



# The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century

By Joel F. Harrington

Download now

Read Online ➔

## The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington

Based on the rare and until now overlooked journal of a Renaissance-era executioner, the noted historian Joel F. Harrington's *The Faithful Executioner* takes us deep inside the alien world and thinking of Meister Frantz Schmidt of Nuremberg, who, during forty-five years as a professional executioner, personally put to death 394 individuals and tortured, flogged, or disfigured many hundreds more. But the picture that emerges of Schmidt from his personal papers is not that of a monster. Could a man who routinely practiced such cruelty also be insightful, compassionate? even progressive?

In *The Faithful Executioner*, Harrington vividly re-creates a life filled with stark contrasts, from the young apprentice's rigorous training under his executioner father to the adult Meister Frantz's juggling of familial duties with his work in the torture chamber and at the scaffold. With him we encounter brutal highwaymen, charming swindlers, and tragic unwed mothers accused of infanticide, as well as patrician senators, godly chaplains, and corrupt prison guards. Harrington teases out the hidden meanings and drama of Schmidt's journal, uncovering a touching tale of inherited shame and attempted redemption for the social pariah and his children. *The Faithful Executioner* offers not just the compelling firsthand perspective of a professional torturer and killer, but testimony of one man's lifelong struggle to reconcile his bloody craft with his deep religious faith. The biography of an ordinary man struggling for his soul, this groundbreaking book also offers an unparalleled panoramic view of Europe on the cusp of modernity, a society riven by violent conflict at all levels and encumbered by paranoia, superstition, and abuses of power. Thanks to an extraordinary historical source and its gifted interpreter, we recognize far more of ourselves than we might have expected in this intimate portrait of a professional killer from a faraway world.



[Download The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor an ...pdf](#)

 [\*\*Read Online\*\* The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor ...pdf](#)

# The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century

By Joel F. Harrington

**The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century** By Joel F. Harrington

Based on the rare and until now overlooked journal of a Renaissance-era executioner, the noted historian Joel F. Harrington's *The Faithful Executioner* takes us deep inside the alien world and thinking of Meister Frantz Schmidt of Nuremberg, who, during forty-five years as a professional executioner, personally put to death 394 individuals and tortured, flogged, or disfigured many hundreds more. But the picture that emerges of Schmidt from his personal papers is not that of a monster. Could a man who routinely practiced such cruelty also be insightful, compassionate? even progressive?

In *The Faithful Executioner*, Harrington vividly re-creates a life filled with stark contrasts, from the young apprentice's rigorous training under his executioner father to the adult Meister Frantz's juggling of familial duties with his work in the torture chamber and at the scaffold. With him we encounter brutal highwaymen, charming swindlers, and tragic unwed mothers accused of infanticide, as well as patrician senators, godly chaplains, and corrupt prison guards. Harrington teases out the hidden meanings and drama of Schmidt's journal, uncovering a touching tale of inherited shame and attempted redemption for the social pariah and his children. *The Faithful Executioner* offers not just the compelling firsthand perspective of a professional torturer and killer, but testimony of one man's lifelong struggle to reconcile his bloody craft with his deep religious faith.

The biography of an ordinary man struggling for his soul, this groundbreaking book also offers an unparalleled panoramic view of Europe on the cusp of modernity, a society riven by violent conflict at all levels and encumbered by paranoia, superstition, and abuses of power. Thanks to an extraordinary historical source and its gifted interpreter, we recognize far more of ourselves than we might have expected in this intimate portrait of a professional killer from a faraway world.

**The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century** By Joel F. Harrington Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #358943 in Books
- Published on: 2013-03-19
- Released on: 2013-03-19
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.46" h x 1.64" w x 6.39" l, 1.00 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 320 pages

 [Download The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor an ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor ...pdf](#)

## Download and Read Free Online *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century* By Joel F. Harrington

---

### Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Based on the journal of Frantz Schmidt, a Nuremburg executioner who died in the early seventeenth century, this endlessly fascinating book explores not just the life of a professional killer but also the times in which he lived. An executioner was not a thug with an axe; he was a highly skilled professional, trained in the arts of torture and interrogation and expert in dispensing death in a frightening variety of ways. Although executioners filled a vital societal need, they were considered outcasts (even though many of them were successful medical practitioners on the side). Schmidt executed more than 300 people, but, as Harrington reveals here, he was a good, ambitious man who dreamed of returning his family to the social status they enjoyed before Schmidt's father became an executioner. A sort of real-life companion to Oliver Pötzsch's 2010 novel *The Hangman's Daughter* (which, like its sequels, is set in Germany in the mid-seventeenth century), the book opens a window on a profession and a period in history about which there are few primary sources. --David Pitt

### Review

"Fascinating . . . Engrossing . . . Harrington brings out the sheer strangeness of the past . . . In *The Faithful Executioner*, Mr. Harrington has not only rescued the life of an individual from disgust and condescension but also, by focusing on a career in killing, brought a whole world back to life." *The Wall Street Journal*

"Remarkable . . . [A] fascinating exploration . . . this is a surprisingly modern, even topical story that poses difficult questions about capital punishment and what Harrington calls 'the human drive toward retribution.'" *The Washington Post*

