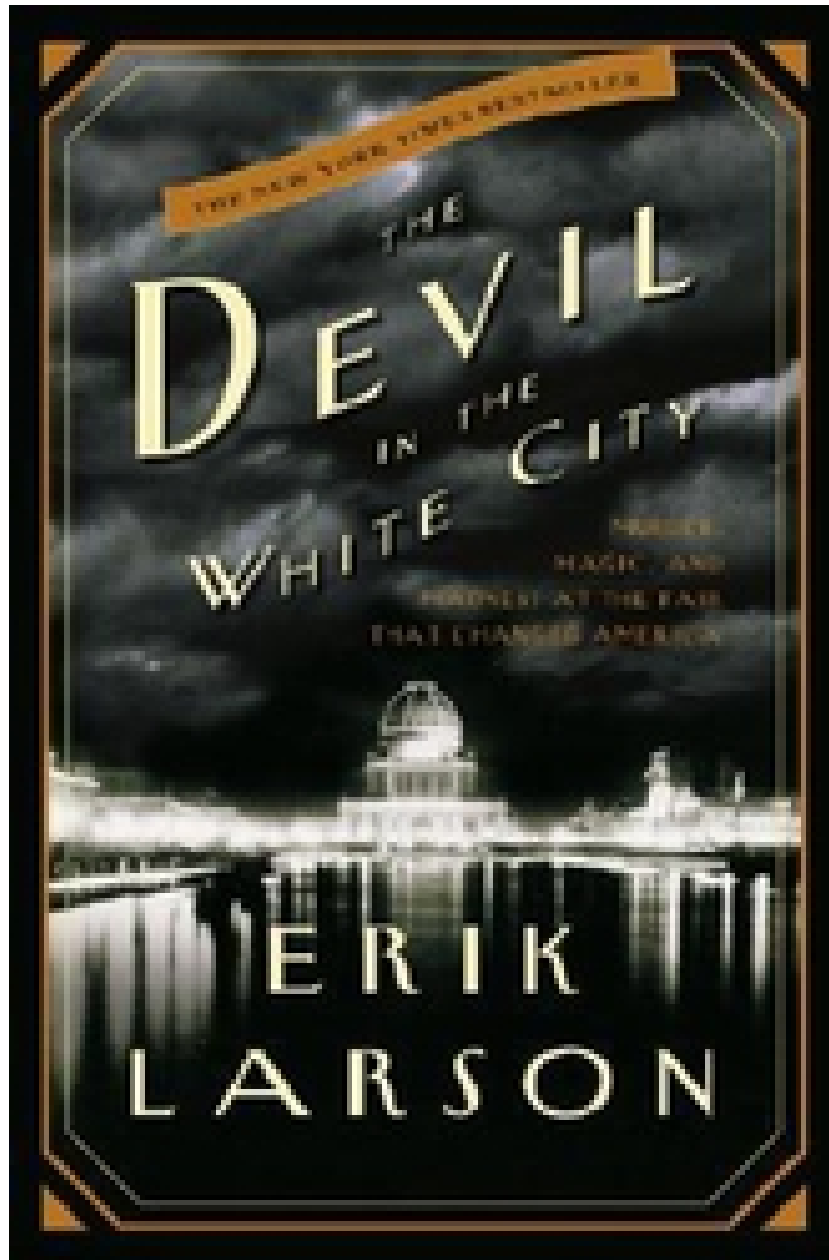


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# The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic, and Madness at the Fair That Changed America Book PDF Download



By:  
Erik Larson

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## What people Say:

### Madeline

Poor Erik Larson.

