I'm not a bot

These harrowing narratives transport readers to the scene of the crime and seek to give a voice to the lost. True crime has never been more popular than it is today, as evidenced by the astonishing number of podcasts, TV shows, and documentaries dedicated to the genre. At its core, however, true crime is a type of nonfiction literature. From influential works like Truman Capote's In Cold Blood (1966) to modern-day investigations such as Michelle McNamara's I'll Be Gone in the Dark (2018) or Elon Green's Last Call (2021), such narratives are unique in the way they connect with their readers, precisely because they explore harrowing real-life events that could happen to anyone. Want to know more about true crime? Here we define the genre, take a fascinating look at its origins, and cover some of its common themes. It seems like the definition of true crime would be obvious: A story about a crime that actually occurred. Indeed, most true crime books explore dark and distressing subject matter, and reader discretion is advised. Granted, the first rule of true crime is that the narrative must include as many nitty-gritty facts about the case as possible: Readers expect the actual names of people involved and the correct time and place, information about what they did, and as many details of the crime and its investigation as the author can dig up. True crime books can be about a single event, like a kidnapping. They can also be about the collective crimes of serial killers, thieves, or cult leaders. However narrow or broad the focus, the best true crime books deliver well-researched, finely written examinations of the case at hand. But the wealth of details is just half of what makes true crime so popular with readers. The most talented true crime authors excel at presenting the facts of a case while vividly re-creating the atmosphere that surrounded the crime. They put criminals and their victims in context by establishing elements like the political climate of the day, the history of a town, or the struggles faced by a particular community. They dig into everyone's motives, then weigh these motives against the actions and developments they document. They re-create dialogue as faithfully as possible, although of course sometimes it's necessary to take artistic liberties. In other words, the most popular true crime authors transport readers to the scene of the crime, with all senses fully engaged. Without an author's narrative talents, the details of the crime would simply read like a legal report. Before literacy rates hit a growth spurt late in the Renaissance, sensational crimes of the day were reported in the form of ballads. These songs were often written and performed within days of the event. Ballads like "The Gosport Tragedy or the Perjured Ship-Carpenter" (1560s), about a woman murdered by her lover, have been passed down for centuries, with the lyrics modified over time. The ballad "Pretty Polly" is the most recent incarnation of "The Gosport Tragedy" and is considered a staple of American folk music. Some of the earliest true crime writing comes from England in the early 1600s. Town leaders and clergymen reported horrible local crimes to teach a moral lesson about the limits of God's mercy to the criminally inclined. John Reynolds' The Triumphs of Gods Revenge Against the Crying & Execrable Sinne of Willful, & Premeditated Murther is one such collection of crime narratives, written between 1621 and 1635 and originally distributed as pamphlets. Execution sermons are another form of early true crime writing. Preachers delivered these sermons — popular with Puritans in the New World — prior to the execution of a criminal, focusing on their path to ruin and the ways they could have avoided their fate. These sermons drew large audiences and usually included the person about to be executed. Printed versions of the sermons were sometimes distributed after the execution took place. As these documents evolved, interviews with the condemned were added, often with scandalous confessions. Some of the most common execution sermons in the New World involved women accused of witchcraft, as found in Cotton and Increase Mather's Wonders of the Invisible World: Being an Account of the Tryals of Several Witches Lately Executed in New-England (1862). By the 1800s, broadsides, crime pamphlets, and penny dreadfuls offered readers vivid — and often exaggerated — reporting of crimes. They were a sensationalized mix of journalism and storytelling, and they sold well but were certainly not considered literature. Nevertheless, criminal behavior was a popular topic for some of the era's most respected authors too, with essays by Charles Dickens ("A Visit to Newgate," 1836) and William Thackeray ("Going to See a Man Hanged," 1840) examining humanity's capacity for violence. Crime fiction flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries, but it was not until 1966 that true crime reached a new level of readership. One book, In Cold Blood by Truman Capote, changed both the way authors wrote true crime and the way critics reviewed it. A hybrid "nonfiction novel," Capote's book centers on the 1959 murders of four members of the Clutter family in Holcomb, Kansas. It explores the investigation of the murders, the subsequent capture of killers Perry Smith and Richard Hickock, and their trial and execution. Capote's nuanced examination on the killers' motives reads like any bestselling mystery novel. Since In Cold Blood, a bevy of true crime books, podcasts, and documentaries have followed the narrative-driven template that Capote employed. There's always overlap in the types of true crime books, but contemporary titles tend to fall into at least one of the following categories: Criminal-centric true crime books put criminals and their motives front and center. In 1979, Norman Mailer won the Pulitzer Prize for The Executioner's Song. The true crime novel centers on Gary Gilmore, who was convicted of murder and insisted on his own execution. Ann Rule's The Stranger Beside Me (1980) is a shocking account of her friendship with serial killer Ted Bundy. Victim-centric true crime books focus on the lives of the victims and seek to give a voice to the lost. Elon Green's Last Call: A True Story of Love, Lust, and Murder in Queer New York (2021) shines a light on a serial killer who targeted gay men in 1980s and '90s at the height of the AIDS epidemic. 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The Kidnap Years (2020) by David Stout reminds us of a heartbreaking kidnapping epidemic during the Great Depression, which included the Lindbergh baby. Sociopolitical true crime books cover crimes of power and influence like political assassinations, high-profile robberies, or organized crime. Ghost in the Wires (2011) by Kevin Mitnick is a true crime memoir about his life as a hacker on the run from the FBI. Charles Brandt's I Heard You Paint Houses (2004) centers on the confessions of hitman Frank "the Irishman" Sheeran, including that Sheeran killed Jimmy Hoffa. As for the assassination of JFK, there are too many books to count. Last but not least, no true crime bookshelf is complete without a bleak look into the lives of the world's most notorious cults. The Road to Jonestown (2017) by Jeff Guinn includes recent interviews with survivors of Jim Jones's cult, plus others who knew Jones personally. Multiple books have been written about Charles Manson and his clan of followers, but none are more popular than Vincent Bugliosi's Helter Skelter (1974), which stands as the bestselling true crime book of all time (Capote's In Cold Blood comes in second). These harrowing narratives transport readers to the scene of the crime and seek to give a voice to the lost. True crime has never been more popular than it is today, as evidenced by the astonishing number of podcasts, TV shows, and documentaries dedicated to the genre. At its core, however, true crime is a type of nonfiction literature. From influential works like Truman Capote's In Cold Blood (1966) to modern-day investigations such as Michelle McNamara's I'll Be Gone in the Dark (2018) or Elon Green's Last Call (2021), such narratives are unique in the way they connect with their readers, precisely because they explore harrowing real-life events that could happen to anyone. Want to know more about true crime? 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The best true crime books have a compelling narrative arc that draws the reader in and goes beyond the simple question of "who did it?" They also answer the question of why and explain how things could be different the next time, though they don't give happy endings. This list of top true crime books includes everything from first-person accounts of murder and mayhem to scholarly deep-dives into the psychology behind the crime. True crime books are nonfiction. They tell stories of actual crimes that have taken place. How does true crime compare vs. crime fiction? In crime fiction, the author can make up details to suit the story, while true crime books are strictly based on facts. While crime fiction often includes series of novels about a detective or police investigator, there really aren't any true crime series, since most crimes are one-offs or part of a single spree, but not part of a longer story related to other crimes. However, some top true crime authors have written many books in the genre. The queen of true crime is Ann Rule, who appears twice on this list and wrote more than two dozen true crime books. The list is based on critical acclaim, book sales and the general interest in the crimes online and in other media. Winner of an Edgar Allen Poe Award (given to each year's best mysteries) for Best Fact Crime, The Devil in the White City tells the story of the man believed to be America's first serial killer, who operated during the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. Leonardo DiCaprio optioned the bestselling tome in 2010. This book is best for those who like their true crime books to read like classic novels, with great character development and rich writing. Erik Larson's The Devil in the White City is available from Penguin Random House. American author Erik Larson wrote the bestselling true crime book "The Devil in the White City."Getty Images Perhaps the best-known true crime work of all time, In Cold Blood first ran as a serial in The New Yorker before becoming a book. It details the killing of the Clutter family in 1959 and the two men who did it, one of whom (Perry Smith) Capote got very close to before his execution. This book is best for devotees of new journalism or anyone watching FX's Feud: Capote Vs. the Swans who wants to know more about Capote's seminal work. Truman Capote's In Cold Blood is available from Penguin Random House. Author Truman Capote relaxes with a book in his cluttered apartment. He wrote top true crime book ... More "In Cold Blood."Getty Images 18. If You Tell by Gregg Olsen (2019) If You Tell makes another tale of parental abuse, Mommie Dearest, look like a fairy tale. Mom Shelly Knotek subjected daughters Nikki, Sami and Tori to psychological and physical torture, and she was later convicted of murder. The book details how the children survived the house of horrors and their parents' murder trials. This book is best for those interested in the psychology of abuse and secrecy. Gregg Olsen's If You Tell is available from Thomas & Mercer. 17. Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann (2017) Killers of the Flower Moon, the basis for the Oscar-nominated movie directed by Martin Scorsese and one of Time's top books of 2017, examines the mysterious deaths of wealthy Osage family members in the 1920s and the shocking plot behind them. It also explains how the modern FBI emerged from the case. This book is best for those interested in Native American culture and history and the horrors they include. David Grann's Killers of the Flower Moon is available from Penguin Random House.A copy of the bestselling true crime book "Killers of the Flower Moon' by David Grann for sale in a ... More bookstore in Santa Fe, New Mexico.Getty Images 16. No Place Safe by Kim Reid (2007) Kim Reid's memoir is multidimensional. She was the daughter of a cop investigating a serial killer in 1979 Atlanta. She was also a young Black girl navigating two distinct worlds, those of her largely Black neighborhood and her largely white school. It's heartbreaking to see her schoolmates' indifference to the murders of Black boys. This book is best for those interested in issues of civil rights, policing and race that are, sadly, still as unresolved as they were when the book takes place. Kim Reid's No Place Safe is available from Dafina. 15. Trailed: One Woman's Quest to Solve the Shenandoah Murders by Kathryn Miles (2023) Kathryn Miles began looking into the 1996 murder of two young women in Virginia's Shenandoah National Park when she became convinced the wrong man had been accused of (but never charged with) the crime. Her investigation turns up surprising new evidence in the long-cold case. This book is best for nature lovers and those who are okay with unresolved endings (that is not a spoiler). Kathryn Miles's Trailed: One Woman's Quest to Solve the Shenandoah Murders is available from Hachette. 14. Small Sacrifices: A True Story of Passion and Murder by Ann Rule (1988) Rule's first book on the list is about young mother Diane Downs, who claimed a stranger had shot her three children but later became the main suspect. Farrah Fawcett famously portrayed Downs in the made-for-TV movie based on the book, which was a sensation when it was published. This book is best for those new to the work of Rule, a former policewoman who examines the psychology of her protagonists from that angle. Ann Rule's Small Sacrifices is available from Penguin Random House.A scene from the TV movie adaptation of "Small Sacrifices," starring Farrah Fawcett and Ryan O'Neal. ... More The book was a true crime sensation.Disney General Entertainment Content via Getty Images 13. The Other Wes Moore: One Name, Two Fates by Wes Moore (2010) Decades before he became governor of Maryland, Wes Moore was featured in the Baltimore Sun for earning a Rhodes Scholarship. The paper ran a series at the same time about another man named Wes Moore implicated in a police killing. Moore the future politician reached out to him, and they formed a relationship. This book is best for those interested in police reform or who have ever wondered "what if" about their own lives. Wes Moore's The Other Wes Moore is available from Penguin Random House.Author and Maryland Governor Wes Moore addresses supporters after defeating Republican nominee Dan ... More Cox. He wrote a top true crime book, too.Getty Images 12. Blood on Their Hands: Murder, Corruption, and the Fall of the Murdaugh Dynasty by Mandy Matney and Carolyn Murnick (2023) A ripped-from-the-headlines look at how the Murdaughs, one of South Carolina's ruling dynasties, fell so far so fast, reported by one of the journalists who followed their case from the beginning (Matney). She builds on her Murdaugh podcast to investigate with Murnick what the family's downfall means for good ol' boys everywhere. This book is best for anyone who read a headline about the Murdaughs in the past five years and couldn't believe what they saw. Mandy Matney and Carolyn Murnick's Blood on Their Hands is available from HarperCollins. 11.Yellow Bird: Oil, Murder, and a Woman's Search for Justice in Indian Country by Sierra Crane Murdoch (2020) Named one of the best books of 2020 by NPR, Publisher's Weekly and the New York Times Book Review, Yellow Bird follows Arikara woman Lissa Yellow Bird as she searches for the truth about what happened to a white male oil worker who disappeared on the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation amid the oil boom. This book is best for those interested in reckoning with generational and personal trauma. Sierra Crane Murdoch's Yellow Bird is available from Penguin Random House. 10. Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil by John Berendt (1994) No wonder the subtitle is "A Savannah Story"—this is as much a portrait of the Deep South and one town's eccentric personalities as it is the mystery behind the death of a male sex worker whose murder spurred four different trials. Clint Eastwood directed the movie based on the New York Times bestseller. This book is best for those who love gossip and innuendo as much as gore. John Berendt's Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil is available from Penguin Random House.Bestselling American author John Berendt, author of "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil," poses ... More for a portrait in 1995.Getty Images 9. Beneath the Tamarind Tree: A Story of Courage, Family, and the Lost Schoolgirls of Boko Haram by Isha Sesay (2019) You may remember the #BringBackOurGirls social media campaign to find the "lost schoolgirls of Boko Haram," who were kidnapped by the terrorist group at their Nigerian school in 2013, but do you know what happened to these young women? British journalist Isha Sesay reports on what occurred after the public attention died down. This book is best for anyone interested in international politics and wondering whether social media spotlights make a difference in solving crimes. Isha Sesay's Beneath the Tamarind Tree is available from HarperCollins. 8. Midnight in Mexico: A Reporter's Journey Through a Country's Descent into Darkness by Alfredo Corchado (2014) Accomplished Mexican-American journalist Alfredo Corchado exposes how the cartels gained so much power in Mexico after he's targeted by a threat saying he could be the next reporter to be killed. He weaves his own story seamlessly with the bigger picture of how the drug trade has decimated his beloved native country. This book is best for anyone curious about the growth of the drug trade. Alfredo Corchado's Midnight in Mexico is available from Penguin Random House. 7. I'll Be Gone in the Dark by Michelle McNamara (2018) There is, of course, a sad postscript to this obsessively researched book by Michelle McNamara that ultimately led to the capture of the Golden State Killer—she passed away before he was caught. He terrorized Northern California for years, and McNamara's book paints a haunting portrait of him, many details of which proved correct. This book is best for pop culture aficionados. Michelle McNamara's I'll Be Gone in the Dark is available from HarperCollins.Actor and comedian Patton Oswalt (right) and Director of New York Public Library's Public ... More Programming Paul Holdengraber discuss the book "I'll Be Gone in the Dark," written by Oswalt's late wife, Michelle McNamara.Getty Images 6. The Poisoner's Handbook: Murder and the Birth of Forensic Medicine in Jazz Age New York by Deborah Blum (2011) The Financial Times said this book "breathes deadly life into the Roaring Twenties" with its in-depth history of how chief medical examiner Charles Norris teamed with toxicologist Alexander Gettler in 1918 NYC to create a new high-tech way to hunt down criminals, leading to the birth of forensic chemistry. This book is best for those interested in how true crime can lead to bigger stories. Deborah Blum's The Poisoner's Handbook is available from Penguin Random House. 5. Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders by Vincent Bugliosi and Curt Gentry (1974) Everyone knows who Charles Manson is. This definitive book on the Manson murders, which the publisher also claims is the bestselling true crime book of all time, gives the inside story on Manson's madness—Vincent Bugliosi was the prosecutor in the case. This book is best for anyone new to the true crime genre who wants to start big. Vincent Bugliosi and Curt Gentry's Helter Skelter is available from W.W. Norton.Cameramen film the scene as Charles Manson is brought into the Los Angeles city jail under suspicion ... More of having masterminded the Tate-LaBianca murders of August, 1969.Bettmann Archive 4. The Red Parts: A Memoir by Maggie Nelson (2007) A remarkable literary work, The Red Parts follows Maggie Nelson and her family after new evidence and documents related to her aunt's murder are discovered and the long-dormant case sparks a new trial. This book is best for those wondering how people impacted by true crime cope. Maggie Nelson's The Red Parts is available from Graywolf Press. 3. The Night Stalker: The Life and Crimes of Richard Ramirez by Philip Carlo (1996) The Night Stalker terrorized Los Angeles in the 1980s, killing 13 people before being caught. Philip Carlo painted such a well-balanced picture of Richard Ramirez that women from around the world contacted the author asking to get in touch with the convicted murderer—he profiles some of them in an updated edition of the book. This book is best for those interested in famous true crime cases. Philip Carlo's The Night Stalker is available from Kensington Publishing. 