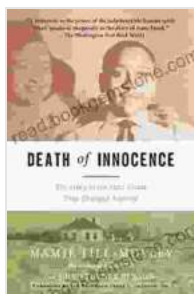


# The Story of the Hate Crime That Changed America

On October 6, 1998, 21-year-old Matthew Shepard was brutally beaten and left to die on a fence in Laramie, Wyoming. His murder was a hate crime, motivated by his sexual orientation. Shepard's death shocked the nation and led to the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, a landmark piece of legislation that expanded federal hate crime laws to include crimes motivated by sexual orientation and gender identity.



## Death of Innocence: The Story of the Hate Crime that Changed America by Mamie Till-Mobley

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 3318 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 322 pages



Shepard was born in Casper, Wyoming, on December 1, 1976. He was raised in a devout Christian family and attended the University of Wyoming in Laramie. Shepard was a talented student and a gifted musician. He was also a kind and compassionate person, always willing to help others.

In October 1998, Shepard met Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson at a bar in Laramie. McKinney and Henderson were both 21 years old and had been drinking heavily. They offered Shepard a ride home, but instead drove him to a remote area outside of town. There, they beat Shepard with the butt of a gun and left him to die.

Shepard's body was found 18 hours later by a passing bicyclist. He was taken to a hospital in Fort Collins, Colorado, where he died six days later.

McKinney and Henderson were arrested and charged with Shepard's murder. They were convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

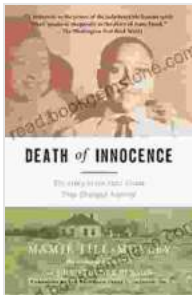
Shepard's murder sparked outrage across the country. People from all walks of life came together to demand justice for Shepard and to work to prevent future hate crimes.

In October 2009, Congress passed the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act. The law expanded federal hate crime laws to include crimes motivated by sexual orientation and gender identity. It also provided funding for law enforcement training and hate crime prevention programs.

The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act has been hailed as a landmark piece of legislation. It has helped to make America a safer place for LGBTQ+ people and has sent a clear message that hate crimes will not be tolerated.

Shepard's legacy lives on through the Matthew Shepard Foundation, which was founded by his parents. The foundation works to raise awareness of hate crimes and to support victims of violence.

The murder of Matthew Shepard was a tragedy, but it also led to a positive change in the world. Shepard's death helped to raise awareness of hate crimes and led to the passage of landmark legislation. His legacy will continue to inspire people to work for a more just and equitable world.



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