He wanted to write an extensive, in-depth look at the 1893 World's Fair, which was a collaboration of some of the greatest creative minds in the country (including the guy who designed the Flatiron building in New York and Walt Disney's dad) and gave us, among other things, the Ferris Wheel, the zipper, shredded wheat, and Columbus Day. The entire venture was almost a disaster, with delays, petty fighting, bad weather, and more delays, but it was ultimately a massive success and

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Here's what it must have looked like when Larson pitched his idea for the book:

Larson: "And the fair didn't go flawlessly - towards the end of the fair, the mayor of Chicago was assassinated by a crazy guy, and there were tons of disappearances over the course of the fair, and a lot of them were probably the work of this serial killer who had opened a hotel near the fairgrounds -

Editor: "Wait, serial killer? And it's connected to the fair? Cool, let's try to include that in the book. Also the crazy assassin sounds good, too."

Larson: "No, the killer - H.H. Holmes - really wasn't connected to the fair at all. I mean, he used the fair as a way to collect victims, but he would have killed tons of people even without it. In fact, after the fair he moved on and kept murdering people, so the fair really didn't have any effect on his methods..."

Editor: "Doesn't matter! How about you alternate between chapters about the fair and chapters about Holmes killing people?"

Larson: "But I don't really know much about that. Nobody does - Holmes never admitted to killing all those people, even after the police found human remains in his basement. I don't really know any actual details about the killings."

## Jason

This book is two, two,

!

Sorry, that was annoying. But it's almost as if Erik Larson wrote two really short books—one about the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and another about the murder spree of Dr. H. H. Holmes—and then shoved them together to create a single story. The result isn't

, and I think Larson is successful at maintaining clean seams between the two narratives, but it's hard to argue these two occurrences are anything but abstractedly related. Yes, Holmes lived

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, and I think Larson is successful at maintaining clean seams between the two narratives, but it's hard to argue these two occurrences are anything but abstractedly related. Yes, Holmes lived in Chicago at the time of the fair and lured a bunch of people to his murder castle (he be snatchin' yo' people

!), but the events didn't weigh heavily on the fair itself or on the atmosphere surrounding it. No alarm bells went off anywhere in Chicago as a result of his, um, unsavory indiscretions.

Still, there is a lot of interesting stuff here, information specific to the world's fair, and it is fun to learn new things. For example, the Chicago Columbian Exposition exudes a long list of firsts: it saw the invention of the world's first ferris wheel, it led the nation in its first public observance of the Pledge of Allegiance, and it helped to establish alternating current as the industry standard for electricity distribution. Even that awful

## Regan

4.5

FASCINATING!

## Miranda Reads

1893 was a year to remember - the World's Fair came to Chicago and H. H. Holmes (one of America's most famous serial killers) took full advantage. He stalked the streets and murdered whomever he pleased.

1893 was a year to remember - the World's Fair came to Chicago and H. H. Holmes (one of America's most famous serial killers) took full advantage. He stalked the streets and murdered whomever he pleased.

I really liked the idea of this one - to take one of America's greatest triumphs and splicing his story along with one of the greatest horrors. However. There's too high of a disconnect between these two sides

This reads like

thrown together at inopportune moments - as soon one half got the least bit exciting, we'd swap. It was

to read.

The World Fair section was interesting in its own right, but it

to the serial killer that it became something to

## Seth T.

Humour me and please allow the channeling an eighth grader for just a moment. OMG Squeee!!1 Teh best!! (Would an eighth grader say "teh best"?) And now we return you to our regularly scheduled review.

I'm not a huge fan of non-fiction. Scratch that. I'm a huge fan of non-fiction, but not so huge a fan of non-fiction. While I appreciate learning and broadening my understanding of the world around and as it once was, I find myself pretty quickly distracted from whatever non-fictional work I

Humour me and please allow the channeling an eighth grader for just a moment. OMG Squeee!!1 Teh best!! (Would an eighth grader say "teh best"?) And now we return you to our regularly scheduled review.

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Erik Larson, however, is a genius. Or something. I could not put this book down. (In the figurative sense—“it actually took me about two weeks to read.) The entire length of my time in this book was marked with moments of in which I would stop reading, interrupt my wife from the depths of her studies, and remark

how good this book was.

(I'm sure that she would have been happier had Larson just been your average purveyor of non-fictionalizations.)

In