2. The Stranger Beside Me: The Shocking Inside Story of Serial Killer Ted Bundy by Ann Rule (1980) The New Yorker called Ann Rule's third book "perhaps the most unnerving true-crime book ever published," and with good reason. Rule worked with Ted Bundy at a Seattle crisis clinic, and they became friends. Years later, her pal was unmasked as an infamous serial killer, and Rule struggles to reconcile friend with murderer. This book is best for those looking for a unique take on a much-written-about case. Ann Rule's The Stranger Beside Me is available from W.W. Norton.Author Ann Rule, who wrote two of the best true crime books.Toronto Star via Getty Images 1. The Complete History of Jack the Ripper by Philip Sugden (1994) The unsolved Jack the Ripper murders have inspired dozens of books, but none as comprehensive as historian Philip Sugden's 1994 work, which took him nearly a decade to research. This doesn't claim to name a culprit, but it does offer an unmatched overview of each killing. This book is best for true crime podcast lovers who want to dig a little deeper into an infamous crime. Philip Sugden's The Complete History of Jack the Ripper is available from Little, Brown. Bottom Line True crime books appeal to our desire to see good triumph over evil. Each of these books is so well-written, you will get caught up in the behind-the-scenes story as much as the drama of the crime. The macabre is all around us. We walk past homemade monuments for people who died in car accidents. There are guided tours of murder locations. The United States—the country that produces the most serial killers in the world—has an obsession with all things dark and twisted. If you're looking to mix things up, consider taking a break from the deluge of true crime podcasts and documentary series and picking up some books from your local independent bookstore or library. I promise these great true crime books will scratch that dark and twisty itch in the back of your mind. (Vintage) This true crime book has the death of a sex worker, an eccentric antiques dealer, drag queens, and hoodoo. Stylistically, this true crime novel reads like fiction (in the biz, this is called narrative non-fiction). This tale is so wild that the author said, "The only fictional character in the book is the narrator, me, until I catch up with myself midway through the book, I felt that was a legitimate license to take. The book is 99 percent true and 1 percent exaggeration." This is a true crime book for those who live for the drama. (Vintage) I grew up in the Bay Area, so at a young age I knew the CEOs of tech start-ups were criminals and swindlers; something about the way they hypnotize their listeners while promising the dream of convenience. When it news broke that Elizabeth Holmes was being accused of fraud, it was the talk of the whole Bay. When John Carreyrou's book was released, Holmes's story was old news for most of us. The trial was all over local news and everyone knew someone in tech eager to spill industry insider tea. However, Bad Blood presented the information in a new light. This is a thoroughly entertaining read that pieces together the wild and wacky lies Holmes told to pull off her scam for as long as possible. I highly, highly recommend it. Even Roxane Gay is a fan of this one. (Benbella Books) If you were once a teen, chances are you read Go Ask Alice by the mysterious anonymous author. The book is about a teenage girl who runs away and becomes addicted to drugs. The selling point was the fact that this story was real, and the book ends on a terrifying cliffhanger that helped it sell millions of copies. Unmask Alice looks at the sensationalism and events that led to this literary deceit. (Twelve) Unfortunately, school shootings happen almost daily in the United States, but before the tragedy was so commonplace, there was Columbine. The Columbine high school shooting was so unprecedented that it shocked the nation. This book examines the psyches of the two killers, using insight from forensic psychologists and the killers' own words. This is often hard to read but is an interesting examination of how these teens turned into mass murderers. (Harper) As someone who grew up in California, the Golden State Killer was a bit of a whisper that fed my mother's paranoia. Along with the Zodiac Killer, he was one of many reminders that we should lock all of our doors and windows. How could my mother not be paranoid when 50 sexual assaults and murders occurred just 90 minutes away? The true crime journalist who wrote this book, Michelle McNamara, died before the completion of the manuscript. Most of the book is written by McNamara and completed by her lead researcher, with an introduction by Gillian Flynn and an afterword by her husband, Patton Oswalt—yes, that Patton Oswalt. This book is a riveting read that describes the Golden State Killer's escalating violence. If you're an audiobook reader, listening to this one will have you on the edge of your seat. (Vintage) Did you know about the U.S.'s first major homicide? Would you be surprised to know that it involves the indigenous community and it was one of the FBI's first major cases? Well, who's really surprised? In the 1920s, the Osage Indian Nation in Oklahoma became rich overnight when oil was discovered on their land. Mind you, in Oklahoma, this was the Wild West. So when someone started murdering some of the richest Native Americans, corruption was suspected and investigated. Grann's book is a fascinating dive into a part of American history that isn't taught in schools. (Vintage) Those familiar with American Horror Story remember Evan Peters' eerie hotel owner who built his establishment to murder people. His character was based on a true story, and that story begins with Daniel H. Burnham, a genius architect, and H. H. Holmes, a doctor who became a vicious murderer. This book is compelling as it combines the story of these two men during a chaotic time in Chicago's history. Erik Larson did such a good job writing this book that he's written a slew of other true crime books, so if you become a fan, there's more for you to explore. (Flatiron Books) If you missed the Spike Lee movie based on the memoir, you need to get your hands on a copy of each. It's the hilariously terrifying true story of a Black cop in Colorado Springs who goes undercover as a member of the Ku Klux Klan. The hijinks that ensue seem more like fiction than fact. (Penguin Books) In 2015, Chanel Miller was assaulted behind a dumpster while walking home from a party at Stanford. Here's the thing about Palo Alto: It's ridiculously safe. It's full of wealthy families and the folks who attend or teach at Stanford. It's one of those places where you'll see mothers pushing strollers alone at night. So to say this assault rocked the community is an understatement. Know My Name is Chanel Miller's brave account of the events that changed the trajectory of her life. This book is not for the faint of heart: Miller tackles the sexual assault she experienced as well as the aftermath. (Penguin Books) Warning: This book will not teach you how to poison people. Sorry about that. It's actually about New York during the height of jazz, and everyone's getting poisoned. Deborah Blum's book follows an examiner and a chemist as they figure out why people are dropping like flies in New York City. There are a bunch of accusations, speculations, and tons of murder. This book scratches the itch for someone who enjoys science, history, and true crime. There's a little bit of everything for everyone, and it all takes place during one of the most interesting periods in the city that never sleeps. (Simon & Schuster) This is a book with two titles. Originally published in 1999 as Disco Bloodbath: A Fabulous but True Tale of Murder in Clubland, this memoir explores the Manhattan club kid scene before RuPaul's Drag Race was all the rage. The book follows the murder of a club kid and drug dealer who James St. James was close friends with. When you're done with the memoirs, you can check out the movie adaptation, Party Monster, which stars Macaulay Culkin, Seth Green, and Chloë Sevigny. (Mariner Books) I'd be remiss if I didn't include one of the most famous serial killers of all time: Jack the Ripper. Okay, kind of, but not really. This book humanizes five of Jack the Ripper's most famous victims: Polly, Annie, Elizabeth, Catherine, and Mary-Jane were from Fleet Street, Knightsbridge, Wolverhampton, Sweden, and Wales, respectively. Writer Hallie Rubenhold was tired of the media's depiction of these women as "prostitutes" who were trolling the night. After all, that's the classic "she was asking for it" excuse that the media has been perpetuating since the rise of Abrahamic religions. (Graywolf Press) Maggie Nelson wrote this memoir to tell the story of her aunt's untimely death. The story begins in 1969 when Nelson's aunt was on her way home from college to announce her engagement. She never made it: She was found shot, stabbed, and abandoned by the gates of a cemetery. This book is part social commentary, exploring America's cultural fascination with dead white women, and part true crime retelling of events, as well as an exploration of Nelson's stakes to this tragedy. For the majority of her life, her aunt's murder went unsolved. This inspired Nelson to create multiple works in an attempt to process the murder that impacted her family to its core. As a result, the book feels more personal than the average true crime novel. (Little Brown and Company) In 2017, Ronan Farrow wrote his famous exposé about Harvey Weinstein, which eventually became Catch and Kill. The title of the book stems from how American Media Inc. (the parent company Weinstein worked for) would respond when they caught wind of a potential story about Weinstein's sexual misconduct. They would "catch" the story and "kill" it. Clever. Although there have been more recent developments regarding Weinstein, this book is a detailed account of the scandal. Because of the nature of the allegations, this book does contain content about sexual assault and manipulation, so please read at your own risk. (Random House) Would a true crime book list be complete without Truman Capote's In Cold Blood? Probably not. This is the classic investigation into the brutal murder of the Clutter family in Holcomb, Kansas. The crime itself felt completely random and became a source of speculation and fear in the small town. It begins like a classic Southern Gothic read and then evolves as the piece progresses. This is a must-read for true crime fans. Plus, it's fun to imagine Harper Lee (author of To Kill a Mockingbird) running around with Capote as he wrote this book. For those who don't know, the two were childhood friends. (Sandra Jonas Publishing) This is a bit different from the rest of the bunch. The Pale-Faced Lie reads more like a memoir with true crime elements. David Crow grew up on a Navajo Nation reservation and was raised primarily by his father, who served during World War II. As time passes, David's father is revealed to be an ex-con involved in an extensive list of crimes. Instead of focusing on the crimes committed, this true crime book focuses on what it's like to be raised by a murderer, and how David escaped his father's grasp. (Atria Books) Selena Quintanilla was an icon for the Mexican-American community who was taken too soon. The famed Tejano singer was tragically murdered on March 31, 1995. Journalist María Celeste Arrarás dives deep into the murder that shocked the Latin American community in the mid-'90s. For those unfamiliar, Selena was murdered by Yolanda Saldívar—her friend and the president of her fan club. While Selena's Secret does a great job of recounting the events that led up to Selena's death, there is no "secret," so to speak, in the 1997 book. (Simon & Schuster) "Lizzie Borden took an axe / And gave her mother forty whacks / When she saw what she had done / She gave her father forty-one." Being turned into a nursery rhyme is one of the most telling signs of societal impact. Lizzie Borden became infamous for the brutal murder of her family. Lizzie is probably one of the most famous female murderers to date. It's hard to fight the chokehold she's had on society, especially considering the event took place in 1892. This book combines legal transcripts, lawyers' journals, unpublished local reports, and Lizzie's letters into a gripping, real tale of the infamous murderess. Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry (W. W. Norton & Company) In the Summer of '69 in Los Angeles, California, several seemingly random, extremely brutal murders were committed, including the Tate-LaBianca murders. Ultimately, these crimes were traced back to the "family" of Charles Manson, a would-be pop singer with ties to The Beach Boys' drummer, Dennis Wilson. What motivated Manson's family to murder in his name? And could Manson be found guilty of the crimes of his followers? In Helter Skelter, the prosecuting attorney in the Manson Family trials, Vincent Bugliosi, shares his firsthand account of attempting to solve the infamous crime spree, as well as figure out how to build a case against him and his accomplices Susan Atkins, Patricia Krenwinkel, and other members of the Manson Family (many of whom still believe in the man's teachings to this day). When Bugliosi died in 2015, Helter Skelter had sold more than 7 million copies, making it the bestselling true crime book in history. With Manson constantly up for parole, I think it's important for everyone to read this book, as the crimes described are so horrific they almost made me give up true crime (and did do so for two years). Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith by Jon Krakauer (Knopf Doubleday) From the Into Thin Air writer Jon Krakauer, Under the Banner of Heaven takes readers inside the isolated Fundamentalist Mormon communities where about 40,000 people still practice polygamy in defiance of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints established practices and modern-day norms. Krakauer juxtaposes the Church's history with the Fundamentalist Mormon beliefs that led brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty to commit a double murder in 1984, acting under the belief God mandated them to kill their two victims. In telling the Lafferty brothers' story, Krakauer writes a gripping book that gives readers a peek inside the fastest-growing religious group in the world. However, the LDS Church disagrees with many of his takes. After book reviewers, religious writers, and reporters contacted the LDS Church about whether the book was accurate, the Church issued a statement, calling Krakauer's account "a full-frontal assault on the veracity of the modern Church." In 2022, the book was adapted by Hulu into a limited series of the same name. (St. Martin's Griffin) Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, a psychologist at the University of California, Irvine, is a controversial figure, criticized for testifying as an expert witness for the defense in the Ivan the Terrible and Ted Bundy trials. In Witness for the Defense, she describes her experience testifying in Bundy's Utah trial for the attempted abduction of a young woman, noting she believed he might have been innocent. However, Loftus's research on memory has also reduced the number of wrongful convictions. A leading expert in human memory, she has served as an expert witness or consultant in many cases: the McMartin preschool molestation case, the Rodney King beating trials, litigation involving celebrities like Michael Jackson and Martha Stewart, and more some of which had positive consequences on reducing the number of innocent people convicted. In this book, Loftus describes what led her into this line of research, giving insight into her work as an expert witness on the fallibility of eyewitness accounts. (Harper Paperbacks) Threats of government censorship threatened Hollywood's rise to prominence after celebrities were involved in a string of headline-grabbing scandals in the 1920s, including the 1922 murder of William Desmond Taylor, then-president of the Motion Picture Directors Association, a case that remains unsolved today. Using never-before-released FBI files to reconstruct the story of what happened to Taylor and those who surrounded him, Mann uses the murder as a frame to tell the story of the establishment of the Hollywood studio system and the establishment of the American Hays Office, formed to create a moral code for films and counteract the threat of government censorship. Tinseltown won the 2015 Edgar Award for Best Fact True Crime. (Anchor Books) "Always a safe haven. Always open," reads the Château Marmont homepage. Since the Château Marmont opened in 1927, partly funded by First Lady of Law Mabel Walker Willebrandt (something I did not know before reading this book), it has attracted Hollywood stars, offering them an LA-based Las Vegas hideout to engage in debauchery away from the paparazzi's watchful eye. In other words, what happens in the Château stays at the Château, so it's no surprise the hotel is the backdrop for generations of Hollywood gossip and folklore. It's where Rebel Without a Cause director Nicholas Ray slept with Natalie Wood, his 16-year-old star, where Doors frontman Jim Morrison famously swung from balconies, and where John Belushi suffered his fatal overdose. But it's also where gay celebrities felt comfortable living their truth, the first LA-based of home of many Method actors, and a hideout for celebrities looking to escape an ex. (Scribner Book Company) If you made it to the end of the list, this book is definitely for you. This is for those readers with a voracious appetite for true crime. Rachel Monroe breaks down society's obsession with true crime by establishing an archetypical narrative pattern: Detective, victim, attorney, and killer. By breaking down the genre's formulaic approach with a sociological gaze, audiences see a different side of true crime. (featured image: Simon & Schuster / Vintage / Twelve / Flatiron Press / Harper / Random House / Penguin Books / Little Brown & Co. / The Mary Sue)Have a tip we should know? True crime books have the power to captivate readers with their exploration of the dark side of humanity and the impact of crimes on victims and their families. With the rise of TV, movies, and streaming services, true crime books have gained popularity and are now seen as more than just factual reporting, often providing emotional depth and storytelling. From infamous serial killers to cults and unsolved cases, the best true crime books offer a diverse range of narratives that blend journalism, history, and personal memoir to shed light on some of the most compelling criminal stories. The best true crime books have the ability to scintillate and fascinate the reader, and they often speak to the dark heart of humankind that has always enthralled the general public. Humanity's obsession with true crime is nothing new, and salacious media has covered the grisly exploits of society for ages, with the popularity of the genre coming and going in waves. The rise of TV and movies has helped to make true crime popular again, and streaming services are practically clogged with miniseries, movies, and documentaries that tackle many of the toughest cases found in best-selling true crime books. Even as true crime journalism has improved, so too has the approach to storytelling in film and TV, with a more serious tack being taken that eschews earlier, less respectful approaches. Much in the same way that the best true crime shows have helped crack cases, true crime books are no longer relegated to simply reporting the facts, and some have even had a real impact. While many excellent true crime stories have been published, a truly memorable non-fiction book not only tells the story with academic rigor, but also explores the emotional heart behind the terrible crimes, and the real-life effect they have on the victims and their families. 26 Bad Blood: Secrets And Lies In A Silicon Valley Startup (2018) Much in the same way there are great true crime documentaries not about murder, John Carreyrou's fascinating true crime book Bad Blood is a story where no one loses their lives. The book recounts the rise and fall of the Silicon Valley startup Theranos, and its enigmatic leader Elizabeth Holmes who defrauded investors and presented medical tech that didn't actually work. Engaging and journalistic, Bad Blood is snappy and imminently readable because it captures Holmes better than many other accounts. Though the book itself didn't serve as inspiration, the series The Dropout told Holmes' story. Elon Green's Last Call recounts the harrowing days in the 1990s when a serial killer preyed on gay men, with very little help coming from law enforcement. Unlike older true crime books, Green's writing does nothing to glorify the killer and puts the emphasis on the victims. In 2023, a four-part documentary series was released on HBO which expanded upon Green's book and told the victims' stories in more depth. While many of the best true crime books focus on only one case, Alfredo Corchado's Midnight in Mexico explores the collapse of a nation. The celebrated journalist goes on a journey through Mexico to investigate the governmental corruption and vicious power struggle that has resulted in thousands of deaths and disappearances. So much more than just one thing, Midnight in Mexico is part organized crime story, part true crime epic, and part journalistic exploration of the human toll of Mexico's drug war. Mara Leveritt approached the highly controversial West Memphis Three case with a sympathetic heart and told the story of three teenage boys who were railroaded into prison for a series of murders that they didn't commit. Because the documentary series Paradise Lost encapsulated the case years earlier, Leveritt's book also tells the true story of the satanic panic of the '80s and '90s that led to the arrests. A 2013 feature film of the same name was produced and starred Reese Witherspoon. Unsolved cases are often some of the most compelling, and Robert Kolker's Lost Girls put a human face on the unsolved murder of several women who performed sex work on Long Island. Atmospheric and heartfelt, Kolker's journalistic background makes his succinct writing powerful and brief. The book was adapted into an eponymous 2020 film starring Amy Ryan. The Red Parts is unique among true crime books because it is part memoir, and part exploration of the dehumanizing effect of the trial system. While writing a book about her aunt's murder, author Maggie Nelson explores the facts to put forward the case that her aunt wasn't actually killed by the notorious serial killer who took the rap for the crime. Unflinching and heartbreaking, the book posits that justice is a fickle thing, and even a solved case could still hold secrets. Despite its cumbersome title, Richard Lloyd Parry's The People Who Eat Darkness is a fast-paced read that tells the story of the murder of Lucy Blackman, a British student visiting Japan. Parry's personal experience in Japan makes the book factual but never xenophobic, and it offers a terrifying glimpse into the underworld of the "safest city in the world" as it really is. With plenty of American true crime stories explored in the best true crime books, the distinctly international true crime tale is a diverse alternative. The process of investigation is often the most fascinating part of any true crime book, and Deborah Blum's The Poisoner's Handbook tells the story of the origins of modern forensic techniques. Without skimping on the true crime elements, the book balances its historical narrative with compelling cases to offer a hybrid true crime/historical experience. PBS produced an eponymous documentary based on the book which debuted on TV in 2014. After exposing the lesser-known serial killer case in 2008, Christine Pelisek published The Grim Sleeper, an enthralling true crime book that recounts the story of murderer Lonnie Franklin and his black female victims who were treated as the less-dead by Los Angeles police. Besides its true crime narrative, the book is also an exploration of the criminal justice system, and how certain victims are not taken seriously by the law enforcement that are paid to protect them. The popularity of true crime podcasts, documentaries, books, and movies have always sparked debate about the ethics of sensationalizing crime, and Janet Malcolm's The Journalist and the Murderer put the onus on journalists. The book explores the role of journalism in true crime cases, and how the approach to telling the stories can be harmful to both the victims and the truth itself. Former Governor Andrew Cuomo, who long led polls in the city's Democratic primary, conceded Tuesday night before vote-counting was even finished.by Solcyré Burga Trust book recommendations from real people, not robots Humans have long been fascinated by all things fearful and forbidden. For centuries now, the pinnacle of that fascination has been crime. That's why we've unearthed the most wickedly wonderful works for your enjoyment. Whether you're intrigued by domestic disappearances or monstrous murderers, you're sure to have the time of your life with the best true crime books of all time.Think that you can outwit a mystery author? Take our 1-minute quiz below to find out! 