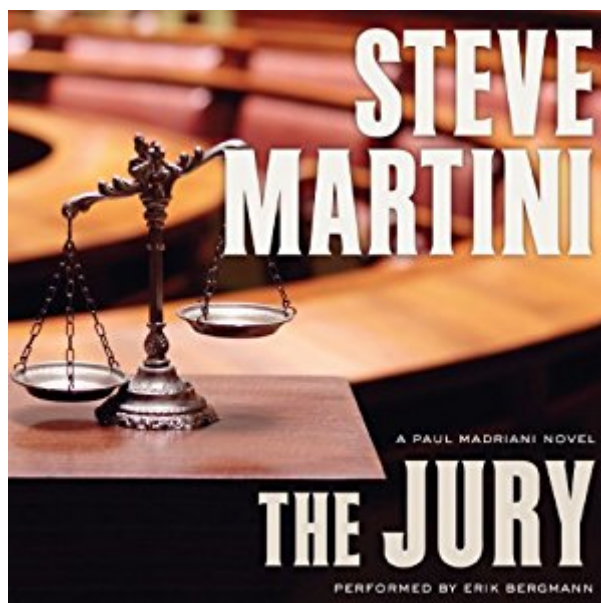


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The Jury: Paul Madriani, Book 6



Synopsis

Paul Madriani has ample reason to suspect he's representing a guilty man. Dr. David Crone, a respected medical researcher and principal in mapping the human genome, is charged with the murder of a young colleague: 26-year-old Kalista Jordan, an African-American research physician whose body washed up on a beach in San Diego Bay. Forensic evidence links her murder with material in Crone's garage. Crone had both opportunity and motive: Kalista had recently ended their affair, and may have been deserting him professionally as well, moving on to a rival genetic research facility. However, when a key witness for the prosecution dies unexpectedly, leaving an incriminating note behind, Crone's innocence seems confirmed - until Madriani hits upon a potentially damning loose end.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Steve Martini delivered genuine thrills in two of his early novels, "Prime Witness" and "Compelling Evidence". What those books supplied were engrossing characters, interesting legal maneuvers and mysteries that kept the reader guessing until the end. Unfortunately, Martini's latest novel, "The Jury," supplies none of these elements, and as a legal thriller, it is a dud. The victim in this book is a gorgeous African-American woman named Kalista Jordan, who is also a brilliant research scientist. She is brutally murdered after exiting her hot tub. Paul Madriani is hired to defend the accused killer--Jordan's boss, David Crone. Jordan and Crone have worked together on some cutting-edge research involving genetics, and their working relationship was marred by serious disagreements

that may have led to murder. "The Jury" has numerous flaws. Martini brings none of his characters to life. Crone and Jordan are little more than cardboard cutouts, and Madriani has very little to do in this novel, other than stand up in court and parry with witnesses. The mystery itself is not compelling in the least. Even the title is problematical, since it implies that the book has something to do with jury deliberations. It doesn't. "The Jury" has very little action and the conclusion is out of left field and unsatisfying. This novel is a real disappointment to those of us who have enjoyed Steve Martini's legal thrillers in the past.

This book was a very good brain teaser. It had many twists and turns. The book story begins with the murder of Kalista Jordan, a twenty-six year old research physician and colleague. Dr. David Crone is Kalista Jordans coworker and is suspected to be the one that killed Kalista. Kalista had filed a sexual harassment charge against Crone after she stole some of research papers out of his office. The two were then seen arguing publicly with each other before she was found washed up on a beach dead. There was heavy evidence against Dr. Crone, such as items in his garbage that were linked to the murder. On top of all this Dr. Crone refuses to cooperate with his own defense. He refuses to give Madriani, his lawyer, valuable information that could help him to win the case. Dr. Crone will not discuss the research that he was working on. He also will not say what role Kalista had in his research. The only reason Mr. Madriani was defending Dr. Crone was because he was the only doctor that would help his daughters friend, Penny Boyd. She was suffering from a disease called Huntington Chorea. This was a rare hereditary disease attacks the brain and central nervous system. This is a very fatal disease. Dr. Crone was attempting to get Penny into a special drug trial program when he was arrested for the murder. I enjoyed this book very much. This book captured me in a way no other book has done before. I looked forward to reading it everyday. I highly recommend this book to someone who enjoys problem solving and law. This book made me realize that just because someone has a lot of evidence against them doesn't mean they did it.

Okay, I'll admit I'm not sure what the title has to do with anything, but it is a legal thriller and these things tend to have juries every so often. Paul Mandriani and Harry Hines take on Dr. Crone, a brilliant geneticist. He's described as a man with a Cray computer between his ears. This is a book where the answer is sitting before you the entire read, but you have to follow the clues. Crone is accused of killing a beautiful, black female colleague. So does this have something to do with his research stretching back 25 years earlier about racial graying? Maybe. Aaron Tash is his number 2 man, who has the personality of gum on the bottom of shoe. He meets with Crone in the county lock

up and they discuss DNA codes, or maybe it is something more sinister. Through out, this is Mandriani's patient manner as he discovers one lie after another - most of the coming from his client. Harry Hinds, Mandriani's partner, continues to quip and wisecrack his way through the story. There is a tight symmetry that really works for the book. A couple of things to keep in mind: Figure out the motive and you'll discover the murderer, and follow Mandriani's advice, "Lawyer's like to keep you looking at one thing while they do another." Novelists like to do the same thing. We are a sneaky bunch.

Normally a huge fan of Steve Martini's legal thrillers, I found "The Jury" a huge disappointment. Like the other reviewers, I am bewildered by the title because the jury plays little to no role in the story. Martini doesn't even describe the *voir dire*, he just launches right into the trial. It takes the reader a couple of chapters to catch up with what happened, which is very annoying. Even then, it's still not clear why Paul Madriani would take on such a sullen, uncooperative client like Dr. Crone, who is on trial for the murder of one of his colleagues. Even after it's revealed that Dr. Crone used his genius to try and save a dying child, his character is still unlikeable and weird. The reader doesn't care whether he's the killer or not, and at times it seems like Martini doesn't either. I have never read a book in this series where Madriani was as listless and uninvolved as he appeared in this book. Even Harry Hinds, Madriani's law partner, who is usually wise-cracking and brilliant, is mouthy and blustery here. Although red herrings are strewn throughout the novel, the killer's identity only comes as a mild surprise. After reaching suspense pinnacles in "Undue Influence" and "The Judge", this book is a real let down. Let's hope that the next Madriani book is a better effort.

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