

# The Trial of the Century

## CAST YOUR VOTE!

What makes a courtroom proceeding the “trial of the century”? Is it the gravity of the crime, its impact on society or merely the amount of publicity? NBC’s “Today” show asked these 3 questions in Jan. 1999 to get viewers’ votes on what they considered to be the “trial of the century.” On Feb. 2, 1999, Prof. Charles Ogletree of Harvard and famed trial lawyer James Brosnahan held a televised mini-debate between the two highest vote getters among famous American trials. All of the riveting trials listed below and more are compared in ***The Sky’s The Limit: People v. Newton, The Real Trial of the 20th Century?*** Publisher: Regent Press, coming out in February 2012. Cast your vote on the 20th century’s most significant trial. My vote is obvious. LISE PEARLMAN.

(“Today Show” survey results at:

<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/scopes/Todaysurvey.html>.)

- 1906: **The trial of Harry Thaw** (Ragtime; The Girl in the Red Velvet Dress)
- 1907: **The trial of “Big Bill” Haywood** (Champion of the eight hour day accused of conspiring to assassinate ex-Gov. of Idaho in the climax of the Colorado Labor Wars)
- 1921: **The Sacco and Vanzetti trial** (anarchists accused of a Massachusetts payroll robbery)
- 1921: **The trial of “Fatty” Arbuckle** (Keystone Cop and Hollywood’s then No. One paid star)
- 1924: **The trial of Nathan Leopold & Richard Loeb** (disciples of Nietzsche commit “the perfect crime”)
- 1925: **The Scopes “Monkey” Trial** (Darwinian evolution v. Creationism — Darrow v. Bryan)
- 1931-37: **The Scottsboro trials** (accusations of rape on a train raise issues of legal lynching)
- 1935: **The Lindbergh baby kidnapping trial**
- 1946: **Nazi War Crimes Trial**
- 1951: **The trial of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg** (atomic bomb espionage)
- 1954/1966: **The trials of Sam Sheppard** (*The Fugitive*)
- 1969: **The “Chicago Seven” Trial** (leaders of demonstrations at the 1968 Democratic Convention)
- 1970: **The trial of Charles Manson** (*Helter Skelter*: actress Sharon Tate ritual murder)
- 1992/1993: **The Los Angeles Police Officers’ “Rodney King beating” Trial**
- 1995: **The trial of O.J. Simpson**
- 1999: **The Clinton impeachment trial**
- 1968: **People v. Newton** [author’s choice]
- None of the above. Your choice for “The” Trial of the Century \_\_\_\_\_