😈 Could you get away with murder in a mystery novel? Take this one-minute quiz to find out! Arguably the book that launched the genre as we know it, Capote's career-defining work begins with a shocking quadruple homicide in a quiet Kansas town. Though the case itself is open-and-shut, the author still manages to extract a spellbinding, psychologically rich story in the aftermath, based on interviews with the killers and exhaustive research on the victims. If you're just starting to read true crime — or hoping to write it yourself one day — In Cold Blood is an unmissable introduction to the genre. The Manson family murders were some of the most sensationalized killings of the 21st century. But how many of the rumors around them actually stemmed from reality? Vincent Bugliosi, who prosecuted Manson in 1970, sets the record straight in this chilling yet mesmerizing account of his investigation, arrest, and conviction. (The title is taken from Manson's notorious delusion of an imminent and destructive race war, which he dubbed "Helter Skelter.") Another dramatic murder case takes center stage in the Pulitzer Prize-winning The Executioner's Song. Yet the interesting element here is not the crime itself — a relatively run-of-the-mill double homicide — but the wish of the killer, Gary Gilmore, to be executed as soon as possible. Mailer is a dutiful biographer, documenting Gilmore's early life and criminal acts, but the beating heart of the story is definitely the irony surrounding our ideas about death… especially in context of the (at the time) recently reinstated death penalty in the United States. We wouldn't leave the twisted tale of Ted Bundy off this list, and as a dedicated writer and one of Bundy's closest friends, Ann Rule is uniquely qualified to tell it. She paints young Bundy as a fresh-faced college student, empathetic and kind, someone she would have trusted to care for her own children. They fell out of touch in 1974, and Rule soon heard reports of brutal murders carried out by a man matching Bundy's description. Yet it took years for her to even admit the possibility of his involvement — a truth that clearly haunts her and colors her narration, lending this book incredible weight even as the prose remains crisp and readable. This book is the definitive account of the still-unidentified Zodiac Killer, who terrorized Northern California during the 1960s and 70s. Robert Graysmith was a cartoonist at the San Francisco Chronicle when the Zodiac began sending letters to the paper, sparking a 50-year mystery and Graysmith's life mission to unmask the culprit. Zodiac is the result of over ten years' painstaking research, with a number of plausible theories presented — though of course, none that panned out. Any reader who's a sucker for decade-spanning cold cases, this one's for you. In 1970, a pregnant woman and her two daughters were stabbed to death in North Carolina. The prime suspect? Her husband, Jeffrey Macdonald — who quickly proposed a book deal to bestselling nonfiction writer Joe McGinniss, under the impression that McGinniss' work would exonerate him. But that book is not the one listed here. Instead, it's Janet Malcolm's brilliantly meta masterpiece about the actual relationship between McGinniss and MacDonald: how the journalist pretended to believe his subject's claims of innocence, all the while scheming to reveal evidence of his guilt (a deception Malcolm labels as "morally indefensible"). Frequently listed as one of the best true crime books of all time, Berendt's work is renowned for its holistic style, vividly conjuring not just the murder in question but also the distinct atmosphere of 1980s Georgia. That's not to say the murder itself isn't fascinating: a male escort killed by a respected local antiques dealer, who then endured four trials to be acquitted. But it's the town's residents who make this story really exceptional, as they give their individual takes on the incident and reveal the vibrant character of the Deep South. Remember The Executioner's Song, number three on this list, which revolved around murderer Gary Gilmore and his wish to die? Take a look at the author's surname here: Mikal is Gary's younger brother. Shot in the Heart recounts their upbringing "inside the house where murder is born," giving Gary's offenses an eerie fatalistic ring and making clear that Mikal barely escaped a similar end. His unflinching descriptions of the family's alcoholism and abuse are not easy to get through, but they do facilitate a more nuanced view of even the most dire criminals. The inspiration for the Netflix series of the same name, this book by former FBI agent Douglas offers a fascinating glimpse into the bureau's criminal profiling process. It includes profiles of famous murderers, such as Wayne Williams and Edmund Kemper, and even suggests specific steps to help police and special agents capture more felons — making Mindhunter the only title on this list that's both riveting true crime and genuinely applicable self-help. Not to be confused with the similarly titled Gillian Flynn book, this smooth hybrid of memoir and investigative journalism follows Ellroy as he attempts to solve his mother's murder. Though Geneva Ellroy's case was abandoned for nearly 40 years, Ellroy — also a thriller writer — is determined to crack it, hiring an L.A. county homicide detective to help him out. Intertwined with details of their investigation are memories of Ellroy's childhood, and profound self-examination of what his mother truly meant to him. O.J. Simpson's infamous "trial of the century" has been rehashed innumerable times over the years, but never with such razor-sharp perception of absolutely every element in the case. Toobin, a Harvard-educated lawyer and high-level legal analyst, portrays both sides of the trial with total acuity and depth — demonstrating the utter exceptionality of what happened, while also unpacking the reasons why. If you're remotely interested in criminal law, this one is a must-read (or a must-watch in the form of the Netflix adaptation, The People v. O. J. Simpson). Love the detailed analyses of true crime, but not so much its authors' penchant for murders? The Orchid Thief is your saving grace: despite the breezy premise about a group of "orchid poachers" in south Florida, the author's thorough research and gorgeous narration make this book just as compelling as any other work in the genre. Susan Orlean is the undisputed master of weaving quotidian subject matter into literary gold (as she also proved in 2018's The Library Book). Okay, now back to murder — in fact, back to one of the first documented serial killers in American history. The year is 1893, and the World's Exposition in Chicago (the titular "White City") is in full swing. Its chief architect, Daniel Burnham, observes his success as a proud parent would their child… but beneath the shining surface, something rotten lurks. A pharmacist by the name of H.H. Holmes plans to lure visitors to his "World's Fair Hotel," where he will murder and dispose of them via a Sweeney Todd-esque setup. How many victims will Holmes claim, and who (if anyone) can stop this devil? Think of And Every Word Is True as the indie companion to In Cold Blood. This bold, revisionist work casts doubt on the open-and-shut case in Capote's masterpiece. Using new evidence from the archives of the Kansas Bureau of Investigations — not to mention letters from one of the convicted killers — Gary McAvoy tells a spine tingling tale about sinister conspiracies and government coverups. This thrilling work casts a classic American case in a new light. Check out what Reedsy Discovery reviewer Nathan Albright has to say about And Every Word Is True! If you're an amateur criminologist who's somehow never read Krakauer, you're in for a real treat. That said, you should steel yourself before starting this one: it centers on two fundamentalist Mormons who murder their sister-in-law and her new baby after allegedly receiving a "removal revelation" from God. Parallel to this shudder-inducing story, Krakauer delves into the history of Mormonism and its many controversial tenets, from the predilection for polygamy to the constant communication with God… and the dangerous consequences these ideas can have when interpreted by unstable minds. John Grisham's sole contribution to the nonfiction canon is another gripping tale of a wrongly convicted individual, this time for the rape and murder of a young cocktail waitress. While the drug- and alcohol-addicted Ron Williamson was perhaps no role model, Grisham clearly renders how evidence was mishandled and distorted by a desperate police department in order to frame him. As a result, Williamson was sentenced to death in 1988 — but was he able to escape his doomed fate? You'll have to read The Innocent Man to find out. Written by two Wall Street Journal reporters, Billion Dollar Whale snagged a nod from the Pulitzer committee in 2016. It reads, however, as much like a picaresque novel as a piece of business journalism. Jho Low, a Malaysian-born Wharton grad, used his financial savvy to funnel some $4.5 billion in stolen money into his accounts. Those fooled by him included Goldman Sachs execs, Malaysian and a host of celebrities — including Leonardo DiCaprio, whose star turn in The Wolf on Wall Street was partially bankrolled by Low's stolen funds. Ten years after the 1999 Columbine massacre, Cullen published this extensive volume detailing its before, during, and after. The narrative alternates between the killers' planning stages and the victims' experiences in the aftermath, intercut with brief but horrific scenes of the shooting (and attempted bombing) itself. A truly devastating account of a largely preventable tragedy, Columbine is nonetheless required reading for those who may have forgotten or minimized the events of that day, if only so we can strive harder to prevent more like it. Another good option for people who want to avoid blood and guts (though not the actual act of murder) is this fascinating guide to the early days of forensic toxicology. Blum takes the reader on a journey from 1915 to 1936, beginning with the appointment of New York City's first chief medical examiner, Charles Norris. After teaming up with toxicologist Alexander Gettler, the two go on to prove the truth about various medical mysteries and unusual crimes, from poisoned Prohibition alcohol to accidental carbon monoxide deaths — with Blum explaining the scientific basis for each case along the way. In the early summer of 2000, 21-year-old Lucie Blackman moved from England to Tokyo and began working as a hostess. Just two months later, she disappeared. The Japanese police and British press became involved, and the incident exploded into international speculation — what really happened to Lucie? Parry's book covers both the peculiar and often poisonous sexual culture of Japan to which Lucie fell prey, as well as the specific phenomenon of young white women's criminal cases and the disproportionate attention they receive in the media. Thurgood Marshall skyrocketed to fame after Brown v. Board of Education. But did you know that just before that, he was involved in an equally controversial case? Devil in the Grove documents how in Florida, 1949, four young black men were accused of sexual assault; one was killed and the other three violently beaten by the sheriff. Undeterred by outside threats, Marshall then took the stand to defend them — marking a turning point for his career and the civil rights movement as a whole. In the ultimate "what would you do?" scenario, Five Days at Memorial recalls the events at Memorial Medical Center in the days immediately following Hurricane Katrina. Under incredibly high-pressure circumstances, the decision was made to de-prioritize critically ill patients with Do Not Resuscitate orders — and even to hasten the deaths of those unlikely to survive the evacuation, using high doses of morphine. But this is no tale of heartless sociopaths: instead, it's one of hardworking professionals faced with a nearly impossible choice, as Fink makes evident through her detailed and sympathetic prose. Originally published as Disco Bloodbath, this edgy memoir tells the story of James St. James's years as a New York club kid — a glitzy time that ultimately ended in, well, a bloodbath. St. James's friend, Michael Alig, rises to prominence in the club scene, a world of drug-fueled decadence. But when he murders rival drug dealer Angel Melendez, the party stops for good — at least for St. James, who must contend with the knowledge that his friend has become a killer. After the Boston Marathon bombing of 2013, which killed five people and grievously injured countless others, the bombers were quickly identified: brothers Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who had self-radicalized after immigrating to America. The Brothers, released the day before Dzhokhar's court conviction, reveals both the origins of the Tsarnaevs and the disturbing psychology behind such politically motivated terrorist attacks — how the perpetrators remain utterly convinced, even in the wake of arrest, that they've acted righteously. In 1974, newspaper heiress Patty Hearst was abducted by the Symbionese Liberation Army. Nineteen months later, she was finally found — not as a kidnapping victim but as a fugitive, wanted for offenses from carjacking to bank robbery. American Heiress dives into the whole history of Hearst's case, which captured the public's imagination from the first reports of her disappearance to her final, spectacular trial. The result is a spellbinding read that combines tightly focused reportage with a birds-eye view of a nation grappling with income inequality and a flawed criminal justice system. If you've listened to Serial, you already know the story of Adnan Syed. Shoddily convicted in 1999 for the murder of his ex-girlfriend, he's been serving a life sentence for almost twenty years now. Chaudry, who brought the case to the attention of Serial, has since decided to take matters into her own hands: the result is Adnan's Story. This book, written from Chaudry's expert perspective as a lawyer, goes into extraordinary detail about the killing — including new forensic evidence and a suspect who could potentially exonerate Syed. Another tragic cold case resurfaces in 2016's Who Killed These Girls?, which recounts the events surrounding the 1991 Austin yogurt shop murders. Four teenage girls were sexually assaulted, shot, and left to burn after their killer set fire to the frozen yogurt store where they worked. What followed was a shockingly incompetent display by the Austin police, who arrested several teenage boys and coerced them into confessing, only for DNA evidence to prove conclusively otherwise. The true criminal's identity remains unknown, but Lowry still manages to bring justice to the victims simply by telling their stories. The lynching of 14-year-old Emmett Till has long been recognized as a horrific hate crime that catalyzed the American civil rights movement. But in rendering Till a historic symbol, we've forgotten that he was also just a boy — a boy whose life was stolen from him in an impossibly cruel and undeserved manner. This book delves into the life and death of Emmett Till, potently presenting the aftermath of his lynching as both political and deeply personal. After a long string of deaths, let's turn to a non-murderous (yet still morally bankrupt — no pun intended) offense: insider trading! Black Edge details the rise and fall of Steven A. Cohen and his hedge fund group, SAC Capital Advisors, which closed following a massive investigation in 2016. Kolhatkar, herself a former hedge fund analyst, skillfully compiles all essential info

while still making Black Edge compulsively readable — similar to Michael Lewis' financial-disaster smash hit The Big Short. However, idealistic readers beware: just because Cohen was caught, doesn't mean this story has a happy ending. The money-motivated murders in this book truly exemplify the darkest depths of human prejudice, jealousy, greed, and evil. In the 1920s, the Osage Native Americans of Oklahoma possessed a wealth of natural oil deposits beneath their land; naturally, they soon found themselves under violent attack from outsiders who wanted the oil for themselves. The death toll reached dozens before serious intervention — from none other than the newly formed Bureau of Investigations. If you're fascinated by the ugliest hidden pockets of American history and the fledgling days of the FBI, pick up Killers of the Flower Moon. If you're a fan of vintage glamour and underworld murk Empire of Sin is the book for you. Prepare to be transported to early 20th-century New Orleans, a city at war with itself. Tom Anderson rules the demimonde as the unofficial mayor of "Storyville," the designated vice district where brothels, dance halls, and gambling dens flourished outside the view of "respectable" citizens. His tale is interwoven with the unforgettable stories of musicians, sex workers, mafiosos, and reformers. A strikingly personal work from Marzano-Lesnevich (its subtitle reads "a murder and a memoir"), this book begins with her watching a videotape of Ricky Langley, who was convicted of killing a six-year-old boy in 1992. Overwhelmed by emotion, our author — at that time a young lawyer — is haunted by the case for years… until she finally cracks open some old files and starts to analyze what really happened, through the unique lens of her own experience. When Monica Hesse traveled to Accomack County, Virginia in 2013, she already knew who was on trial for the massive fire-setting spree there: a couple, Charlie Smith and Tonya Bundick. But the Bonnie and Clyde of arson, so to speak, were more than they initially appeared — as Hesse soon discovered through her research. American Fire is the enthralling account of what she found: a "whydunnit" of complex, psychosexual motivations that will astound even the most jaded readers. Fans of The Crown, you'll recognize the inciting incident of this thrillingly intertwined narrative. The year is 1952, and the "Great Smog" has settled over London. This was a disastrous pollution event that killed thousands, diseased many more, and provided convenient cover for a serial killer, who lured women to his flat under the fog. Over the course of this book, Dawsom deftly demonstrates how "the Beast of Rillington Place" operated, and how both killers — human and airborne — came to permanently impact English law. One of our personal favorites on this list (and others), I'll Be Gone in the Dark is a doggedly researched, masterfully crafted work from an author whose work will long outlive her. It describes the various cases of the Visalia Ransacker, the East Area Rapist, and the Original Night Stalker, all of whom McNamara speculates to be one person: the Golden State Killer. Packed to the brim with information, and made even more impressive by the fact that these events occurred 30+ years ago, this book will no doubt be remembered as one of the great true crime feats of the 21st century — and for spurring the arrest of Joseph James DeAngelo, now widely believed to be the Golden State Killer. Bad Blood chronicles one of the most bizarre criminal cases in recent memory, even in the strange land of Silicon Valley. We're talking, of course, about Elizabeth Holmes and Theranos: a company hawking super-advanced blood-testing technology, which turned out to be predicated on fraud and lies. Carreyrou, reporting for the Wall Street Journal, was actually the first to expose the technology's failure and Holmes' willful deception of investors and the public. This aptly titled treatment expands on his earlier articles, providing a fascinating glimpse into the Fyre Festival-esque fiasco that was Theranos. In this book, Keefe recalls a brutal conflict that many have too easily forgotten: the Troubles in Northern Ireland. This deep-rooted political and nationalist conflict came to a head in 1972, when nearly 500 Irish citizens lost their lives — including a single mother of 10, who was abducted and killed by the Irish Republican Army. Against the grim backdrop of these events, Say Nothing homes in on the fates of IRA terrorists Dolours and Marian Price, as well as the devastating combat that took place between other IRA and British Army individuals. There are endless books about Jack the Ripper that speculate on his identity. The Five takes a gratifying new approach by focusing instead on the "canonical five" women that he killed: Polly, Annie, Elizabeth, Catherine, and Mary-Jane. Rubenhold depicts their lives with great nuance and care, built on a foundation of diligent research and hard-won facts. Most importantly, this book forces the reader to confront their misconceptions and biases about the Ripper and his victims, and sets a new precedent for whose stories ought to be told. Now for a dose of weird and wacky. The Feather Thief recounts the case of Edwin Rist, a 20-year-old flautist who robbed the British Museum of Natural History in 2009. But his mark wasn't precious heirlooms, at least not of the conventional sort — Rist was after the rare bird skins housed in the museum, and ended up getting away with hundreds of specimens. Still, what did he want with Victorian-era feathers? Johnson's book intriguingly tackles this highly unusual heist — and, in tandem, the study of ornithology and the secret world of "fly-tying." Nearing the end of our list, we're coming slightly full-circle with Furious Hours. This book follows Harper Lee, who helped Truman Capote research In Cold Blood, in her attempts to complete her own groundbreaking true crime book. The case in question was actually quite interesting: a rural preacher who killed five of his family members, a vigilante relative who then killed him, and the same lawyer who briefly represented them both. However, classic literature enthusiasts will be much more engrossed by the story of Lee's writing, her relationship with Capote, and her struggles to live up to expectations after the explosion of To Kill a Mockingbird. We've covered the most prolific and the most unusual serial killers, but what about the most meticulous? According to Maureen Callahan, that title goes to Israel Keyes. His modus operandi was to bury "kill kits" around the United States, and use them on victims at seemingly random times… over the course of 14 years. In other words, this was no typical messy criminal; this was a calculating monster who killed for fun and knew exactly how to elude the authorities. American Predator is a singular rendition of this cold-blooded killer, brilliantly scripted by Callahan and impossible to forget. Stieg Larsson is world-renowned for his Millennium trilogy starring Lisbeth Salander. Yet the late author was working on something even bigger before his untimely death: a no-holds-barred investigation of the Swedish prime minister's assassination in 1986. Years later, journalist Jan Stocklassa took up his mantle and delved back into the case, which Larsson had linked to the far-right activities. Stocklassa's exciting discoveries in this new book prove him just as worthy a detective as Larsson, and definitely one to watch as he continues putting the pieces together. Here we have the much-anticipated Catch and Kill — Ronan Farrow's tell-all account of his years chasing Harvey Weinstein, and the arduous process of publishing the movement-sparking article about him. (The book's title refers to the media practice of buying a story just to bury it, which Weinstein employed to prevent NBC coverage of his crimes.) In any case, Farrow — no stranger to morally gray celebrities — here goes after Weinstein with the tenacity of a bloodhound, uncovering even more shocking revelations and turning Catch and Kill into a veritable real-life thriller. Yet he still manages to keep the main focus on what really matters: the women involved, their stories, and the justice they deserve. Four years before Maggie Nelson was born, her aunt was murdered by the Ypsilanti Ripper, a Michigan serial killer targeting teen and college-aged girls. At least, that's what everyone assumed, although Jane Mixer's death was never actually solved. Decades later, Nelson, now an award-winning poet, is working on a book about her aunt — right when a DNA match points to another suspect for her death. Mixing memoir and reportage, The Red Parts excavates a remarkable case with a poet's poignancy and grace. Written with sensitivity and rigor, Lost Girls shines a light on five sex workers murdered by the Long Island serial killer — a fiend who remains at large today. Disregarded by law enforcement and the media alike, these women find a voice through Kolker's reportage, which brings their intelligence, heart, and humanity to the forefront. With a narrative voice that reads less "thriller" than "literary fiction," this is the perfect book for readers who prefer subtle characterization to cheap thrills. ***Can't get enough of suspicious figures and spectacular solves? Check out this list of our 50 best suspense books, or if you're in the mood for something milder, our essential guide to cozy mysteries. More posts from across the blog. With the re-energized efforts of the BLM movement inspiring us to shine a light on Black voices, here are 70 books by Black authors that you need on your TBR, from 20th century classics to 2020 bestsellers. Read post Whether you're looking to travel back in time or journey out to the frontiers of the latest thinking, we've got you covered with the 30 best memoirs from the last one hundred years. Read post If there's one thing that we can all agree is universal, it's that you never forget your first love. Ironically enough, first loves might also be one of the hardest things to capture in words — but, luckily, we have books for that. 