

Discussion Guide

The cover features a red background with a globe icon in the top left. The text 'WORLD ALMANAC® VIDEO' is prominently displayed in white. A yellow diagonal banner in the top right corner reads 'America's #1 Source'. Below the title, the subtitle 'Landmark American Trials' is written in a smaller white font. The central image is a black and white photograph showing Julius and Ethel Rosenberg behind a chain-link fence, with a crowd of protesters in the foreground holding signs. One sign reads 'IF WE OBE IT WILL BE MURDER OF INNOCENT PEOPLE.' and another says 'Ethel Rosenberg & Julius Rosenberg'. At the bottom of the cover, the title 'Julius and Ethel Rosenberg' is written in white. Logos for 'nfn NATIONAL FILM NETWORK' and 'CHOICES' are located at the bottom.

Some trials take on a significance that is larger than the verdict itself. Such trials are shaped by the tenor and emotions of the era in which they occur, and in turn may reshape prevailing attitudes. The trials of this series fall into that category. Whether pointing up the anti-anarchistic hysteria demonstrated in the 1921 Sacco and Vanzetti trial or the anti-Communist fervor exhibited during the 1951 Rosenberg case, these trials become miniature history lessons that can provide as much insight into an age as a history textbook.

In New York City in 1951, six years after the first atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, and in the midst of post-World War II anti-Communist fervor, Julius Rosenberg and his wife, Ethel, were tried for conspiracy to commit espionage. The trial has been the subject of controversy for nearly 50 years. Some see the Rosenbergs as victims of a hysterical fear of Communism that lasted in the U.S. through most of the 1950's. Others see them as criminals who compromised the nation's security and deserved the punishment they received, which was execution. Both the Rosenbergs maintained their innocence to the end.



National Film Network

4501 Forbes Boulevard, Lanham, MD 20706

www.nationalfilmnetwork.com

1-800-431-4586