"Fascinating . . . One of the pleasures of reading history is to be transported somewhere, even if we aren't sure we want to go." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

"Equal parts enlightening and enjoyable." *The Daily Beast*

"[A] vividly drawn portrait . . . Harrington succeeds in deftly taking us beyond Schmidt's biography to address broader questions. Finely researched and crafted." *History Today*

"A fascinating read." *Publishers Weekly*

"Surprisingly poignant . . . A whole teeming world of Reformation Germany comes alive." *Kirkus Reviews*

"This is a precious story that Harrington has drawn from the journal and archival records, a braiding of Schmidt's words with a re-creation of Schmidt's world, a story that is at once inclusive and atmospheric, deeply intimate and rare . . . It is a wonder-making world, made manifest by an artful historian's hand." *Barnes & Noble Review*

"Who can imagine how an executioner feels about his trade? Joel F. Harrington has written a considered and fascinating book that helps us hear the voice of one such man, a professional torturer (and healer) who, astonishingly, kept a diary. Exploring both sixteenth-century Nuremberg and the world about the city, he re-creates the social context for the flamboyant displays of cruelty that later centuries find so hard to comprehend. Both the executioner and his victims are rescued from our condescension and restored to their

own moral universe?which is not as far from ours as we like to suppose.” ?Hilary Mantel, Man Booker Prize–winning author Wolf Hall and Bring Up the Bodies

“A book as entertaining and revealing as it is improbable and outrageous. Joel F. Harrington has told a marvelous yarn, giving us not just the compelling biography of Meister Frantz but his world.” ?Rick Atkinson, Pulitzer Prize–winning author of *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943–1944*

“In an astonishing feat of historical reconstruction, Joel F. Harrington uniquely draws us into the emotional world of a man paid to kill professionally--into his troubled sense of achievement and shame. This compelling book is brilliant reading for everyone interested in new ways of thinking about the past as well as crime and punishment today.” ?Ulinka Rublack, author of *Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Renaissance Europe*

“The Faithful Executioner masterfully conjures the heavy stench and bustle of a sixteenth-century southern German city--waterlogged roads, smoky marketplaces, blood-lusty masses laden with bizarre superstitions--via the Lebenslauf of a curious figure: Meister Frantz Schmidt, Nuremburg's state executioner from 1578 to 1617. With the help of Schmidt's private journal, Joel F. Harrington revivifies both the detailed and the abstract with enviable scholarship and style. This is social history at its very best: weird, riveting, addictive.” ?R. Jay Magill Jr., author of *Sincerity*

#### About the Author

**Joel F. Harrington** is a professor of history at Vanderbilt University. He is the author of *The Unwanted Child*, winner of the 2010 Roland H. Bainton Prize for History, as well as *Reordering Marriage and Society in Reformation Germany* and *A Cloud of Witnesses*. He lives with his wife and two children in Nashville, Tennessee.

#### Users Review

##### From reader reviews:

##### Scott Anderson:

The book *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century* can give more knowledge and information about everything you want. Exactly why must we leave the great thing like a book *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century*? Several of you have a different opinion about guide. But one aim which book can give many facts for us. It is absolutely suitable. Right now, try to closer along with your book. Knowledge or details that you take for that, you could give for each other; you are able to share all of these. Book *The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century* has simple shape but the truth is know: it has great and big function for you. You can look the enormous world by available and read a reserve. So it is very wonderful.

##### Carroll Boggess:

What do you in relation to book? It is not important together with you? Or just adding material when you really need something to explain what yours problem? How about your spare time? Or are you busy particular person? If you don't have spare time to accomplish others business, it is make you feel bored

faster. And you have free time? What did you do? Everyone has many questions above. They need to answer that question simply because just their can do this. It said that about e-book. Book is familiar on every person. Yes, it is proper. Because start from on jardín de infancia until university need that The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century to read.

#### **Donald Link:**

It is possible to spend your free time to read this book this guide. This The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century is simple to create you can read it in the park, in the beach, train in addition to soon. If you did not include much space to bring the actual printed book, you can buy the e-book. It is make you simpler to read it. You can save often the book in your smart phone. Thus there are a lot of benefits that you will get when you buy this book.

#### **Herlinda Jerkins:**

That guide can make you to feel relax. This specific book The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century was vibrant and of course has pictures on the website. As we know that book The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century has many kinds or genre. Start from kids until teenagers. For example Naruto or Private investigator Conan you can read and think you are the character on there. Therefore not at all of book are generally make you bored, any it offers up you feel happy, fun and unwind. Try to choose the best book for you personally and try to like reading which.

**Download and Read Online The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington #3NY1TPI2R8G**

# **Read The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington for online ebook**

The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington books to read online.

## **Online The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington ebook PDF download**

**The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington Doc**

**The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington Mobipocket**

**The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington EPub**

**3NY1TPI2R8G: The Faithful Executioner: Life and Death, Honor and Shame in the Turbulent Sixteenth Century By Joel F. Harrington**