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Gear > Best Books for Men By Andrew Peloquin | Updated January 29, 2025 Never miss a book again. True crime is a fascinating genre to read because it's not really fiction, but often feels like it. We are presented with a mystery that often seems strange to the point of being bizarre, then are walked through the steps taken to solve that mystery. It can feel like solving a puzzle, taking a deep dive into the eccentricities of human nature, and watching a really strange—and bloody—soap opera all at once. So of course it's going to be one of the best-selling and most-loved genres of books on the market. There's also an interesting phenomena where humans are fascinated with "evil" while still being utterly decent members of society—they want to "walk safely on the dark side" through the stories they read. Whether you're an amateur sleuth, a budding law enforcement professional, or someone who just loves a really compelling story, you're in luck. Below, I've compiled a list of what I consider to be the 10 best true crime books. Let's be honest: there are going to be so many more excellent books, that it's impossible to list them all. But hopefully you'll find that the books I've chosen as the "best" below offer the most riveting reads, the most compelling cases, and a truly wonderful time reading about real-life crimes by real-life people. Finally, for all the book lovers like me, I've got something exciting to share. Little Stack is a new project I've been working on. The website offers a full resource to track books by author and series, so you can easily follow your favorite writers and discover hidden indie gems. We're building a hub where you can track what your favorite authors are up to and get notified when they release new works. Whether you're into bestsellers or indie finds, Little Stack is soon to be your go-to resource for keeping your library in order. Check it out—you might find your next favorite read! This story was written by renowned American novelist Truman Capote (of Breakfast at Tiffany's fame) and researched with the aid of Harper Lee (of To Kill a Mockingbird fame), so you know it's going to be a truly riveting read. In Cold Blood tells the story of the Clutter family, a Kansas family murdered in their own home. Through the pages of the novel, you'll not only get the story of those leading the investigation into the shooting, but also the story of the ones who committed the murder. To add extra depth, real-life interviews with people who knew both the murderers and the victims are sprinkled throughout. It's got enough added color and flair to read like an amazing novel, but all the important details are fact-based and thoroughly researched. It's considered one of the greatest—and most compelling—true crime novels of all time. Published: 1966 In the 1920s, members of the Osage Nation Native American tribe were among the wealthiest of Osage County, thanks largely to the oil deposits discovered on their land. Until the murders began. One after another, members of the Osage Nation were killed off, eliminated in order to gain access to their land and the immeasurable wealth offered by the oil beneath. In the pages of Killers of the Flower Moon, you'll read about how the newly formed FBI, led by J. Edgar Hoover, worked with Texas Ranger Tom White to uncover the true identity of the murderer, as well as the bloody sequence of events that led to the deaths of so many members of the Osage Nation. It's a gripping exploration of the lengths to which greed can drive people. Published: 2017 Between 2007 and 2010, a brutal serial killer terrorized young women on Long Island, New York. Lost Girls, written by Robert Kolker, is a thorough and exhaustive investigation into the circumstances of both the victims and the serial killer. It's a gritty, insightful read into both the depravities of which humans are capable and the grim reality that many young women in the sex work industry face. So compelling is the story, in fact, that it was turned into a film (2020, available on Netflix). Most intriguing of all is the fact that the Long Island serial killer is still at large and unidentified to this day. Published: 2013 For decades in the late 1900s and early 2000s, a serial killer known only as the "Grim Sleeper" terrorized South Central LA. His victims: all women of color, all chosen from poorer areas of Los Angeles. What made him so difficult to catch was the fact that he had years-long "cooling off" periods between kills, when he would go utterly dormant—until he struck again and another victim's life was ended cruelly. The Grim Sleeper is so much more than just a fascinating true crime novel; it's an exploration of the harsh reality that so many in poverty-riddled and high-crime areas often face, largely that both the press and law enforcement tend to overlook and neglect victims from those areas. It's an eye-opening and truly sobering look into the deep-rooted societal problems that allowed a serial killer to continue killing for nearly 20 years. Published: 2017 Harper Lee, of To Kill a Mockingbird Fame, was so much more than just a novelist—she was also fascinated by and dedicated to solving unsolved crime. Often to the point of obsession, as we discover in the pages of Furious Hours. This book chronicles the case of Reverend Willie Maxwell, a small-town preacher on trial for killing five of his family members. Though he escaped justice, he was assassinated at his family's funeral. Curiously, his assassin was defended by the same lawyer who helped Reverend Maxwell escape justice—and it was this assassin's trial that drew Harper Lee's attention. Furious Hours dives into Harper Lee's obsession with getting all the details right—intended to be written into her next book, titled The Reverend—and finishes telling the story that she was never able to before her death. Published: 2020 Ron Stallworth had the distinction of being the first black detective to ever join the Colorado Springs Police Department, but when the chance to join the infamous Ku Klux Klan presents itself—in the form of a classified ad—he has to seize the opportunity. At first, he communicates with the Klan only through correspondence, but when the time comes to present himself in person, he has no choice but to rope in the help of his partner and fellow detective, Chuck. Black Klansmen follows Stallworth on his investigation into the rising Klan during the late 1970s, a truly audacious and daring investigation that led to the exposure of white supremacists in the U.S. military and the formation of a "friendship" with Grand Wizard David Duke. It's a crime thriller with every detail true-to-life, and a fascinating look into the fractures just beneath the surface of American society that allow organizations like the KKK to not only exist, but thrive. Published: 2014 I'll Be Gone in the Dark is considered one of the greatest modern masterpieces of true crime fiction, a testament to all the work invested by the author. The fact that she passed away during its writing makes it an even more compelling story, a legacy that endures beyond her life. In the book, you'll read about the Golden State Killer, a notorious serial killer that ran rampant in Northern California during the 1970s and 1980s. So compelling a story is it that HBO made a documentary influenced heavily by the exhausting investigative work that went into attempting to identify the cold-blooded killer. Published: 2019 In Chicago in the early 1890s, a serial killer struck repeatedly, killing those attending the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. His methods: setting up a fake hotel next to the fairgrounds, and luring unsuspecting victims to stay the night, putting them within his grasp and leading to their grim murders. The story may be true, but it's presented in a truly gripping novel format that makes it an engaging read from start to finish. Not only is it the story of H.H. Holmes, considered the first modern serial killer in America, but it also dives into everything that went into crafting the world-famous fair, the work of both Daniel Burnham and Frederick Law Olmsted. Get ready for a captivating and breathtakingly suspenseful read! Published: 2003 Not all the "best" true crime books have to be about murder, a fact that John Carreyrou proved compellingly. Bad Blood documents the rise and fall of Theranos founder—and consummate con-woman—Elizabeth Holmes, a woman who promised an absolute marvel of biotechnology (being able to pull health data from a single drop of blood) and defrauded investors out of millions of dollars because no such technology existed. Follow Carreyrou on his journalist journey from the very beginning, receiving a tip about the fraud of Theranos, and join him as he builds his case by painstakingly adding new facts and details until the day he finally has enough to bring it all crumbling down. Not a single murder takes place, but it's no less compelling a read for the absence of violence. Published: 2018 Few criminal enterprises are as fascinating and compelling as the New York Mafia, criminal syndicates run by five influential Italian families in New York City. So of course a book about the adventures of an undercover FBI agent infiltrating the Mafia is going to be a truly fascinating read. Written by the FBI agent himself, the book details his activities of going deep-cover to work his way first into truck hijacking gangs, then into the Mafia itself. Masquerading as Donald "Donnie" Brasco, an expert jewel thief from Miami, he worms his way into the Colombo crime family, then the Bonanno crime family. The story reads like an adventure and offers amazing insights into the operations of one of the most powerful criminal organizations in the United States, ending with the successful convictions of more than 100 mafia members. Published: 1997 WERD has been reader-supported since 2009. When you buy through a link on our site, we may earn an affiliate commission. We do not accept compensation for reviews. The public's fascination with true crime has led to endless docu-series, podcasts and social media theories dedicated to infamous crimes and killers. But when an investigation is unfolding in real time, this obsession—especially when internet sleuths get involved—can have grim consequences for real people.Most recently, the murders of four University of Idaho students who were found stabbed to death in an off-campus townhouse in the college town of Moscow, Idaho, became a breeding ground for misinformation with conspiracy theorists and amateur "detectives" dissecting the case on social media. On TikTok, the hashtag "Idaho murders"—and its many iterations—have collected more than one billion views with thousands of users posting updates and asking for answers. TikTok lives and videos discussing different theories on who could be responsible for the gruesome slayings have spanned hours on the platform, especially in the weeks before suspect Bryan Kohberger, 28, was arrested.While high-profile cases can garner the attention necessary to bring new tips forward, they can also endanger innocent people and be the cause of much misinformation. Rebecca Scofield, a University of Idaho professor was accused by TikToker Ashley Guillard (@ashleyisinthebookoflife) of involvement in the Idaho murders in a series of videos posted online. Scofield says the lies spread about her have caused safety issues for her and family. Guillard, a self-proclaimed clairvoyant who uses her abilities "to help solve mysteries," told her more than 115,000 followers on the app that Scofield was romantically involved with one of the victims and worked with another individual to commit the murders in more than 50 videos starting around Nov. 17. Scofield served Guillard with two cease-and-desist letters that were ignored, even after police had charged and arrested Kohberger on Dec. 30. Scofield has since filed a lawsuit, citing emotional distress from the public attention caused by Guillard. Although users on Guillard's most recent videos began telling her to stop posting videos about Scofield—saying things like "You're still doing this?!" and "none of this happened"—previous posts where Guillard defamed Scofield have amassed at least 2.5 million likes, according to the lawsuit. Guillard declined an interview and did not respond to requests for comment. In a statement to TIME, Scofield's lawyer Wendy Olson said: "These untrue statements create safety issues for the Professor and her family. They also further compound the trauma that the families of the victims are experiencing and undermine law enforcement efforts to find the people responsible in order to provide answers to the families and the public." While Scofield has been the only one to take legal action, several others associated with the case have been accused online. Guillard also accused an ex-boyfriend of victim Kaylee Goncalves, of involvement in the crime. "He's not only lost the love of his life," his aunt told the New York Post, but "half of America" also believes he could be responsible for the murders. A neighbor of the four University of Idaho students has also been wrongfully accused by social media users. He told NewsNation that people have been "ruthless" about getting information about his personal life. He added that he now carries a gun with him to get "that extra sense of security." "They've already contacted my friends asking questions about me," he said. "And so who knows if someone's gonna go so far as to try and confront me in person."A double-edged swordDavid Schmid, an associate professor of English at the University at Buffalo College of Arts and Sciences, says that public interest in high-profile cases can certainly bring forward attention and new information that can help investigators solve a case, but also comes with high costs. In the Idaho murders case, Guillard is just one of many online personalities who has chosen to make accusations with little or no evidence. On Dec. 9, weeks before Kohberger was arrested in connection with the murders, Moscow Police released a statement about the influx of information circulating online, saying they were "monitoring online activity" related to the case and were "aware of the large amount of rumors and misinformation being shared, as well as harassing and threatening behavior toward potentially involved parties." "Anyone engaging in threats or harassment whether in person, online or otherwise needs to understand that they could be subjecting themselves to criminal charges," the department said in a Facebook post. That is not to say all involvement in true crime is detrimental. Bystanders who were at nearby locations to Gabby Petito in the moments before her disappearance in September 2022 uploaded TikToks, photos and videos of their interactions with her and helped police narrow down their search efforts and ultimately find her body. And in the Idaho case, the Moscow Police Department reports that they received more than 19,000 tips from the community as of Dec. 30 that were integral to arresting Bryan Kohberger, according to CBS News. They continue to ask for more tips related to the arrest of the primary suspect. Schmid suggests that the best of internet sleuthing—deep diving into criminal cases online— is seen in projects like Serial, an investigative journalism podcast whose first season focused on the case of Adnan Syed, who was convicted of killing 18-year-old Hae Min Lee in 1999. With an average of more than 2 million listeners at the time of its release, Serial's popularity undoubtedly played a role in Syed's eventual release last October. Citizen sleuthing into true crime can have dangerous impacts though. Serial, for instance, was made by experienced journalists who took measures to fact-check and share information in a manner that minimizes harm. TikTokers and others on social media, however, often have little basis for their claims. Yet with TikTok's more than 1 billion users, they are able to reach vast numbers of people. "[The internet] has a tremendous impact in terms of allowing people who ordinarily wouldn't have access to media influence in any way, shape or form to provide input," Schmid tells TIME. "In some cases, that's been a very good thing, but like everything else, it's a mixed bag."Schmid warns that the mass amount of information people have access to on a day-to-day basis often generates misinformation on a scale that is difficult to contain once it's out. And because there is a lack of trust in traditional arbiters of information like the press and authorities, citizens feel that they have an equal right to comment and investigate. Schmid believes social media companies should be responsible for taking down false accusations and misinformation in cases like the University of Idaho murders. "Obviously, the scale of the problem is so big you're never going to be able to eliminate it entirely. But I think in cases like the one you're discussing, where the damage being done is so egregious, I think deplatforming is a very good response to that," Schmid tells TIME. It seems like everyone is obsessing over all things true crime lately — from binging Making a Murderer on Netflix to tuning in to the latest S-Town podcast. But true crime has long found a home in novels, where at times reality can seem stranger than fiction.Whether it's the true story of a black man infiltrating the KKK (recently adapted into Spike Lee's latest film, BlacKkKlansman,) or a memoir about working alongside a serial killer at large, here are the top true crime novels of all time:Party Monster: A Fabulous But True Tale of Murder in Clubland (Formerly Disco Bloodbath) by James St. JamesJames St. James's memoir relives his days as a club kid in the 1990s, and how that led him to become the close confidant of Michael Alig, a man convicted of killing a drug dealer known as Angel in 1996. St. James brings you into the heyday of the New York City club scene marked by drugs, sex, music and mayhem that fueled an environment where nothing was too outrageous — not even murder.Buy Now: Party Monster on Bookshop | AmazonIn 1959, four members of the Clutter family, who owned a farm in Kansas, were shot to death in their home. In Cold Blood weaves together the stories of the murderers and the investigators hunting them with interviews with those who knew the victims and the killers. The novel is a true crime classic — it was researched by award-winning novelists Truman Capote and Harper Lee, and its ability to bring every detail of the crime to life revolutionized the true crime novel genre when it was released. Despite the criticism the book has received for adding "color" to some of the factual details to make the book a smoother read, In Cold Blood remains a staple on the book shelves of many true crime enthusiasts.Buy Now: In Cold Blood on Bookshop | AmazonMy Dark Places by James EllroyWhen James Ellroy was 10 years old, his mother was murdered. Although at the time he wouldn't even admit to liking his mother, the murder weighed heavily on his mind — eventually leading him to drug and alcohol abuse that served as an escape from the pressing need to know who his mother really was. My Dark Places mixes the hard-hitting chronicles of an unsolved mystery with deeply personal confessions, as Ellroy grapples with the impact his mother's murder had on him.Buy Now: My Dark Places on Bookshop | AmazonThe Stranger Beside Me by Ann RuleIn the 1970s, aspiring crime novelist Ann Rule worked at a suicide hotline with Ted Bundy — a man she would soon consider a friend. It was this friendship that allowed Rule to gain insight on the serial killer's inner psyche and life during the period of his conviction, trial and execution for the murders of 30 women (though Bundy confessed to the 30 murders, investigators say the number of victims could be much higher). In The Stranger Beside Me, Rule combines her own personal observations about Bundy with in-depth reporting on his crimes to create a vivid and enduring true crime novel.Buy Now: The Stranger Beside on Bookshop | AmazonMidnight in Mexico: A Reporter's Journey Through a Country's Descent Into Darkness by Alfredo CorchadoAlfredo Corchado spent his life building a career as a reporter, and eventually ended up as an international correspondent in Mexico for the Dallas Morning News. He reported not only on the country's budding economy, but also its crumbling rule of law as cartels were overrunning the government with corruption. One night, Corchado received a tip that he could be the next target of the Zetas, a violent paramilitary group — and the man who had reported on the murders of so many others had just 24 hours to save his own life.Buy Now: Midnight in Mexico on Bookshop | AmazonI'll Be Gone in the Dark: One Woman's Obsessive Search for the Golden State Killer by Michelle McNamaraIn April 2018, the police finally caught the suspected Golden State Killer — 40 years after the serial killer and rapist's first attack. For years detectives obsessed over the more than 50 rapes and at least 12 murders, unsuccessfully trying to catch him. But a break in the case came when an investigator matched DNA recovered from a crime scene to the killer's great-great-great grandparents. True crime journalist Michelle McNamara joined the search 30 years after his final crimes; she too obsessively combed through every bit of information the Internet had to offer about the elusive rapist-turned-murderer. The extensive research and prose she left behind after her tragic passing have been turned into I'll Be Gone in the Dark, a cutting account of a criminal mastermind and the terror he sowed across the state of California.Buy Now: I'll Be Gone in the Dark on Bookshop | AmazonKillers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David GrannIn the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Nation in Oklahoma after oil was discovered beneath their land. Then, one by one, the Osage were killed off, and many of those who dared to investigate the killings wound up murdered themselves. As the death toll rose, the newly created FBI took up the case and the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history.Buy now: Killers of the Flower Moon on Bookshop | AmazonLost Girls: An Unsolved American Mystery by Robert KolkerIn Robert Kolker's debut non-fiction book, he explores the lives of five women, all of whom were prostitutes murdered by a serial killer. He explores how the women used the sexual underside of the internet to escape dead-end jobs and bad situations and recounts the authorities' failure to take their cases seriously, or even solve their murders. Lost Girls is a social critique on how the police and society let these young women down. What makes their stories even more poignant is knowing that the killer is still at large.Buy now: Lost Girls on AmazonThe Grim Sleeper: The Lost Women of South Central by Christine PelisekChristine Pelisek meticulously details the case of the L.A serial killer called "the Grim Sleeper" as only someone who reported on the case for 10 years could. She named him the Grim Sleeper for his long breaks between victims, all of whom were women of color in poor areas. Pelisek's book carefully details the lives of each victim and tells a broader story about homicide investigations in neighborhoods ridden with poverty and gang violence. The book reveals the hard truth that often victims found in high-crime areas are neglected by the police and the press — which is likely how a serial killer ran rampant for two decades.Buy now: The Grim Sleeper on Bookshop | Amazon Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption by Byran StevensonBryan Stevenson's memoir highlights the injustice found in the American justice system as he recounts one particular case he worked on as a young lawyer. During his time at Equal Justice Initiative, he took the case of Walter McMillian, a young black man who was sentenced to death for the murder of a white woman — which he insisted he didn't commit — that he was having an affair with. The case, which reads like it could be straight out of To Kill a Mockingbird, irreversibly shapes the author's view of mercy and justice.Buy Now: Just Mercy on Bookshop | Amazon Missoula: Rape and Justice in a College Town by Jon KrakauerAcclaimed investigative journalist Jon Krakauer goes to the University of Montana's college town of Missoula. The school is known for its tough academics, pastoral surroundings and a massive fan base for the football team, the Grizzlies. But behind the typical trappings of a college community, hides a system that makes it difficult for rape victims to come forward. Krakauer interviews several women in Missoula and chronicles the nights of their rapes; their self-doubt while their cases were going through the justice system and what it cost them to speak out.Buy now: Missoula on Bookshop | Amazon Evidence of Love: A True Story of Passion and Death in the Suburbs by Jim Atkinson and John BloomIn 1980, Candy Montgomery and Betty Gore were two bored housewives in Texas trying to make the best of their mundane suburban lives — until Betty discovered Candy had an affair with her husband, which culminated in a lethal crime scene. Evidence of Love details the struggle of "two desperate housewives," as Candy's trial unfolds in national headlines after she pleads not guilty for reasons of self-defense. Based on exclusive interviews with the Montgomery and Gore families, Bloom and Atkins cut through the drama of the case to study the frustrations and unanswered desires of these two women.Buy Now: Evidence of Love on AmazonThe Devil in the White City by Erik LarsonIn The Devil in the White City, Erik Larson recounts the true tale of the 1893 World's Fair and a serial killer who set up a fake hotel next to it to lure unsuspecting fairgoers to their death. Larson mixes true history with thrilling suspense to make his research on the fair and the spurious hotel nearby seem like a well-crafted work of fiction. He takes the imposing historical murderer that the Chicago Times-Herald at the time called "so unthinkable that no novelist would dare to invent such a character," and contrasts him with the preparations for the lavish World's Fair to create an enthralling and suspenseful read.Buy Now: The Devil in the White City on Bookshop | AmazonThe Dead Girl by Melanie ThernstromThe Dead Girl, based on Thernstrom's diary, is the retelling of intimate thoughts and emotions surrounding the murder of her childhood best friend Bibi Lee. After Lee goes missing while jogging in the hills of Oakland with her boyfriend Bradley Page, a colossal search mission ensues. In a state of distress, Thernstrom begins compiling her friend's letters and poems. When Bibi's body is discovered five weeks later, Thernstorm begins writing about their lives together. The resulting book weaves the tragic murder with the "the interior lives of young women."Buy Now: The Dead Girl on Bookshop | AmazonBlack Klansman by Ron StallworthIn Ron Stallworth's inaugural book and memoir, he recalls his time as the first black detective in the Colorado Springs Police Department. When he comes across a classified ad in the local paper about joining the Ku Klux Klan, he responds using his real name while posing as a white man. Stallworth narrates the ensuing undercover investigation into the KKK and draws parallels between the Klan's stance on immigration and other issues impacting the country with the current era of Donald Trump's politics. His chilling story was also recently adapted into a major motion picture directed by Spike Lee.Buy Now: Black Klansman on Bookshop | AmazonThe Suspicions of Mr. Whicher: A Shocking Murder and the Undoing of a Great by Kate SummerscaleIn June of 1860, three-year-old Saville Kent was found at the bottom of an outhouse with a slit throat. Inspector Jonathan Whicher, one of the founding members of Scotland Yard, the London Metropolitan Police Service, pursued the case relentlessly — but without sufficient evidence or a confession, the case was only circumstantial, leaving the investigator feeling defeated. The novel features a fast-paced narrative and brutal retelling of the case to create a dark fable that spawned a TV series under the same name.Buy Now: The Suspicions of Mr. Whicher on Bookshop | AmazonCorrection, Aug. 13, 2018The original version of this story misstated the year of the Clutter family murders recounted in Capote's In Cold Blood. It was 1959, not 1956.Correction, Aug. 29, 2018The original version of this story misstated author Jon Krakauer's name. It is Jon Krakauer, not John Krakauer.Correction, Nov. 20, 2019The original version of this story misstated the author who wrote Evidence of Love with Jim Atkinson. It is John Bloom, not Joe Briggs. On November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their faces. