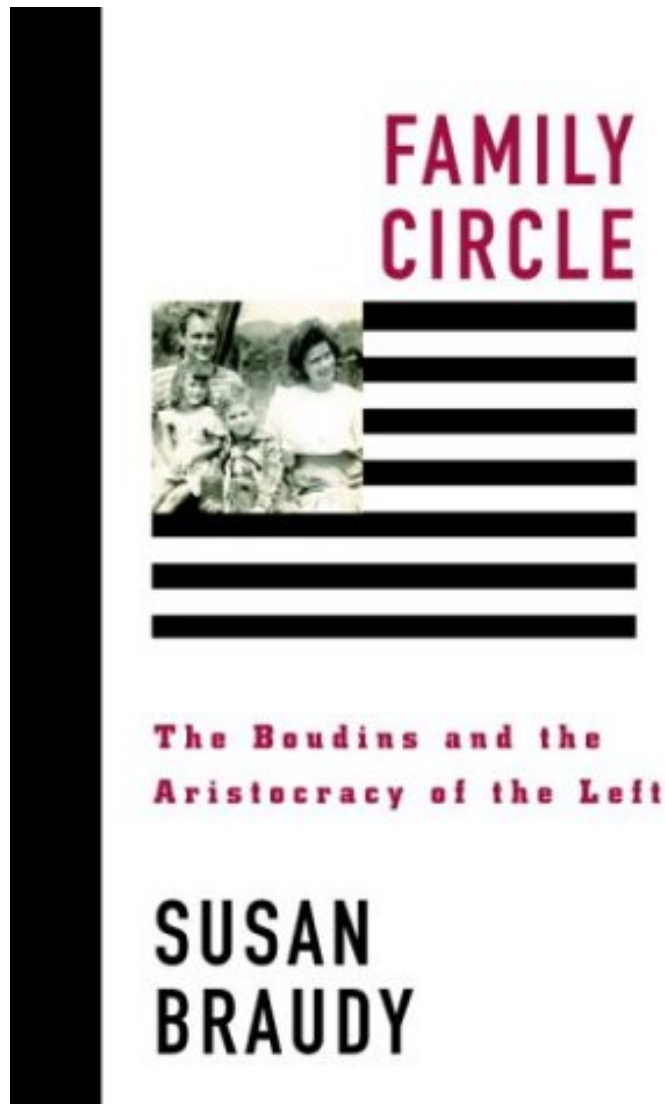


## Family Circle: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left

*Susan Braudy*

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**Susan Braudy : Family Circle: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Family Circle: The Boudins and the Aristocracy of the Left:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. interesting readBy Ron NutterI enjoyed reading this book very much. It brought back a lot of memories of the 60's and a lot of the characters of that time. I had no idea of Boudin's family influence at the time. I find it fascinating one family can produce two children so diametrically opposite as the two Boudin kids.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Leonard Boudin was my attorneyBy Robert Carl CohenLeonard Boudin, my attorney, represented me before the US State Department's Passport Appeals Board in

1958.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. very thoroughly researchedBy Helen the SwimmerThis is a very thorough account of the lives of the Boudins and of those connected with them. Some readers may not want all that detail. I personally found it very engaging, especially since I knew (not well) both the author and the book's subject at school. I continue to be fascinated by Kathy Boudin's life, now that she is a professor at Columbia University.

In 1970, Kathy Boudin, revolutionary Weatherman, fled the ruins of a town house on West Eleventh Street in Greenwich Village after a bomb that was being made there exploded, killing three people, and America's sympathy with radicalism fell apart. The Weathermen had started as angry kids who planted stink bombs and emulated the Black Panthers, but the bomb they were building on Eleventh Street was deadly. Kathy, daughter of the celebrated lawyer Leonard Boudin, third generation of the famous Boudin family, emerged naked from the wreckage, was given some clothes by a neighbor, slipped into the night, and went underground for the next eleven years, her name soon appearing on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted List. Susan Braudy tells the riveting story of the Boudin family circle through four generations. She writes of Kathy Boudin's childhood, growing up in Manhattan in an ambitious, liberal New York Jewish family, daughter of a revered left-wing labor and civil liberties lawyer and an intellectual poet mother. Braudy writes of Kathy's parents; her father, Leonard, who patterned his life after that of his uncle, the great labor lawyer and leftist legal scholar, Louis B. Boudin (in the 1930s he fought in court for new laws to protect and organize labor unions and was one of the foremost translators and interpreters of Karl Marx). Leonard Boudin fought on behalf of dissenters on the left. He argued the cases of Paul Robeson and the two-time convicted spy Judith Coplon before the Supreme Court, forcing the U.S. government to allow free travel to all citizens and preventing the admission of illegally gathered evidence, rulings that crucially curtailed the power of J. Edgar Hoover. Braudy writes of Boudin's legal work on behalf of such clients as Rockwell Kent and Julian Bond; his defense of Fidel Castro in connection with his seizure of American capital in Cuba; his case on behalf of Dr. Benjamin Spock (arrested for protesting the Vietnam War; Boudin put the war, not Dr. Spock, on trial); and his case on behalf of Daniel Ellsberg, helping him to leak the Pentagon Papers, which set the stage for Nixon's resignation. We see Kathy's mother, Jean Boudin, poet and intellectual, an orphan taken in by a cultivated Jewish family whose circle included Marc Blitzstein and Clifford Odets; her courtship and marriage to Leonard (they were toasted as the most gorgeous couple of the left); her years as the dutiful, devoted wife to a husband who conducted countless affairs; her suicide attempt when Kathy was nine. And we see Leonard's lifelong mentor and competitor, his brother-in-law, the brilliant, scrappy independent journalist and government critic I. F. Stone, a born leader and fighter who made war on government bureaucrats (believing they usurped power) and on his deadly enemy, J. Edgar Hoover. We follow Kathy at Bryn Mawr, organizing the school's maids to demand fair wages, graduating magna cum laude in the top five of her class; failing to get into Yale Law School (while her brother was a star at Harvard); helping to plan the riots at the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago and the Days of Rage that followed; breaking Black Panther Assata Shakur out of jail; bombing the headquarters of the Manhattan Police Department and the Capitol in Washington; and finally, in 1981, being part of the botched robbery of a Brinks truck that turned into a bloodbath (two policemen and one Brinks guard were killed), which resulted in her trial with her father as her lawyer; her years in Bedford Hills prison as a model prisoner, teacher, and AIDS activist and her release after twenty-two years. A huge, rich, riveting book—a story of idealism and passion; of law and brilliant legal minds; of political intrigue and government witch-hunts; of SDS and the Days of Rage; of Vietnam protests and underground revolutionary terrorism; and of the golden family at the center of this vortex, who came to be seen through five decades as the very emblem of the American left.

