

Darrow, Clarence (1857-1938)

Encyclopedia Article

Darrow, Clarence (1857-1938)

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Sometimes reviled for his defense of unpopular people and causes, Clarence Darrow was the most widely known attorney in the United States at the time of his death in 1938. He practiced law in the Midwest, eventually becoming chief attorney for the Chicago and North Western Railways. By 1900 he had left this lucrative position to defend Socialist leader Eugene Debs, who had organized striking American Railway Union workers. Involved in several other labor-related cases and an advocate of integration, he also worked as a defense attorney, saving murderers Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb from the electric chair in 1924. His 1925 courtroom battle against bible-thumping politician William Jennings Bryant in the Scopes trial—called the "Monkey Trial" due to its focus on teaching Darwin's theory of evolution in schools—was immortalized in the play and film *Inherit the Wind*. Darrow wrote several books, including *Crime: Its Cause and Treatment* (1922).

Further Reading:

Kurland, Gerald. *Clarence Darrow: "Attorney for the Damned."* Charlottesville, Virginia, SamHar Press, 1992.

Stone, Irving. *Clarence Darrow for the Defense*. Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1941.

Tierney, Kevin. *Darrow: A Biography*. New York, Crowell, 1979.

Weinberg, Arthur, and Lila Weinberg. *Clarence Darrow, a Sentimental Rebel*. New York, Putnam, 1980.