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues. As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing empathy. At the center of his study are the amoral young killers Perry Smith and Dick Hickcock, who, vividly drawn by Capote, are shown to be... moreOn November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their faces. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues. As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing empathy. At the center of his study are the amoral young killers Perry Smith and Dick Hickcock, who, vividly drawn by Capote, are shown to be reprehensible yet entirely and frighteningly human. In Cold Blood is a seminal work of modern prose, a remarkable synthesis of journalistic skill and powerfully evocative narrative. lessRecommended by Lynda La Plante, Ben Shapiro, R J Ellory, and 3 others. Lynda La PlanteOne of the reasons I like this true crime novelisation is down to the fact it was so out of character for Capote and took everyone by surprise. It is also an excellent, almost biographical, insight into the two young killers' minds. (Source)R J ElloryI think in all honesty it is one of the finest books ever written. It took him six years to finish it because he had to wait for the court case and the final verdict which was the two perpetrators being executed. (Source)The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBIDavid Grann | 4.85In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Indian Nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, the Osage rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe.Then, one by one, they began to be killed off. One Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, watched as her family was murdered. Her older sister was shot. Her mother was then slowly poisoned. And it was just the beginning, as more Osage began to die under mysterious circumstances.In this last remnant of the Wild West—where... moreIn the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Indian Nation in Oklahoma. After oil was discovered beneath their land, the Osage rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions, and sent their children to study in Europe.Then, one by one, they began to be killed off. One Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, watched as her family was murdered. Her older sister was shot. Her mother was then slowly poisoned. And it was just the beginning, as more Osage began to die under mysterious circumstances.In this last remnant of the Wild West—where oilmen like J. P. Getty made their fortunes and where desperadoes such as Al Spencer, "the Phantom Terror," roamed – virtually anyone who dared to investigate the killings were themselves murdered. As the death toll surpassed more than twenty-four Osage, the newly created F.B.I. took up the case, in what became one of the organization's first major homicide investigations. But the bureau was then notoriously corrupt and initially bungled the case. Eventually the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White to try to unravel the mystery. White put together an undercover team, including one of the only Native American agents in the bureau. They infiltrated the region, struggling to adopt the latest modern techniques of detection. Together with the Osage they began to expose one of the most sinister conspiracies in American history.A true-life murder mystery about one of the most monstrous crimes in American history. lessRecommended by Jacqueline Novogratz, and 1 others. Jacqueline NovogratzReads like a novel while giving a deeper understanding of both the good and the terrible that humans are capable of. (Source)A masterful true crime account of the Golden State Killer—the elusive serial rapist turned murderer who terrorized California for over a decade—from Michelle McNamara, the gifted journalist who died tragically while investigating the case."You'll be silent forever, and I'll be gone in the dark."For more than ten years, a mysterious and violent predator committed fifty sexual assaults in Northern California before moving south, where he perpetrated ten sadistic murders. Then he disappeared, eluding capture by multiple police forces and some of the best... moreA masterful true crime account of the Golden State Killer—the elusive serial rapist turned murderer who terrorized California for over a decade—from Michelle McNamara, the gifted journalist who died tragically while investigating the case."You'll be silent forever, and I'll be gone in the dark."For more than ten years, a mysterious and violent predator committed fifty sexual assaults in Northern California before moving south, where he perpetrated ten sadistic murders. Then he disappeared, eluding capture by multiple police forces and some of the best detectives in the area.Three decades later, Michelle McNamara, a true crime journalist who created the popular website TrueCrimeDiary.com, was determined to find the violent psychopath she called "the Golden State Killer." McNamara pored over police reports, interviewed victims, and embedded herself in the online communities that were as obsessed with the case as she was.At the time of the crimes, the Golden State Killer was between the ages of eighteen and thirty, Caucasian, and athletic—capable of vaulting tall fences. He always wore a mask. After choosing a victim—he favored suburban couples—he often entered their home when no one was there, studying family pictures, mastering the layout. He attacked while they slept, using a flashlight to awaken and blind them. Though they could not recognize him, his victims recalled his voice: a guttural whisper through clenched teeth, abrupt and threatening.I'll Be Gone in the Dark—the masterpiece McNamara was writing at the time of her sudden death—offers an atmospheric snapshot of a moment in American history and a chilling account of a criminal mastermind and the wreckage he left behind. It is also a portrait of a woman's obsession and her unflagging pursuit of the truth. Framed by an introduction by Gillian Flynn and an afterword by her husband, Patton Oswalt, the book was completed by McNamara's lead researcher and a close colleague. Utterly original and compelling, it is destined to become a true crime classic—and may at last unmask the Golden State Killer. lessSecrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley StartupJohn Carreyrou | 4.76The full inside story of the breathtaking rise and shocking collapse of a multibillion-dollar startup, by the prize-winning journalist who first broke the story and pursued it to the end in the face of pressure and threats from the CEO and her lawyers.In 2014, Theranos founder and CEO Elizabeth Holmes was widely seen as the female Steve Jobs: a brilliant Stanford dropout whose startup "unicorn" promised to revolutionize the medical industry with a machine that would make blood tests significantly faster and easier. Backed by investors such as Larry Ellison and Tim Draper,... moreThe full inside story of the breathtaking rise and shocking collapse of a multibillion-dollar startup, by the prize-winning journalist who first broke the story and pursued it to the end in the face of pressure and threats from the CEO and her lawyers.In 2014, Theranos founder and CEO Elizabeth Holmes was widely seen as the female Steve Jobs: a brilliant Stanford dropout whose startup "unicorn" promised to revolutionize the medical industry with a machine that would make blood tests significantly faster and easier. Backed by investors such as Larry Ellison and Tim Draper, Theranos sold shares in a fundraising round that valued the company at $9 billion, putting Holmes's worth at an estimated $4.7 billion. There was just one problem: The technology didn't work.For years, Holmes had been misleading investors, FDA officials, and her own employees. When Carreyrou, working at The Wall Street Journal, got a tip from a former Theranos employee and started asking questions, both Carreyrou and the Journal were threatened with lawsuits. Undaunted, the newspaper ran the first of dozens of Theranos articles in late 2015. By early 2017, the company's value was zero and Holmes faced potential legal action from the government and her investors. Here is the riveting story of the biggest corporate fraud since Enron, a disturbing cautionary tale set amid the bold promises and gold-rush frenzy of Silicon Valley. lessRecommended by Bill Gates, Andrew Chen, Brad Feld, and 15 others. Bill GatesA bunch of my friends recommended this one to me. Carreyrou gives you the definitive insider's look at the rise and fall of Theranos. The story is even crazier than I expected, and I found myself unable to put it down once I started. This book has everything: elaborate scams, corporate intrigue, magazine cover stories, ruined family relationships, and the demise of a company once valued at nearly... (Source)Andrew ChenFinished "bad blood" on the Theranos scandal. Wow. Just wow. It's a must read for everyone in tech and startups. Just 1-click buy it :) Amazing how far charisma and social proof got them. Here's the NYT review of the book (Source)Brad FeldEvery entrepreneur and VC should read this book. John Carreyrou has done something important here. Maybe this book will finally put a nail in the phrase "fake it till you make it", but I doubt it. The amount of lying, disingenuousness, blatant and unjustified self-promotion, and downright deceit that exists in entrepreneurship right now is at a local maximum. This always happens when... (Source)The Shocking Inside Story of Serial Killer Ted BundyAnn Rule | 4.73From #1 New York Times bestselling author Ann Rule, "America's best true-crime writer" (Kirkus Reviews), her unforgettable classic account of the horrifying murders in the Pacific Northwest and her shock when she discovered her friend—Ted Bundy—was not only a suspect but also one of the most prolific serial killers in American history. Meeting in 1971 at a Seattle crisis clinic, Ann Rule and Ted Bundy developed a friendship and correspondence that would span the rest of his life. Rule had no idea that when they went their separate ways, their paths would cross... moreFrom #1 New York Times bestselling author Ann Rule, "America's best true-crime writer" (Kirkus Reviews), her unforgettable classic account of the horrifying murders in the Pacific Northwest and her shock when she discovered her friend—Ted Bundy—was not only a suspect but also one of the most prolific serial killers in American history. Meeting in 1971 at a Seattle crisis clinic, Ann Rule and Ted Bundy developed a friendship and correspondence that would span the rest of his life. Rule had no idea that when they went their separate ways, their paths would cross again under shocking circumstances.The Stranger Beside Me is Rule's compelling firsthand account of not just her relationship with Bundy, but also his life—from his complicated childhood to the media circus of his trials. Astonishing in its intimacy and with Rule's clear-eyed prose, you can't help but share in her growing horror at discovering that her friend was one of the most notorious American serial killers.An unforgettable and haunting work of research, journalism, and personal memories, The Stranger Beside Me is "as dramatic and chilling as a bedroom window shattering at midnight" (The New York Times). lessAuthor Erik Larson imbues the incredible events surrounding the 1893 Chicago World's Fair with such drama that readers may find themselves checking the book's categorization to be sure that 'The Devil in the White City' is not, in fact, a highly imaginative novel. Larson tells the stories of two men: Daniel H. Burnham, the architect responsible for the fair's construction, and H.H. Holmes, a serial killer masquerading as a charming doctor. Burnham's challenge was immense. In a short period of time, he was forced to overcome the death of his partner and numerous other obstacles to... moreAuthor Erik Larson imbues the incredible events surrounding the 1893 Chicago World's Fair with such drama that readers may find themselves checking the book's categorization to be sure that 'The Devil in the White City' is not, in fact, a highly imaginative novel. Larson tells the stories of two men: Daniel H. Burnham, the architect responsible for the fair's construction, and H.H. Holmes, a serial killer masquerading as a charming doctor. Burnham's challenge was immense. In a short period of time, he was forced to overcome the death of his partner and numerous other obstacles to construct the famous "White City" around which the fair was built. His efforts to complete the project, and the fair's incredible success, are skillfully related along with entertaining appearances by such notables as Buffalo Bill Cody, Susan B. Anthony, and Thomas Edison. The activities of the sinister Dr. Holmes, who is believed to be responsible for scores of murders around the time of the fair, are equally remarkable. He devised and erected the World's Fair Hotel, complete with crematorium and gas chamber, near the fairgrounds and used the event as well as his own charismatic personality to lure victims. Combining the stories of an architect and a killer in one book, mostly in alternating chapters, seems like an odd choice but it works. The magical appeal and horrifying dark side of 19th-century Chicago are both revealed through Larson's skillful writing. - John Moe lessRecommended by Melissa Jacobs, and 1 others. Melissa Jacobs@Turk0219 Agree, that book was amazing! (Source)Lies, Spies, and a Conspiracy to Protect PredatorsRonan Farrow | 4.68 In a dramatic account of violence and espionage, Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter Ronan Farrow exposes serial abusers and a cabal of powerful interests hell-bent on covering up the truth, at any cost. In 2017, a routine network television investigation led Ronan Farrow to a story only whispered about: one of Hollywood's most powerful producers was a predator, protected by fear, wealth, and a conspiracy of silence. As Farrow drew closer to the truth, shadowy operatives, from high-priced lawyers to elite war-hardened spies, mounted a secret... more In a dramatic account of violence and espionage, Pulitzer Prize-winning investigative reporter Ronan Farrow exposes serial abusers and a cabal of powerful interests hell-bent on covering up the truth, at any cost. In 2017, a routine network television investigation led Ronan Farrow to a story only whispered about: one of Hollywood's most powerful producers was a predator, protected by fear, wealth, and a conspiracy of silence. As Farrow drew closer to the truth, shadowy operatives, from high-priced lawyers to elite war-hardened spies, mounted a secret campaign of intimidation, threatening his career, following his every move and weaponizing an account of abuse in his own family.All the while, Farrow and his producer faced a degree of resistance that could not be explained - until now. And a trail of clues revealed corruption and cover-ups from Hollywood, to Washington, and beyond.This is the untold story of the exotic tactics of surveillance and intimidation deployed by wealthy and connected men to threaten journalists, evade accountability and silence victims of abuse - and it's the story of the women who risked everything to expose the truth and spark a global movement.Both a spy thriller and a meticulous work of investigative journalism, Catch and Kill breaks devastating new stories about the rampant abuse of power - and sheds far-reaching light on investigations that shook the culture. lessReese WitherspoonCongrats @RonanFarrow on your incredible book #CatchandKill. Amazing investigative reporting and A real thrill ride of a read. (Source)Julie K. BrownThe parallels to the Jeffrey Epstein case are amazing in @RonanFarrow's new book. Imagine this same predatory behavior and coverup among powerful men — not at a TV-media network — but at the highest levels of our government. #perversionofjustice (Source)Bastian ObermayerI know I'm very late to this party, but: „Catch And Kill" from the unrelenting @RonanFarrow is a hell of a read!! Need inspiration for how to hold the powerful accountable - or only looking for great entertainment? Get this book. (Source)Discover the classic, behind-the-scenes chronicle of John E. Douglas' twenty-five-year career in the FBI Investigative Support Unit, where he used psychological profiling to delve into the minds of the country's most notorious serial killers and criminals—the basis for the upcoming Netflix original series.In chilling detail, the legendary Mindhunter takes us behind the scenes of some of his most gruesome, fascinating, and challenging cases—and into the darkest recesses of our worst nightmares. During his twenty-five year career with the Investigative Support Unit,... moreDiscover the classic, behind-the-scenes chronicle of John E. Douglas' twenty-five-year career in the FBI Investigative Support Unit, where he used psychological profiling to delve into the minds of the country's most notorious serial killers and criminals—the basis for the upcoming Netflix original series.In chilling detail, the legendary Mindhunter takes us behind the scenes of some of his most gruesome, fascinating, and challenging cases—and into the darkest recesses of our worst nightmares. During his twenty-five year career with the Investigative Support Unit, Special Agent John Douglas became a legendary figure in law enforcement, pursuing some of the most notorious and sadistic serial killers of our time: the man who hunted prostitutes for sport in the woods of Alaska, the Atlanta child murderer, and Seattle's Green River killer, the case that nearly cost Douglas his life. As the model for Jack Crawford in The Silence of the Lambs, Douglas has confronted, interviewed, and studied scores of serial killers and assassins, including Charles Manson, Ted Bundy, and Ed Gein, who dressed himself in his victims' peeled skin. Using his uncanny ability to become both predator and prey, Douglas examines each crime scene, reliving both the killer's and the victim's actions in his mind, creating their profiles, describing their habits, and predicting their next moves. lessThe True Story of the Manson MurdersVincent Bugliosi | 4.63Prosecuting attorney in the Manson trial, Vincent Bugliosi held a unique insider's position in one of the most baffling and horrifying cases of the twentieth century: the cold-blooded Tate-LaBianca murders carried out by Charles Manson and four of his followers. What motivated Manson in his seemingly mindless selection of victims, and what was his hold over the young women who obeyed his orders? Here is the gripping story of this famous and haunting crime. 50 pages of b/w photographs. moreProsecuting attorney in the Manson trial, Vincent Bugliosi held a unique insider's position in one of the most baffling and horrifying cases of the twentieth century: the cold-blooded Tate-LaBianca murders carried out by Charles Manson and four of his followers. What motivated Manson in his seemingly mindless selection of victims, and what was his hold over the young women who obeyed his orders? Here is the gripping story of this famous and haunting crime. 