From Publishers Weekly When Kathy Boudin walked out of prison recently after serving 20 years of a 20-year-to-life sentence, it was front-page news and an eerie echo of a rapidly receding era. Boudin had been an accomplice in a notorious 1981 Brinks robbery by the Black Liberation Army in which one Brinks guard and two police officers were killed. Boudin's release was an odd reminder of a time when revolution was in the air and some, namely Boudin's Weather Underground, thought they could bring it by violence. Braudy (Who Killed Sal Mineo? etc.), who knew Boudin at college in the early '60s, sees the Boudin "family circle" as revolving around the father-daughter dyad of Leonard and Kathy, locked in a love-hate relationship that involved a fierce need by each for the other's approval and an equally fierce need to outradicalize the other. Leonard was a celebrated leftist lawyer whose clients included Dr. Benjamin Spock, Fidel Castro and Daniel Ellsberg. But Kathy insisted, according to Braudy, that she was the one who would end the war in Vietnam and bring racial equality through her guerrilla tactics. It's an unpleasant, even suffocating tale: Leonard comes off as preening and self-regarding, a chronic seducer of young women; Kathy as arrogant and rigidly ideological, scolding anyone who wouldn't join her revolution. But in reducing Kathy's radical motivations to a battle with her father, Braudy offers a thin portrait with no resonance and no emotional toehold for the reader—no one in this sad story appears sympathetic in Braudy's portrayal; Kathy's mother, clearly deserving sympathy, is only a shadowy bit player. Braudy's is a small account of events and people meriting a broader, larger-spirited chronicle. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Kathy Boudin, former member of the radical

Weather Underground who was on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted List for 11 years, was sentenced to 20 years in prison for her part in the 1980 Brink's robbery, which resulted in the death of two police officers and a security guard. Braudy, who met Boudin at Bryn Mawr, offers a revealing look at the Boudin family--three generations of political activists and thinkers. Her father, Leonard, intense and driven, was a respected civil liberties attorney. Kathy's mother, Jean, was a poet and intellectual, so slavishly devoted to Leonard that she ignored his affairs with young women. Kathy's relationship with her family was deeply troubled; she vied with her brother for the attention of a father who was absorbed in his own image. Kathy, in effect, competed with her father for headlines--he with sensational court battles, she with plans for bombings and protests. Based on FBI files, court transcripts, and interviews, Braudy details the turbulent social and political atmosphere of the 1960s when Kathy associated with radicals including Bernardine Dohrn, Tom Hayden, and Abbie Hoffman. She also vividly recalls the radical counterculture that eschewed material comforts, advocated "smash monogamy" with group sex, and heavily used drugs. Boudin's recent parole will heighten interest in this compelling look at a major figure in American radical politics and domestic terrorism. Vanessa BushCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved A gripping study. . . . A powerful narrative. --The New York Times Book Tough-minded, honest, and thoroughly absorbing. --The New RepublicThe tensions, conflicts, and eventual downfall of a seemingly confident dynasty of radical tinkers and super-achievers . . . give Susan Braudys Family Circle its stunning power. . . . As Braudy tells it, the story attains the epic stature of a genuine American tragedy. --The Womens of BooksFascinating . . . Braudy, who knew Kathy growing up, delves deeply into her familys crippling psychological games. PeopleRethinks what makes a radical tick." --New York Daily NewsFrom the Trade Paperback edition.