descriptive uplifting writing: And to be honest I honestly thought I would not wanna read it. But it was actually pretty good! the only thing I didn't like was that after I read it (in 2 hours) i was thinking about the axe and the killing, I was nervous! I wanted to read it and forget about the bad deed done. Bryan This is the true story of an unsolved murder that took place in Iowa on the night of December 1 1900: John Hossack a well to-do farmer was fatally attacked with an ax while he slept, Suspicions focused on his long suffering wife Margaret who claimed to asleep beside her husband in the bed while the attack took place. A history of domestic strife within the household convinced local authorities that she had finally snapped after years of threats and verbal abuse. This story takes us through her two trials and alternate theories as to who else could have been responsible for the crime, It also brings to light how at that time communities largely ignored or tolerated domestic abuse: The book also delves into what daily life was like for a rural farm woman at that time it's not hard to understand why some of them would snap: This was a well written book but I wish some of the theories about other possible suspects especially the sons in the family would have been fleshed out more: Bryan When you consider this actually happened it's a good story, It is fascinating (and frustrating) how much the attorney for each side got away with. Shows how far women have come in the past 100 years with regards to respect: Bryan Interesting insights into the lives of women the judicial system and mental health issues in the late 1800's-early 1900's in America. I stole this from someone else's review but I loved this short description, It's a true story about a murder in Iowa in the 1890's, The wife is accused of murdering her husband and it's not a simple case. The reporter covering the story was a female journalist Susan Glaspell: This book is going to be the One Book One Sioux County discussion book for 2022, Bryan In 1900 Margaret Hossack the wife of a prominent Iowa farmer was arrested for bludgeoning her husband to death with an ax while their children slept upstairs: The community was outraged: How could a woman commit such an act of violence? Firsthand accounts describe the victim John Hossack as a cruel and unstable man: Or perhaps the story she told was true—that an intruder broke into the house killed her husband while she slept soundly beside him and was still on the loose, Newspapers across the country carried the story and community

sentiment was divided over her guilt: At trial Margaret was convicted of murder but later was released on appeal. Ultimately neither her innocence nor her guilt was ever proved: Midnight Assassin expertly renders the American character and experience: our obsession with crime how justice is achieved and the powerful influence of the media: Midnight Assassin: A Murder in America's Heartland I waffled between three or four stars for this book. The author did a lot of research and time into telling the story and I appreciated that: I look forward to discussing it at our book club! Patricia L. Bryan I grabbed this true crime novel primarily because it is set in my home state, The murder case itself is fascinating and I enjoyed reading about the culture of turn-of-the century Iowa, However the writing itself was lackluster -- more of reporting than storytelling. Great non-fiction writers seem to understand a reader's need to be engaged by more than just the facts, I wish this particular story had been written more colorfully. Bryan Skip Hollandsworth is a very good well respected journalist: The premise and historical documentation in this book are very well researched: At first it was interesting but then I realized it really didn't further the story. Several years are described in much the same way so again it becomes uninteresting, Bryan Especially interesting due to the familiarity of Indianola: This would be a great book to read before taking Evidence in law school because it brings home all the reasons why we need those rules: And -- this is something I never thought I'd write because who would? -- props to the Supreme Court of Iowa circa 1901 for being so damned progressive. It is matter of fact which normally I enjoy in books. Patricia L. Bryan This is my first true murder story. I don't like true story stuff. I'm sometimes such a scaredy cat. Patricia L. Patricia L. And based upon her husband's standing the community. It drags a little at times but is a fast read. Patricia L. I look forward to hearing the authors. Patricia L. Perhaps Margaret Hossack was acting out of fear. I love historical books and found this one fascinating. I did feel that the book was a bit repetitious. Nevertheless it was a worthwhile read. 3 1/2 stars rounded up. Patricia L. The story could've been a third of the length. Lots of Texas history.LOTS. I listened to the audiobook version. The narrator doesn't say "pecan" or "Seguin" right. I was mortified. Patricia L. I now must visit the New Virginia cemetery. Patricia L. Patricia L. Bryan