50 pages of b/w photographs. less"The tragedies keep coming. As we reel from the latest horror . . . " So begins a new epilogue, illustrating how Columbine became the template for nearly two decades of "spectacle murders." It is a false script, seized upon by a generation of new killers. In the wake of Newtown, Aurora, and Virginia Tech, the imperative to understand the crime that sparked this plague grows more urgent every year.What really happened April 20, 1999? The horror left an indelible stamp on the American psyche, but most of what we "know" is wrong. It wasn't about jocks, Goths, or the Trench Coat... more"The tragedies keep coming. As we reel from the latest horror . . . " So begins a new epilogue, illustrating how Columbine became the template for nearly two decades of "spectacle murders." It is a false script, seized upon by a generation of new killers. In the wake of Newtown, Aurora, and Virginia Tech, the imperative to understand the crime that sparked this plague grows more urgent every year.What really happened April 20, 1999? The horror left an indelible stamp on the American psyche, but most of what we "know" is wrong. It wasn't about jocks, Goths, or the Trench Coat Mafia. Dave Cullen was one of the first reporters on scene, and spent ten years on this book-widely recognized as the definitive account. With a keen investigative eye and psychological acumen, he draws on mountains of evidence, insight from the world's leading forensic psychologists, and the killers' own words and drawings-several reproduced in a new appendix. Cullen paints raw portraits of two polar opposite killers. They contrast starkly with the flashes of resilience and redemption among the survivors. lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. A shocking and empowering true-crime story of three sisters determined to survive their mother's house of horrors.After more than a decade, when sisters Nikki, Sami, and Tori Knotek hear the word mom, it claws like an eagle's talons, triggering memories that have been their secret since childhood. Until now.For years, behind the closed doors of their farmhouse in Raymond, Washington, their sadistic mother, Shelly, subjected her girls to unimaginable abuse, degradation, torture, and psychic terrors. Through it all, Nikki, Sami, and Tori developed a defiant bond... moreA shocking and empowering true-crime story of three sisters determined to survive their mother's house of horrors.After more than a decade, when sisters Nikki, Sami, and Tori Knotek hear the word mom, it claws like an eagle's talons, triggering memories that have been their secret since childhood. Until now.For years, behind the closed doors of their farmhouse in Raymond, Washington, their sadistic mother, Shelly, subjected her girls to unimaginable abuse, degradation, torture, and psychic terrors. Through it all, Nikki, Sami, and Tori developed a defiant bond that made them far less vulnerable than Shelly imagined. Even as others were drawn into their mother's dark and perverse web, the sisters found the strength and courage to escape an escalating nightmare that culminated in multiple murders.Harrowing and heartrending, If You Tell is a survivor's story of absolute evil—and the freedom and justice that Nikki, Sami, and Tori risked their lives to fight for. Sisters forever, victims no more, they found a light in the darkness that made them the resilient women they are today—loving, loved, and moving on. lessA sublime and seductive reading experience. Brilliantly conceived and masterfully written, this enormously engaging portrait of a most beguiling Southern city has become a modern classic.Shots rang out in Savannah's grandest mansion in the misty, early morning hours of May 2, 1981. Was it murder or self-defense? For nearly a decade, the shooting and its aftermath reverberated throughout this hauntingly beautiful city of moss-hung oaks and shaded squares. John Berendt's sharply observed, suspenseful, and witty narrative reads like a thoroughly engrossing novel, and yet it is a work... moreA sublime and seductive reading experience. Brilliantly conceived and masterfully written, this enormously engaging portrait of a most beguiling Southern city has become a modern classic.Shots rang out in Savannah's grandest mansion in the misty, early morning hours of May 2, 1981. Was it murder or self-defense? For nearly a decade, the shooting and its aftermath reverberated throughout this hauntingly beautiful city of moss-hung oaks and shaded squares. John Berendt's sharply observed, suspenseful, and witty narrative reads like a thoroughly engrossing novel, and yet it is a work of nonfiction. Berendt skillfully interweaves a hugely entertaining first-person account of life in this isolated remnant of the Old South with the unpredictable twists and turns of a landmark murder case.It is a spellbinding story peopled by a gallery of remarkable characters: the well-bred society ladies of the Married Woman's Card Club; the turbulent young redneck gigolo; the hapless recluse who owns a bottle of poison so powerful it could kill every man, woman, and child in Savannah; the aging and profane Southern belle who is the "soul of pampered self-absorption"; the uproariously funny black drag queen; the acerbic and arrogant antiques dealer; the sweet-talking, piano-playing con artist; young blacks dancing the minuet at the black debutante ball; and Minerva, the voodoo priestess who works her magic in the graveyard at midnight. These and other Savannahians act as a Greek chorus, with Berendt revealing the alliances, hostilities, and intrigues that thrive in a town where everyone knows everyone else. less14 hours, 40 minutes From award-winning New Yorker staff writer Patrick Radden Keefe, a stunning, intricate narrative about a notorious killing in Northern Ireland and its devastating repercussionsIn December 1972, Jean McConville, a thirty-eight-year-old mother of ten, was dragged from her Belfast home by masked intruders, her children clinging to her legs. They never saw her again. Her abduction was one of the most notorious episodes of the vicious conflict known as The Troubles. Everyone in the neighborhood knew the I.R.A. was... more14 hours, 40 minutes From award-winning New Yorker staff writer Patrick Radden Keefe, a stunning, intricate narrative about a notorious killing in Northern Ireland and its devastating repercussionsIn December 1972, Jean McConville, a thirty-eight-year-old mother of ten, was dragged from her Belfast home by masked intruders, her children clinging to her legs. They never saw her again. Her abduction was one of the most notorious episodes of the vicious conflict known as The Troubles. Everyone in the neighborhood knew the I.R.A. was responsible. But in a climate of fear and paranoia, no one would speak of it. In 2003, five years after an accord brought an uneasy peace to Northern Ireland, a set of human bones was discovered on a beach. McConville's children knew it was their mother when they were told a blue safety pin was attached to the dress--with so many kids, she had always kept it handy for diapers or ripped clothes.Patrick Radden Keefe's mesmerizing book on the bitter conflict in Northern Ireland and its aftermath uses the McConville case as a starting point for the tale of a society wracked by a violent guerrilla war, a war whose consequences have never been reckoned with. The brutal violence seared not only people like the McConville children, but also I.R.A. members embittered by a peace that fell far short of the goal of a united Ireland, and left them wondering whether the killings they committed were not justified acts of war, but simple murders. From radical and impetuous I.R.A. terrorists such as Dolours Price, who, when she was barely out of her teens, was already planting bombs in London and targeting informers for execution; to the ferocious I.R.A. mastermind known as The Dark; to the spy games and dirty schemes of the British Army; to Gerry Adams, who negotiated the peace but betrayed his hardcore comrades by denying his I.R.A. past, Say Nothing conjures a world of passion, betrayal, vengeance, and anguish. lessMargot WallströmI recommend the book "Say nothing" about Northern Ireland and IRA. It makes fascinating reading about memories, murder, mourning and making peace. (Source)Mikko TakkunenJust finished reading this remarkable book by @praddenkeefe. I was baffled getting this from @VeronicaSanchis as I don't remember ever showing particular interest in the Troubles, but she obviously knows me better than I do. (Source)Ann Rule's shocking and powerful account of the destructive forces that drove Diane Downs, a beautiful young mother, to shoot her three young children in cold blood. moreAnn Rule's shocking and powerful account of the destructive forces that drove Diane Downs, a beautiful young mother, to shoot her three young children in cold blood. lessGo deep into the investigation behind one of the most frightening and enigmatic serial killers in modern American history, and into the ranks of a singular American police force: the Alaska PD.Most of us have never heard of Israel Keyes. But he is one of the most ambitious, meticulous serial killers of modern time. The FBI considered his behavior unprecedented. Described by a prosecutor as "a force of pure evil", he was a predator who struck all over the United States. He buried 'kill kits' - cash, weapons, and body-disposal tools - in remote locations across the country, and over... moreGo deep into the investigation behind one of the most frightening and enigmatic serial killers in modern American history, and into the ranks of a singular American police force: the Alaska PD.Most of us have never heard of Israel Keyes. But he is one of the most ambitious, meticulous serial killers of modern time. The FBI considered his behavior unprecedented. Described by a prosecutor as "a force of pure evil", he was a predator who struck all over the United States. He buried 'kill kits' - cash, weapons, and body-disposal tools - in remote locations across the country, and over the course of fourteen years, would fly to a city, rent a car, and drive thousands of miles in order to use his kits. He would break into a stranger's house, abduct his victims in broad daylight, and kill and dispose of them in mere hours. And then he would return home, resuming life as a quiet, reliable construction worker devoted to his only daughter.When journalist Maureen Callahan first heard about Israel Keyes in 2012, she was captivated by how a killer of this magnitude could go undetected by law enforcement for over a decade. And so began a project that consumed her for the next several years - uncovering the true story behind how the FBI ultimately caught Israel Keyes, and trying to understand what it means for a killer like Keyes to exist. A killer who left a path of monstrous, randomly committed crimes in his wake - many of which remain unsolved to this day.American Predator is the culmination of years of on-the-ground interviews with key figures in law enforcement, and in Keyes' life, and research uncovered from classified FBI files. lessA Story of Violent

FaithJon Krakauer | 4.36A multilayered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, savage violence, polygamy, and unyielding faith. This is vintage Krakauer, an utterly compelling work of nonfiction that illuminates an otherwise confounding realm of human behavior.Jon Krakauer's literary reputation rests on insightful chronicles of lives conducted at the outer limits. In Under The Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith, he shifts his focus from extremes of physical adventure to extremes of religious belief within our own borders. At the core of his book is an appalling double murder committed by... moreA multilayered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, savage violence, polygamy, and unyielding faith. This is vintage Krakauer, an utterly compelling work of nonfiction that illuminates an otherwise confounding realm of human behavior.Jon Krakauer's literary reputation rests on insightful chronicles of lives conducted at the outer limits. In Under The Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith, he shifts his focus from extremes of physical adventure to extremes of religious belief within our own borders. At the core of his book is an appalling double murder committed by two Mormon Fundamentalist brothers, Ron and Dan Lafferty, who insist they received a revelation from God commanding them to kill their blameless victims. Beginning with a meticulously researched account of this "divinely inspired" crime, Krakauer constructs a multilayered, bone-chilling narrative of messianic delusion, savage violence, polygamy, and unyielding faith. Along the way, he uncovers a shadowy offshoot of America's fastest-growing religion, and raises provocative questions about the nature of religious belief.Krakauer takes readers inside isolated communities in the American West, Canada, and Mexico, where some forty-thousand Mormon Fundamentalists believe the mainstream Mormon Church went unforgivably astray when it renounced polygamy. Defying both civil authorities and the Mormon establishment in Salt Lake City, the leaders of these outlaw sects are zealots who answer only to God. Marrying prodigiously and with virtual impunity (the leader of the largest fundamentalist church took seventy-five "plural wives," several of whom were wed to him when they were fourteen or fifteen and he was in his eighties), fundamentalist prophets exercise absolute control over the lives of their followers, and preach that any day now the world will be swept clean in a hurricane of fire, sparing only their most obedient adherents.Weaving the story of the Lafferty brothers and their fanatical brethren with a clear-eyed look at Mormonism's violent past, Krakauer examines the underbelly of the most successful homegrown faith in the United States, and finds a distinctly American brand of religious extremism. The result is vintage Krakauer, an utterly compelling work of nonfiction that illuminates an otherwise confounding realm of human behavior. lessIn her most personal and provocative book to date, the #1 bestselling master of true crime presents "her long-awaited definitive narrative of the brutal and senseless crimes that haunted the Seattle area for decades" (Publishers Weekly). This is the extraordinary true story of the most prolific serial killer the nation had ever seen -- a case involving more than forty-nine female victims, two decades of intense investigative work...and one unrelenting killer who not only attended Ann Rule's book signings but lived less than a mile away from her home. moreIn her most personal and provocative book to date, the #1 bestselling master of true crime presents "her long-awaited definitive narrative of the brutal and senseless crimes that haunted the Seattle area for decades" (Publishers Weekly). This is the extraordinary true story of the most prolific serial killer the nation had ever seen -- a case involving more than forty-nine female victims, two decades of intense investigative work...and one unrelenting killer who not only attended Ann Rule's book signings but lived less than a mile away from her home. lessRobert Graysmith was on staff at the San Francisco Chronicle in 1969 when Zodiac first struck, triggering in the resolute reporter an unrelenting obsession with seeing the hooded killer brought to justice. In this gripping account of Zodiac's eleven-month reign of terror, Graysmith reveals hundreds of facts previously unreleased, including the complete text of the killer's letters. moreRobert Graysmith was on staff at the San Francisco Chronicle in 1969 when Zodiac first struck, triggering in the resolute reporter an unrelenting obsession with seeing the hooded killer brought to justice. In this gripping account of Zodiac's eleven-month reign of terror, Graysmith reveals hundreds of facts previously unreleased, including the complete text of the killer's letters. lessWinner of the Baillie Gifford Prize for Non-FictionFive devastating human stories and a dark and moving portrait of Victorian London—the untold lives of the women killed by Jack the Ripper.Polly, Annie, Elizabeth, Catherine and Mary-Jane are famous for the same thing, though they never met. They came from Fleet Street, Knightsbridge, Wolverhampton, Sweden, and Wales. They wrote ballads, ran coffee houses, lived on country estates, they breathed ink-dust from printing presses and escaped people-traffickers.What they had in common was the year of their... moreWinner of the Baillie Gifford Prize for Non-FictionFive devastating human stories and a dark and moving portrait of Victorian London—the untold lives of the women killed by Jack the Ripper.Polly, Annie, Elizabeth, Catherine and Mary-Jane are famous for the same thing, though they never met. They came from Fleet Street, Knightsbridge, Wolverhampton, Sweden, and Wales. They wrote ballads, ran coffee houses, lived on country estates, they breathed ink-dust from printing presses and escaped people-traffickers.What they had in common was the year of their murders: 1888. The person responsible was never identified, but the character created by the press to fill that gap has become far more famous than any of these five women.For more than a century, newspapers have been keen to tell us that "the Ripper" preyed on prostitutes. Not only is this untrue, as historian Hallie Rubenhold has discovered, it has prevented the real stories of these fascinating women from being told. Now, in this devastating narrative of five lives, Rubenhold finally sets the record straight, revealing a world not just of Dickens and Queen Victoria, but of poverty, homelessness and rampant misogyny. They died because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time—but their greatest misfortune was to be born a woman. lessRecommended by Isabelle Khurshudyan, Sarah Churchwell, and 2 others. Sarah ChurchwellMassive congratulations to @HallieRubenhold for being longlisted for the @BGPrize for her brilliant book The Five!! So well deserved and a complete thrill for #twitterstorians! (Source)Fatal Vision is the electrifying true story of Dr. Jeffrey MacDonald, the handsome, Princeton-educated physician convicted of savagely slaying his young pregnant wife and two small children, murders he vehemently denies committing. Bestselling author Joe McGinnis chronicles every aspect of this horrifying and intricate crime, and probes the life and psyche of the magnetic, all-American Jeffrey MacDonald, a golden boy who seemed destined to have it all. The result is a penetration to the heart of darkness that enshrouded one of the most complex criminal cases ever to capture the... moreFatal Vision is the electrifying true story of Dr. Jeffrey MacDonald, the handsome, Princeton-educated physician convicted of savagely slaying his young pregnant wife and two small children, murders he vehemently denies committing. Bestselling author Joe McGinnis chronicles every aspect of this horrifying and intricate crime, and probes the life and psyche of the magnetic, all-American Jeffrey MacDonald, a golden boy who seemed destined to have it all. The result is a penetration to the heart of darkness that enshrouded one of the most complex criminal cases ever to capture the attention of the American public. It is haunting, stunningly suspenseful—a work that no reader will be able to forget.With 8 pages of dramatic photos and a special epilogue by the author lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. A Year on the Killing StreetsDavid Simon | 4.28The scene is Baltimore; the year is 1988. Twice every three days another citizen is shot, stabbed, or bludgeoned to death. At the center of this hurricane of crime is the city's homicide unit, a small group of hard men who battle to achieve a bit of rough justice in a deadly world. This is their story. moreThe scene is Baltimore; the year is 1988. Twice every three days another citizen is shot, stabbed, or bludgeoned to death. At the center of this hurricane of crime is the city's homicide unit, a small group of hard men who battle to achieve a bit of rough justice in a deadly world. This is their story. lessRecommended by John R Stanton, and 1 others. John R Stanton@grisuy @anthoknees The snot boogy story is also based on something that really happened as I recall. If you haven't read @AoDespair's book Homicide, you should. It's amazing and has a lot of the source material from the Wire and Homicide the show. (Source)In 2011, one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in American legal history was set right when Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin, and Jessie Misskelley were released after eighteen years in prison. Award-winning journalist Mara Leveritt's The Devil's Knot remains the most comprehensive, insightful reporting ever done on the investigation, trials, and convictions of three teenage boys who became known as the West Memphis Three.For weeks in 1993, after the murders of three eight-year-old boys, police in West Memphis, Arkansas seemed stymied. Then suddenly, detectives charged... moreIn 2011, one of the greatest miscarriages of justice in American legal history was set right when Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin, and Jessie Misskelley were released after eighteen years in prison. Award-winning journalist Mara Leveritt's The Devil's Knot remains the most comprehensive, insightful reporting ever done on the investigation, trials, and convictions of three teenage boys who became known as the West Memphis Three.For weeks in 1993, after the murders of three eight-year-old boys, police in West Memphis, Arkansas seemed stymied. Then suddenly, detectives charged three teenagers, alleged members of a satanic cult, with the killings. Despite the witch-hunt atmosphere of the trials, and a case which included stunning investigative blunders, a confession riddled with errors, and an absence of physical evidence linking any of the accused to the crime, the teenagers were convicted. Jurors sentenced Jason Baldwin and Jessie Misskelley to life in prison and Damien Echols, the accused ringleader, to death. The guilty verdicts were popular in their home state, even upheld on appeal, and all three remained in prison until their unprecedented release in August 2011.With close-up views of its key participants, this award-winning account unravels the many tangled knots of this endlessly shocking case, one which will shape the American legal landscape for years to come. lessDeborah Blum, writing with the high style and skill for suspense that is characteristic of the very best mystery fiction, shares the untold story of how poison rocked Jazz Age New York City. In The Poisoner's Handbook Blum draws from highly original research to track the fascinating, perilous days when a pair of forensic scientists began their trailblazing chemical detective work, fighting to end an era when untraceable poisons offered an easy path to the perfect crime. Drama unfolds case by case as the heroes of The Poisoner's Handbook—chief medical examiner... moreDeborah Blum, writing with the high style and skill for suspense that is characteristic of the very best mystery fiction, shares the untold story of how poison rocked Jazz Age New York City. In The Poisoner's Handbook Blum draws from highly original research to track the fascinating, perilous days when a pair of forensic scientists began their trailblazing chemical detective work, fighting to end an era when untraceable poisons offered an easy path to the perfect crime. Drama unfolds case by case as the heroes of The Poisoner's Handbook—chief medical examiner Charles Norris and toxicologist Alexander Gettler—investigate a family mysteriously stricken bald, Barnum and Bailey's Famous Blue Man, factory workers with crumbling bones, a diner serving poisoned pies, and many others. Each case presents a deadly new puzzle and Norris and Gettler work with a creativity that rivals that of the most imaginative murderer, creating revolutionary experiments to tease out even the wiliest compounds from human tissue. Yet in the tricky game of toxins, even science can't always be trusted, as proven when one of Gettler's experiments erroneously sets free a suburban housewife later nicknamed "America's Lucretia Borgia" to continue her nefarious work. From the vantage of Norris and Gettler's laboratory in the infamous Bellevue Hospital it becomes clear that killers aren't the only toxic threat to New Yorkers. Modern life has created a kind of poison playground, and danger lurks around every corner. Automobiles choke the city streets with carbon monoxide; potent compounds, such as morphine, can be found on store shelves in products ranging from pesticides to cosmetics. Prohibition incites a chemist's war between bootleggers and government chemists while in Gotham's crowded speakeasies each round of cocktails becomes a game of Russian roulette. Norris and Gettler triumph over seemingly unbeatable odds to become the pioneers of forensic chemistry and the gatekeepers of justice during a remarkably deadly time. A beguiling concoction that is equal parts true crime, twentieth-century history, and science thriller, The Poisoner's Handbook is a page-turning account of a forgotten New York. lessRecommended by Michelle Francl, and 1 others. Michelle FranclDeborah Blum's book reminds me that molecules are powerful witnesses, if only we have the skills to interrogate them, and sometimes they are killers. (Source)Douglas Preston and Mario Spez | 4.26In the nonfiction tradition of John Berendt (Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil) and Erik Larson (The Devil in the White City), New York Times bestselling author Douglas Preston presents a gripping account of crime and punishment in the lush hills surrounding Florence, Italy.In 2000, Douglas Preston fulfilled a dream to move his family to Italy. Then he discovered that the olive grove in front of their 14th century farmhouse had been the scene of the most infamous double-murders in Italian history, committed by a serial killer known as the Monster of... moreIn the nonfiction tradition of John Berendt (Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil) and Erik Larson (The Devil in the White City), New York Times bestselling author Douglas Preston presents a gripping account of crime and punishment in the lush hills surrounding Florence, Italy.In 2000, Douglas Preston fulfilled a dream to move his family to Italy. Then he discovered that the olive grove in front of their 14th century farmhouse had been the scene of the most infamous double-murders in Italian history, committed by a serial killer known as the Monster of Florence. Preston, intrigued, meets Italian investigative journalist Mario Spezi to learn more.This is the true story of their search for—and identification of—the man they believe committed the crimes, and their chilling interview with him. And then, in a strange twist of fate, Preston and Spezi themselves become targets of the police investigation. Preston has his phone