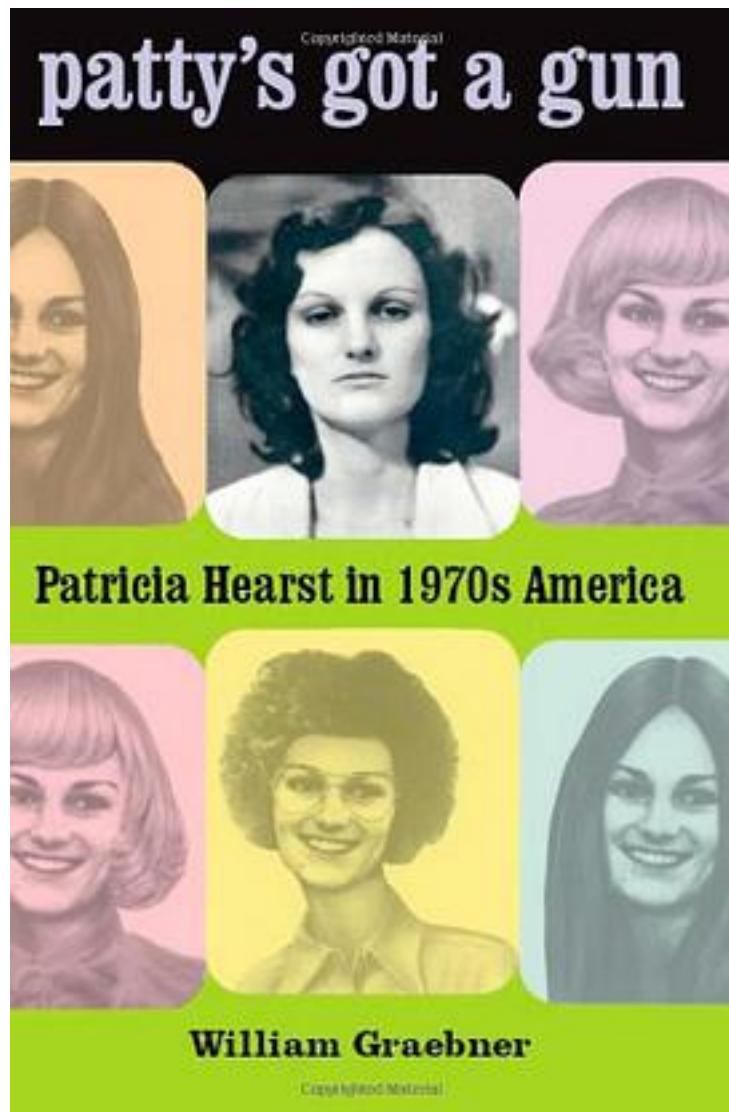


Patty's Got a Gun



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It was a story so bizarre it defied belief: in April 1974, twenty-year-old newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst robbed a San Francisco bank in the company of members of the Symbionese Liberation Army - who had kidnapped her a mere nine weeks earlier. But the robbery - and the spectacular 1976 trial that ended with Hearst's criminal conviction - seemed oddly appropriate to the troubled mood of the nation, an instant exemplar of a turbulent era. With "Patty's Got a Gun", the first substantial reconsideration of Hearst's story in more than twenty-five years, William Graebner vividly recreates the atmosphere of uncertainty and frustration of mid-1970s America. Drawing on copious media accounts of the robbery and trial - as well as cultural artifacts from glam rock to "Invasion of the Body Snatchers" - Graebner paints a compelling portrait of a nation confused and frightened by the upheavals of 1960s liberalism and beginning to tip over into what would become Reagan-era conservatism, with its invocations of individual responsibility and the heroic. Trapped in the middle of that shift, the affectless, zombielike, 'brainwashed' Patty Hearst was a ready-made symbol of all that seemed to have gone wrong with the sixties - the inevitable result, some said, of rampant permissiveness, feckless elitism, the loss of moral clarity, and feminism run amok. By offering a fresh look at Patty Hearst and her trial - for the first time free from the agendas of the day, yet set fully in their cultural context - "Patty's Got a Gun" delivers a nuanced portrait of both an unforgettable moment and an entire era, one whose repercussions continue to be felt today.

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目录:

[Patty's Got a Gun 下载链接1](#)

标签

评论

[Patty's Got a Gun 下载链接1](#)

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