tapped, is interrogated, and told to leave the country. Spezi fares worse: he is thrown into Italy's grim Capanne prison, accused of being the Monster of Florence himself. Like one of Preston's thrillers, The Monster of Florence, tells a remarkable and harrowing story involving murder, mutilation, and suicide—and at the center of it, Preston and Spezi, caught in a bizarre prosecutorial vendetta. lessThe Definitive How-To GuideKaren Kilgariff | 4.26Sharing never-before-heard stories ranging from their struggles with depression, eating disorders, and addiction, Karen and Georgia irreverently recount their biggest mistakes and deepest fears, reflecting on the formative life events that shaped them into two of the most followed voices in the nation. moreSharing never-before-heard stories ranging from their struggles with depression, eating disorders, and addiction, Karen and Georgia irreverently recount their biggest mistakes and deepest fears, reflecting on the formative life events that shaped them into two of the most followed voices in the nation. lessHow One True-Crime Writer Started Solving MurdersBilly Jensen | 4.24Have you ever wanted to solve a murder? Gather the clues the police overlooked. Put together the pieces. Identify the suspect. Journalist Billy Jensen spent 15 years investigating unsolved murders, fighting for the families of victims. Every story he wrote had one thing in common - it didn't have an ending. The killer was still out there. But after the sudden death of a friend, crime writer Michelle McNamara, Billy became fed up. Following a dark night, he came up with a plan. A plan to investigate past the point when the cops have given up. A plan to solve the murders... moreHave you ever wanted to solve a murder? Gather the clues the police overlooked. Put together the pieces. Identify the suspect. Journalist Billy Jensen spent 15 years investigating unsolved murders, fighting for the families of victims. Every story he wrote had one thing in common - it didn't have an ending. The killer was still out there. But after the sudden death of a friend, crime writer Michelle McNamara, Billy became fed up. Following a dark night, he came up with a plan. A plan to investigate past the point when the cops have given up. A plan to solve the murders himself. In Chase Darkness with Me, you'll ride shotgun as Billy identifies the Halloween Mask Murderer, finds a missing girl in the California Redwoods, and investigates the only other murder in New York City on 9/11. You'll hear intimate details of the hunts for two of the most terrifying serial killers in history: his friend Michelle's pursuit of the Golden State Killer which is chronicled in I'll Be Gone In The Dark which Billy helped finish after Michelle's passing, and his own quest to find the murderer of the Allenstown 4 family. And Billy gives you the tools - and the rules - to help solve murders yourself. Gripping, complex, unforgettable, Chase Darkness with Me is an examination of the evil forces that walk among us, illustrating a novel way to catch those killers, and a true crime narrative unlike any you've listened to before. With a foreword by Karen Kilgariff of My Favorite Murder. lessMy Twenty Years Tracking Serial Killers for the FBIRobert K. Ressler | 4.23Face-to-face with some of America's most terrifying killers, FBI veteran and ex-Army CID colonel Robert Ressler learned form then how to identify the unknown monsters who walk among us--and put them behind bars. Now the man who coined the phrase "serial killer" and advised Thomas Harris on The Silence of the Lambs shows how is able to track down some of today's most brutal murderers.Just as it happened in The Silence of the Lambs, Ressler used the evidence at a crime scene to put together a psychological profile of the killers. From the victims they choose, to... moreFace-to-face with some of America's most terrifying killers, FBI veteran and ex-Army CID colonel Robert Ressler learned form then how to identify the unknown monsters who walk among us--and put them behind bars. Now the man who coined the phrase "serial killer" and advised Thomas Harris on The Silence of the Lambs shows how is able to track down some of today's most brutal murderers.Just as it happened in The Silence of the Lambs, Ressler used the evidence at a crime scene to put together a psychological profile of the killers. From the victims they choose, to the way they kill, to the often grotesque souvenirs they take with them--Ressler unlocks the identities of these vicious killers of the police to capture.And with his discovery that serial killers share certain violent behaviors, Ressler's gone behind prison walls to hear the bizarre first-hand stories countless convicted murderers. Getting inside the mind of a killer to understand how and why he kills, is one of the FBI's most effective ways of helping police bring in killers who are still at large.Join Ressler as he takes you on the hunt for toady's most dangerous psychopaths. It is a terrifying journey you will not forget. lessAn incisive and compelling account of the case of 21-year-old Lucie Blackman, who stepped out into the vastness of Tokyo in the summer of 2000 and disappeared forever. The following winter, her dismembered remains were found buried in a seaside cave. The seven months in between had seen a massive search for the missing girl, involving Japanese policemen; British private detectives; Australian dowsers; and Lucie's desperate, but bitterly divided, parents. As the case unfolded, it drew the attention of prime ministers and sado-masochists, ambassadors and con-men, and reporters from... moreAn incisive and compelling account of the case of 21-year-old Lucie Blackman, who stepped out into the vastness of Tokyo in the summer of 2000 and disappeared forever. The following winter, her dismembered remains were found buried in a seaside cave. The seven months in between had seen a massive search for the missing girl, involving Japanese policemen; British private detectives; Australian dowsers; and Lucie's desperate, but bitterly divided, parents. As the case unfolded, it drew the attention of prime ministers and sado-masochists, ambassadors and con-men, and reporters from across the world. Had Lucie been abducted by a religious cult, or snatched by human traffickers? Who was the mysterious man she had gone to meet? And what did her work, as a "hostess" in the notorious Roppongi district of Tokyo, really involve?Richard Lloyd Parry, an award-winning foreign correspondent, followed the case since Lucie's disappearance. Over the course of a decade, he traveled to four continents to interview those caught up in the story, fought off a legal attack in the Japanese courts, and worked undercover as a bartender in a Roppongi strip club. He talked exhaustively with Lucie's friends and family and won unique access to the Japanese detectives who investigated the case. And he delved into the mind and background of the man accused of the crime--Joji Obara, described by the judge as "unprecedented and extremely evil." With the finesse of a novelist, he reveals the astonishing truth about Lucie and her fate. People Who Eat Darkness is, by turns, a non-fiction thriller, a courtroom drama, and the biography of both a victim and a killer. It is the story of a young woman who fell prey to unspeakable evil, and of a loving family torn apart by grief. And it is a fascinating insight into one of the world's most baffling and mysterious societies, a light shone into dark corners of Japan that the rest of the world has never glimpsed before. lessThe riveting, powerful memoir of the woman whose statement to Brock Turner gave voice to millions of survivors. She was known to the world as Emily Doe when she stunned millions with a letter. Brock Turner had been sentenced to just six months in county jail after he was found sexually assaulting her on Stanford's campus. Her victim impact statement was posted on BuzzFeed, where it instantly went viral--viewed by eleven million people within four days, it was translated globally and read on the floor of Congress; it inspired changes in California law and the recall of the judge in... moreThe riveting, powerful memoir of the woman whose statement to Brock Turner gave voice to millions of survivors. She was known to the world as Emily Doe when she stunned millions with a letter. Brock Turner had been sentenced to just six months in county jail after he was found sexually assaulting her on Stanford's campus. Her victim impact statement was posted on BuzzFeed, where it instantly went viral--viewed by eleven million people within four days, it was translated globally and read on the floor of Congress; it inspired changes in California law and the recall of the judge in the case. Thousands wrote to say that she had given them the courage to share their own experiences of assault for the first time.Now she reclaims her identity to tell her story of trauma, transcendence, and the power of words. It was the perfect case, in many ways--there were eyewitnesses, Turner ran away, physical evidence was immediately secured. But her struggles with isolation and shame during the aftermath and the trial reveal the oppression victims face in even the best-case scenarios. Her story illuminates a culture biased to protect perpetrators, indicts a criminal justice system designed to fail the most vulnerable, and, ultimately, shines with the courage required to move through suffering and live a full and beautiful life.Know My Name will forever transform the way we think about sexual assault, challenging our beliefs about what is acceptable and speaking truth to the tumultuous reality of healing. It also introduces readers to an extraordinary writer, one whose words have already changed our world. Entwining pain, resilience, and humor, this memoir will stand as a modern classic. lessAn Unsolved American MysteryRobert Kolker | 4.21Award-winning investigative reporter Robert Kolker delivers a humanizing account of the true-life search for a serial killer still at large on Long Island and presents the first detailed look at the shadow world of online escorts, where making a living is easier than ever, and the dangers remain all too real. Lost Girls is a portrait of unsolved murders in an idyllic part of America, of the underside of the Internet, and of the secrets we keep without admitting to ourselves that we keep them. moreAward-winning investigative reporter Robert Kolker delivers a humanizing account of the true-life search for a serial killer still at large on Long Island and presents the first detailed look at the shadow world of online escorts, where making a living is easier than ever, and the dangers remain all too real. Lost Girls is a portrait of unsolved murders in an idyllic part of America, of the underside of the Internet, and of the secrets we keep without admitting to ourselves that we keep them. lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. John E. Douglas, Mark Olshaker, John Douglas | 4.21Violent. Provocative. Shocking. Call them what you will...but don't call them open and shut. Did Lizzie Borden murder her own father and stepmother? Was Jack the Ripper actually the Duke of Clarence? Who killed JonBenet Ramsey?America's foremost expert on criminal profiling and twenty-five-year FBI veteran John Douglas, along with author and filmmaker Mark Olshaker, explores those tantalizing questions and more in this mesmerizing work of detection. With uniquely gripping analysis, the authors reexamine and reinterpret the accepted facts, evidence, and victimology of the most... moreViolent. Provocative. Shocking. Call them what you will...but don't call them open and shut. Did Lizzie Borden murder her own father and stepmother? Was Jack the Ripper actually the Duke of Clarence? Who killed JonBenet Ramsey?America's foremost expert on criminal profiling and twenty-five-year FBI veteran John Douglas, along with author and filmmaker Mark Olshaker, explores those tantalizing questions and more in this mesmerizing work of detection. With uniquely gripping analysis, the authors reexamine and reinterpret the accepted facts, evidence, and victimology of the most notorious murder cases in the history of crime, including the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, the Zodiac Killer, and the Whitechapel murders.Utilizing techniques developed by Douglas himself, they give detailed profiles and reveal chief suspects in pursuit of what really happened in each case.The Cases That Haunt Us not only offers convincing and controversial conclusions, it deconstructs the evidence and widely held beliefs surrounding each case and rebuilds them -- with fascinating, surprising, and haunting results. lessMurder and Injustice in a Small TownJohn Grisham | 4.20#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERIn the town of Ada, Oklahoma, Ron Williamson was going to be the next Mickey Mantle. But on his way to the Big Leagues, Ron stumbled, his dreams broken by drinking, drugs, and women. Then, on a winter night in 1982, not far from Ron's home, a young cocktail waitress named Debra Sue Carter was savagely murdered. The investigation led nowhere. Until, on the flimsiest evidence, it led to Ron Williamson. The washed-up small-town hero was charged, tried, and sentenced to death—in a trial littered with lying witnesses and tainted evidence that would... more#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLERIn the town of Ada, Oklahoma, Ron Williamson was going to be the next Mickey Mantle. But on his way to the Big Leagues, Ron stumbled, his dreams broken by drinking, drugs, and women. Then, on a winter night in 1982, not far from Ron's home, a young cocktail waitress named Debra Sue Carter was savagely murdered. The investigation led nowhere. Until, on the flimsiest evidence, it led to Ron Williamson. The washed-up small-town hero was charged, tried, and sentenced to death—in a trial littered with lying witnesses and tainted evidence that would shatter a man's already broken life, and let a true killer go free.Impeccably researched, grippingly told, filled with eleventh-hour drama, John Grisham's first work of nonfiction reads like a page-turning legal thriller. It is a book that will terrify anyone who believes in the presumption of innocence—a book no American can afford to miss. lessA Murder and a MemoirAlexandria Marzano-Lesnevich | 4.20Before Alexandria Marzano-Lesnevich begins a summer job at a law firm in Louisiana, working to help defend men accused of murder, she thinks her position is clear. The child of two lawyers, she is staunchly anti-death penalty. But the moment convicted murderer Ricky Langley's face flashes on the screen as she reviews old tapes—the moment she hears him speak of his crimes—she is overcome with the feeling of wanting him to die. Shocked by her reaction, she digs deeper and deeper into the case. Despite their vastly different circumstances, something in his story is unsettlingly, uncannily... moreBefore Alexandria Marzano-Lesnevich begins a summer job at a law firm in Louisiana, working to help defend men accused of murder, she thinks her position is clear. The child of two lawyers, she is staunchly anti-death penalty. But the moment convicted murderer Ricky Langley's face flashes on the screen as she reviews old tapes—the moment she hears him speak of his crimes—she is overcome with the feeling of wanting him to die. Shocked by her reaction, she digs deeper and deeper into the case. Despite their vastly different circumstances, something in his story is unsettlingly, uncannily familiar.Crime, even the darkest and most unsayable acts, can happen to any one of us. As Alexandria pores over the facts of the murder, she finds herself thrust into the complicated narrative of Ricky's childhood. And by examining the details of Ricky's case, she is forced to face her own story, to unearth long-buried family secrets, and reckon with a past that colors her view of Ricky's crime.But another surprise awaits: She wasn't the only one who saw her life in Ricky's.An intellectual and emotional thriller that is also a different kind of murder mystery, The Fact Of a Body is a book not only about how the story of one crime was constructed—but about how we grapple with our own personal histories. Along the way it tackles questions about the nature of forgiveness, and if a single narrative can ever really contain something as definitive as the truth. This groundbreaking, heart-stopping work, ten years in the making, shows how the law is more personal than we would like to believe—and the truth more complicated, and powerful, than we could ever imagine. lessJim Jones and Peoples TempleJeff Guinn, George Newbern, et al | 4.19By the New York Times bestselling author of Manson, the comprehensive, authoritative, and tragic story of preacher Jim Jones, who was responsible for the Jonestown Massacre—the largest murder-suicide in American history.In the 1950s, a young Indianapolis minister named Jim Jones preached a curious blend of the gospel and Marxism. His congregation was racially integrated, and he was a much-lauded leader in the contemporary civil rights movement. Eventually, Jones moved his church, Peoples Temple, to northern California. He became involved in electoral politics, and... moreBy the New York Times bestselling author of Manson, the comprehensive, authoritative, and tragic story of preacher Jim Jones, who was responsible for the Jonestown Massacre—the largest murder-suicide in American history.In the 1950s, a young Indianapolis minister named Jim Jones preached a curious blend of the gospel and Marxism. His congregation was racially integrated, and he was a much-lauded leader in the contemporary civil rights movement. Eventually, Jones moved his church, Peoples Temple, to northern California. He became involved in electoral politics, and soon was a prominent Bay Area leader.In this riveting narrative, Jeff Guinn examines Jones's life, from his extramarital affairs, drug use, and fraudulent faith healing to the fraught decision to move almost a thousand of his followers to a settlement in the jungles of Guyana in South America. Guinn provides stunning new details of the events leading to the fatal day in November, 1978 when more than nine hundred people died—including almost three hundred infants and children—after being ordered to swallow a cyanide-laced drink.Guinn examined thousands of pages of FBI files on the case, including material released during the course of his research. He traveled to Jones's Indiana hometown, where he spoke to people never previously interviewed, and uncovered fresh information from Jonestown survivors. He even visited the Jonestown site with the same pilot who flew there the day that Congressman Leo Ryan was murdered on Jones's orders. The Road to Jonestown is the definitive book about Jim Jones and the events that led to the tragedy at Jonestown. lessOn the night of October 23/24, 1995 in Prairie Village, Kansas, a fierce, wind-driven fire devastated the luxurious mansion of Dr. Debora Green and her husband, Dr. Michael Farrar. Trapped and burned to death in the flames were twelve-year-old Tim and his six-year-old sister Kelly. Lissa, ten, was barely able to leap to safety from the garage roof into the arms of her mother, who was standing outside the house. When Michael Farrar returned to the scene, he had lost more than his children and his home. His entire life was in ruins. The fire was the climactic event of Michael and Debora's... moreOn the night of October 23/24, 1995 in Prairie Village, Kansas, a fierce, wind-driven fire devastated the luxurious mansion of Dr. Debora Green and her husband, Dr. Michael Farrar. Trapped and burned to death in the flames were twelve-year-old Tim and his six-year-old sister Kelly. Lissa, ten, was barely able to leap to safety from the garage roof into the arms of her mother, who was standing outside the house. When Michael Farrar returned to the scene, he had lost more than his children and his home. His entire life was in ruins. The fire was the climactic event of Michael and Debora's lives. Until that summer, they seemed to have it all -- a happy marriage, successful medical practices, three bright and beautiful children. Then they went on a trip to Peru with their son. There, they met attractive, blonde Celeste Walker, whose husband, John was also a successful doctor. But after that trip, nothing was the same again for either couple, and all the dark hidden places in Debora and Michael's marriage bubbled to the surface in a series of almost unbelievable horrors. "Bitter Harvest" is the chronicle of this tragedy in the heartland of America, the true story of the disintegration of a marriage and its horrifying consequences. Rule takes us deep in the psyche of a killer whose behavior was so twisted and so evil that it defies belief. Gripping, powerful, and ultimately terrifying, "Bitter Harvest" is a vivid recreation of an unthinkable crime -- and a depiction of the unimagined depths of a darkness within the human spirit. Copyright © 1998 Ann Rule. All Rights Reserved Performance copyright 1998 by Simon & Schuster Inc. All Rights Reserved lessRape and the Justice System in a College TownJon Krakauer | 4.17From bestselling author Jon Krakauer, a stark, powerful, meticulously reported narrative about a series of sexual assaults at the University of Montana — stories that illuminate the human drama behind the national plague of campus rape. Missoula, Montana, is a typical college town, with a highly regarded state university, bucolic surroundings, a lively social scene, and an excellent football team — the Grizzlies — with a rabid fan base. The Department of Justice investigated 350 sexual assaults reported to the Missoula police between January 2008 and... moreFrom bestselling author Jon Krakauer, a stark, powerful, meticulously reported narrative about a series of sexual assaults at the University of Montana — stories that illuminate the human drama behind the national plague of campus rape. Missoula, Montana, is a typical college town, with a highly regarded state university, bucolic surroundings, a lively social scene, and an excellent football team — the Grizzlies — with a rabid fan base. The Department of Justice investigated 350 sexual assaults reported to the Missoula police between January 2008 and May 2012. Few of these assaults were properly handled by either the university or local authorities. In this, Missoula is also typical. A DOJ report released in December of 2014 estimates 110,000 women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four are raped each year. Krakauer's devastating narrative of what happened in Missoula makes clear why rape is so prevalent on American campuses, and why rape victims are so reluctant to report assault. Acquaintance rape is a crime like no other. Unlike burglary or embezzlement or any other felony, the victim often comes under more suspicion than the alleged perpetrator. This is especially true if the victim is sexually active; if she had been drinking prior to the assault — and if the man she accuses plays on a popular sports team. The vanishingly small but highly publicized incidents of false accusations are often used to dismiss her claims in the press. If the case goes to trial, the woman's entire personal life becomes fair game for defense attorneys. This brutal reality goes a long way towards explaining why acquaintance rape is the most underreported crime in America. In addition to physical trauma, its victims often suffer devastating psychological damage that leads to feelings of shame, emotional paralysis and stigmatization. PTSD rates for rape victims are estimated to be 50%, higher than soldiers returning from war. In Missoula, Krakauer chronicles the searing experiences of several women in Missoula — the nights when they were raped; their fear and self-doubt in the aftermath; the way they were treated by the police, prosecutors, defense attorneys; the public vilification and private anguish; their bravery in pushing forward and what it cost them. Some of them went to the police. Some declined to go to the police, or to press charges, but sought redress from the university, which has its own, non-criminal judicial process when a student is accused of rape. In two cases the police agreed to press charges and the district attorney agreed to prosecute. One case led to a conviction; one to an acquittal. Those women courageous enough to press charges or to speak publicly about their experiences were attacked in the media, on Grizzly football fan sites, and/or to their faces. The university expelled three of the accused rapists, but one was reinstated by state officials in a secret proceeding. One district attorney testified for an alleged rapist at his university hearing. She later left the prosecutor's office and successfully defended the Grizzlies' star quarterback in his rape trial. The horror of being raped, in each woman's case, was magnified by the mechanics of the justice system and the reaction of the community. Krakauer's dispassionate, carefully documented account of what these women endured cuts through the abstract ideological debate about campus rape. College-age women are not raped because they are promiscuous, or drunk, or send mixed signals, or feel guilty about casual sex, or seek attention. They are the victims of a terrible crime and deserving of compassion from society and fairness from a justice system that is clearly broken. lessOn 10 June 1991, eleven-year-old Jaycee Dugard was abducted from a school bus stop within sight of her home in Tahoe, California. It was the last her family and friends saw of her for over eighteen years. On 26 August 2009, Dugard, her daughters, and Phillip Craig Garrido appeared in the office of her kidnapper's parole officer in California. Their unusual behaviour sparked an investigation that led to the positive identification of Jaycee Lee Dugard, living in a tent behind Garrido's home. During her time in captivity, at the age of fourteen and seventeen, she gave birth to two daughters,... moreOn 10 June 1991, eleven-year-old Jaycee Dugard was abducted from a school bus stop within sight of her home in Tahoe, California. It was the last her family and friends saw of her for over eighteen years. On 26 August 2009, Dugard, her daughters, and Phillip Craig Garrido appeared in the office of her kidnapper's parole officer in California. Their unusual behaviour sparked an investigation that led to the positive identification of Jaycee Lee Dugard, living in a tent behind Garrido's home. During her time in captivity, at the age of fourteen and seventeen, she gave birth to two daughters, both fathered by Garrido. Dugard's memoir is written by the 30-year-old herself and covers the period from the time of her abduction in 1991 up until the present. In her stark, utterly honest and unflinching narrative, Jaycee opens up about what she experienced, including how she feels now, a year after being found. Garrido and his wife Nancy have since pleaded guilty to their crimes. less There was only one way to please her father: Murder his wife.... David Brown was the consummate entrepreneur: a computer wizard and millionaire by age thirty-two. When his beautiful young wife was shot to death as she slept, Brown's fourteen-year-old daughter, Cinnamon, confessed to killing her stepmother. The California courts sentenced her harshly: twenty-four years to life. But in the wake of Cinnamon's murder conviction, thanks in part to two determined lawmen, the twisted private world of David Brown himself unfolded with astonishing clarity -- revealing a trail of... more There was only one way to please her father: Murder his wife.... David Brown was the consummate entrepreneur: a computer wizard and millionaire by age thirty-two. When his beautiful young wife was shot to death as she slept, Brown's fourteen-year-old daughter, Cinnamon, confessed to killing her stepmother. The California courts sentenced her harshly: twenty-four years to life. But in the wake of Cinnamon's murder conviction, thanks in part to two determined lawmen, the twisted private world of David Brown himself unfolded with astonishing clarity -- revealing a trail of perverse love, twisted secrets, and evil mind games. A complex and often dangerous investigation suggested a horrifying scenario: Was the seemingly bland David Brown really a stone-cold killer who convinced his own daughter to prove her love by killing for him? A man who turned young women into his own personal slaves, who collected nearly $1 million in insurance money, and married his dead wife's teenage sister, David Brown was a sociopath who would stop at nothing...a deadly charmer who almost got away with everything. lessA True Story of Medicine, Madness, and MurderCharles Graeber | 4.16After his December 2003 arrest, registered nurse Charlie Cullen was quickly dubbed "The Angel of Death" by the media. But Cullen was no mercy killer, nor was he a simple monster. He was a favorite son, husband, beloved father, best friend, and celebrated caregiver. Implicated in the deaths of as many as 300 patients, he was also perhaps the most prolific serial killer in American history.Cullen's murderous career in the world's most trusted profession spanned sixteen years and nine hospitals across New Jersey and Pennsylvania. When, in March of 2006, Charles Cullen was marched... moreAfter his December 2003 arrest, registered nurse Charlie Cullen was quickly dubbed "The Angel of Death" by the media. But Cullen was no mercy killer, nor was he a simple monster. He was a favorite son, husband, beloved father, best friend, and celebrated caregiver. Implicated in the deaths of as many as 300 patients, he was also perhaps the most prolific serial killer in American history.Cullen's murderous career in the world's most trusted profession spanned sixteen years and nine hospitals across New Jersey and Pennsylvania. When, in March of 2006, Charles Cullen was marched from his final sentencing in an Allentown, Pennsylvania, courthouse into a waiting police van, it seemed certain that the chilling secrets of his life, career, and capture would disappear with him. Now, in a riveting piece of investigative journalism nearly ten years in the making, journalist Charles Graeber presents the whole story for the first time. Based on hundreds of pages of previously unseen police records, interviews, wire-tap recordings and videotapes, as well as exclusive jailhouse conversations with Cullen himself and the confidential informant who helped bring him down, THE GOOD NURSE weaves an urgent, terrifying tale of murder, friendship, and betrayal.Graeber's portrait of Cullen depicts a surprisingly intelligent and complicated young man whose promising career was overwhelmed by his compulsion to kill, and whose shy demeanor masked a twisted interior life hidden even to his family and friends. Were it not for the hardboiled, unrelenting work of two former Newark homicide detectives racing to put together the pieces of Cullen's professional past, and a fellow nurse willing to put everything at risk, including her job and the safety of her children, there's no telling how many more lives could have been lost.In the tradition of In Cold Blood, THE GOOD NURSE does more than chronicle Cullen's deadly career and the breathless efforts to stop him; it paints an incredibly vivid portrait of madness and offers a penetrating look inside America's medical system. Harrowing and irresistibly paced, this book will make you look at medicine, hospitals, and the people who work in them, in an entirely different way. lessPerfect Husband, Perfect Killer?Ann Rule | 4.16The author of eight New York Times bestsellers, Ann Rule first won nationwide acclaim with The Stranger Beside Me, about serial killer Ted Bundy. Her Crime Files volumes, based on fascinating case histories, have assured her reputation as our premier chronicler of crime. Now the former Seattle policewoman brings us the horrific account of a charismatic man adored by beautiful and brilliant women who always gave him what he wanted...sex, money, their very lives.... When attorney Cheryl Keeton's brutally bludgeoned body was found in her van in the fast lane of an... moreThe author of eight New York Times bestsellers, Ann Rule first won nationwide acclaim with The Stranger Beside Me, about serial killer Ted Bundy. Her Crime Files volumes, based on fascinating case histories, have assured her reputation as our premier chronicler of crime. Now the former Seattle policewoman brings us the horrific account of a charismatic man adored by beautiful and brilliant women who always gave him what he wanted...sex, money, their very lives.... When attorney Cheryl Keeton's brutally bludgeoned body was found in her van in the fast lane of an Oregon freeway, her husband, Brad Cunningham, was the likely suspect. But there was no solid evidence linking him to the crime. He married again, for the fifth time, and his stunning new wife, a physician named Sara, adopted his three sons. They all settled down to family life on a luxurious estate. But gradually, their marriage became a nightmare.... In this gripping account of Cheryl's murder, Ann Rule takes us from Brad's troubled boyhood to one of the most bizarre trials in legal history, uncovering multiple marriages, financial manipulations, infidelities, and monstrous acts of harassment and revenge along the way. Dead By Sunset is Ann Rule at her riveting best. lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. A rollicking true-crime adventure and a thought-provoking exploration of the human drive to possess natural beauty for readers of The Stranger in the Woods, The Lost City of Z, and The Orchid Thief.On a cool June evening in 2009, after performing a concert at London's Royal Academy of Music, twenty-year-old American flautist Edwin Rist boarded a train for a suburban outpost of the British Museum of Natural History, armed with a pair of latex gloves, a miniature LED flashlight, and a diamond-blade glass cutter. Home to one of the largest ornithological... moreA rollicking true-crime adventure and a thought-provoking exploration of the human drive to possess natural beauty for readers of The Stranger in the Woods, The Lost City of Z, and The Orchid Thief.On a cool June evening in 2009, after performing a concert at London's Royal Academy of Music, twenty-year-old American flautist Edwin Rist boarded a train for a suburban outpost of the British Museum of Natural History, armed with a pair of latex gloves, a miniature LED flashlight, and a diamond-blade glass cutter. Home to one of the largest ornithological collections in the world, the Tring museum was full of rare bird specimens whose coppery orange, emerald, and iridescent blue feathers were worth staggering amounts of money to the men who shared Edwin's obsession: the Victorian art of salmon fly-tying, in which exotic feathers are fastened in intricate patterns around fishing hooks. Over the next few hours, the champion fly-tier grabbed hundreds of bird skins--some collected 150 years earlier by a contemporary of Darwin's, Alfred Russel Wallace, who'd risked everything to gather them--and escaped into the darkness.Two years later, Kirk Wallace Johnson was waist high in a river in northern New Mexico, fly-fishing for trout, when his guide told him about the heist. He was soon consumed by the strange case of the feather thief. What would possess a person to steal dead birds from a museum? Had Edwin paid the price for his crime? What became of the missing skins? In his search for answers, Johnson was catapulted into a years-long, worldwide investigation, infiltrating the underground network of fly-tiers and feather smugglers, and tracking down the thief and his suspected accomplices in a single-minded search for the missing birds. The gripping story of a bizarre and shocking crime, and one man's relentless pursuit of justice, The Feather Thief is also a fascinating exploration of obsession, and man's destructive instinct to harvest the beauty of nature. lessRecommended by Joe Kunkle, and 1 others. Joe KunkleI set aside an hour after the close on Wednesday's to read a book (only hour I get per week usually) outside by the firepit, and I really look forward to it...man I must be getting old :) "Feather Thief" current read, 180 pages in, it's incredibly awesome (Source)A True Story of Obsession, Revenge, and MurderAnn Rule | 4.14America's #1 true-crime writer fulfills a murder victim's desperate plea with this shattering New York Times bestseller."If anything ever happens to me...find Ann Rule and ask her to write my story." In perhaps the first true-crime book written at the victim's request, Ann Rule untangles a web of lies and brutality that culminated in the murder of Sheila Blackthorne Bellush—a woman Rule never met, but whose shocking story she now chronicles with compassion, exacting detail, and unvarnished candor. Although happily ensconced in a loving... moreAmerica's #1 true-crime writer fulfills a murder victim's desperate plea with this shattering New York Times bestseller."If anything ever happens to me...find Ann Rule and ask her to write my story." In perhaps the first true-crime book written at the victim's request, Ann Rule untangles a web of lies and brutality that culminated in the murder of Sheila Blackthorne Bellush—a woman Rule never met, but whose shocking story she now chronicles with compassion, exacting detail, and unvarnished candor. Although happily ensconced in a loving second marriage, and a new family of quadruplets, Sheila never truly escaped the vicious enslavement of her ex-husband, multi-millionaire Allen Blackthorne, a handsome charmer— and a violent, controlling sociopath who subjected Sheila to unthinkable abuse in their marriage, and terrorized her for a decade after their divorce. When Sheila was slain in her home, in the presence of her four toddlers, authorities raced to link the crime to Blackthorne, the man who vowed to monitor Sheila's every move in his obsessive quest for power and revenge. lessMurder, Fraud, and the Last Trial of Harper LeeScott Turow | 4.14The stunning story of an Alabama serial killer and the true-crime book that Harper Lee worked on obsessively in the years after To Kill a Mockingbird.Reverend Willie Maxwell was a rural preacher accused of murdering five of his family members for insurance money in the 1970s. With the help of a savvy lawyer, he escaped justice for years until a relative shot him dead at the funeral of his last victim. Despite hundreds of witnesses, Maxwell's murderer was acquitted–thanks to the same attorney who had previously defended the Reverend.Sitting in the audience during the... moreThe stunning story of an Alabama serial killer and the true-crime book that Harper Lee worked on obsessively in the years after To Kill a Mockingbird.Reverend Willie Maxwell was a rural preacher accused of murdering five of his family members for insurance money in the 1970s. With the help of a savvy lawyer, he escaped justice for years until a relative shot him dead at the funeral of his last victim. Despite hundreds of witnesses, Maxwell's murderer was acquitted–thanks to the same attorney who had previously defended the Reverend.Sitting in the audience during the vigilante's trial was Harper Lee, who had traveled from New York City to her native Alabama with the idea of writing her own In Cold Blood, the true-crime classic she had helped her friend Truman Capote research seventeen years earlier. Lee spent a year in town reporting, and many more working on her own version of the case.Now Casey Cep brings this story to life, from the shocking murders to the courtroom drama to the racial politics of the Deep South. lessAs a young man, Randall Woodfield had it all--a star athlete, good looks, and an award-winning student. Working in the swinging West Coast bar scene, he had more than his share of women. But he wanted more than just sex. An appetite for unspeakable violent acts led him to cruise the I-5 highway through California to Washington, leaving a trail of victims along the way. As the list of the dead grew, the police mobilized to stop a twisted killer who had 44 known deaths to his name. Praise for Ann Rule: "Vivid...Extraordinary...A page-turner!"-- "New York Times Book Review," for... moreAs a young man, Randall Woodfield had it all--a star athlete, good looks, and an award-winning student. Working in the swinging West Coast bar scene, he had more than his share of women. But he wanted more than just sex. An appetite for unspeakable violent acts led him to cruise the I-5 highway through California to Washington, leaving a trail of victims along the way. As the list of the dead grew, the police mobilized to stop a twisted killer who had 44 known deaths to his name. Praise for Ann Rule: "Vivid...Extraordinary...A page-turner!"-- "New York Times Book Review," for "Small Sacrifices" "Rule has an instinct for suspense, knowing just what information to leak to the reader and when."-- "Washington Post Book World," for "Small Sacrifices" "A shattering story...carefully investigated, written with compassion but also with professional objectivity."-- "Seattle Times," for "The Stranger Beside Me" less 'John Douglas is the FBI's pioneer and master of investigative profiling, and one of the most exciting figures in law enforcement I've had the privilege of knowing' Patricia Cornwell 'John Douglas knows more about serial killers than anybody in the world' Jonathan Demme, Director of The Silence of the Lambs The legendary FBI criminal profiler, number-one New York Times bestselling author, and inspiration for the hit Netflix show Mindhunter delves deep into the lives and crimes of four of the most... more 'John Douglas is the FBI's pioneer and master of investigative profiling, and one of the most exciting figures in law enforcement I've had the privilege of knowing' Patricia Cornwell 'John Douglas knows more about serial killers than anybody in the world' Jonathan Demme, Director of The Silence of the Lambs The legendary FBI criminal profiler, number-one New York Times bestselling author, and inspiration for the hit Netflix show Mindhunter delves deep into the lives and crimes of four of the most disturbing and complex predatory killers, offering never-before-revealed details about his profiling process, and divulging the strategies used to crack some of his most challenging cases. The FBI's pioneer of criminal profiling, former special agent John Douglas, has studied and interviewed many of America's most notorious killers – including Charles Manson, 'Son of Sam Killer' David Berkowitz and 'BTK Strangler' Dennis Rader. Twenty years after his famous memoir, the man who literally wrote the book on FBI criminal profiling opens his case files once again. In this riveting work of true crime, he spotlights four of the most diabolical criminals he's confronted, interviewed and learned from.A glimpse into the mind of a man who has pierced the heart of human darkness, The Killer Across the Table unlocks the ultimate mystery of depravity and the techniques and approaches that have countered evil in the name of justice. lessThe Greatest Espionage Story of the Cold WarBen Macintyre | 4.14The celebrated author of A Spy Among Friends and Rogue Heroes returns with his greatest spy story yet, a thrilling Cold War-era tale of Oleg Gordievsky, the Russian whose secret work helped hasten the collapse of the Soviet Union.If anyone could be considered a Russian counterpart to the infamous British double-agent Kim Philby, it was Oleg Gordievsky. The son of two KGB agents and the product of the best Soviet institutions, the savvy, sophisticated Gordievsky grew to see his nation's communism as both criminal and philistine. He took his first posting for... moreThe celebrated author of A Spy Among Friends and Rogue Heroes returns with his greatest spy story yet, a thrilling Cold War-era tale of Oleg Gordievsky, the Russian whose secret work helped hasten the collapse of the Soviet Union.If anyone could be considered a Russian counterpart to the infamous British double-agent Kim Philby, it was Oleg Gordievsky. The son of two KGB agents and the product of the best Soviet institutions, the savvy, sophisticated Gordievsky grew to see his nation's communism as both criminal and philistine. He took his first posting for Russian intelligence in 1968 and eventually became the Soviet Union's top man in London, but from 1973 on he was secretly working for MI6. For nearly a decade, as the Cold War reached its twilight, Gordievsky helped the West turn the tables on the KGB, exposing Russian spies and helping to foil countless intelligence plots, as the Soviet leadership grew increasingly paranoid at the United States's nuclear first-strike capabilities and brought the world closer to the brink of war. Desperate to keep the circle of trust close, MI6 never revealed Gordievsky's name to its counterparts in the CIA, which in turn grew obsessed with figuring out the identity of Britain's obviously top-level source. Their obsession ultimately doomed Gordievsky: the CIA officer assigned to identify him was none other than Aldrich Ames, the man who would become infamous for secretly spying for the Soviets. Unfolding the delicious three-way gamesmanship between America, Britain, and the Soviet Union, and culminating in the gripping cinematic beat-by-beat of Gordievsky's nail-biting escape from Moscow in 1985, Ben Macintyre's latest may be his best yet. Like the greatest novels of John le Carré, it brings readers deep into a world of treachery and betrayal, where the lines bleed between the personal and the professional, and one man's hatred of communism had the power to change the future of nations. lessRecommended by Casey Neistat, Isabel Hardman, Amrullah Saleh, and 5 others. Casey Neistatjust finished this yesterday. absolutely fantastic book. super recommend if you're into spycraft and espionage. bravo @BenMacintyre1 (Source)Isabel Hardman@holland_tom @BenMacintyre1 Oh it's a brilliant book isn't it. Another one I was sad to finish. (Source)Amrullah SalehI had a great conversation with Ambassador Micheal Lund Jeppesen of @DKinAfghanistan . On the sidelines of our rich conversation we spoke of the Spy & the Traitor a great book in which Denmark's intelligence features highly. Proud of our alliance & cooperation. (Source)The Deadly SeducerAnn Rule | 4.13From America's most celebrated true-crime writer comes the heartbreaking real-life drama of a doomed young woman hopelessly trapped in a web of sexual intrigue, political manipulation, and emotional deception by her charming and successful—but ultimately deadly—lover.The author of fifteen New York Times national bestsellers, Ann Rule, a former Seattle policewoman, has researched thousands of homicides and understands every facet of murder investigation. Now, in the most complex and shocking book of her long career, she delves into the motivation that drove a... moreFrom America's most celebrated true-crime writer comes the heartbreaking real-life drama of a doomed young woman hopelessly trapped in a web of sexual intrigue, political manipulation, and emotional deception by her charming and successful—but ultimately deadly—lover.The author of fifteen New York Times national bestsellers, Ann Rule, a former Seattle policewoman, has researched thousands of homicides and understands every facet of murder investigation. Now, in the most complex and shocking book of her long career, she delves into the motivation that drove a seemingly successful man to kill, and she explores heretofore unknown aspects of a fatal affair between a beautiful young woman who moved confidently in the heady world of the upper echelons of government and a widely admired millionaire attorney who was an immensely popular political figure. On June 27, 1996, thirty-year-old Anne Marie Fahey, who was the scheduling secretary for the governor of Delaware, had dinner with a man she had been having a secret affair with for more than two years. "Tommy" Capano, forty-seven, was perhaps the most politically powerful man in Wilmington. Son of a wealthy contractor, former state prosecutor, partner in a prestigious law firm, advisor to governors and mayors, Tom Capano had a soft-spoken and considerate manner that endeared him to many. Although recently estranged from his wife, he was a devoted father to his four beautiful young daughters, the trusted son of his widowed mother, and the backbone of his extended family. But sometime after 9:15 that night when Anne Marie and Tom left a Philadelphia restaurant, something terrible happened to Anne Marie. It would be forty-eight hours before her brothers and sisters realized that she had disappeared entirely. Ann Rule brilliantly traces the lives of both Fahey and Capano as she discloses the intimate details of their ill-fated bonding. A vulnerable, trusting woman becomes spellbound by a charming, duplicitous married man, and what begins as a seemingly unremarkable affair is slowly transformed into an obsessive, convoluted, and deadly relationship. Through her impeccable research, Rule peels away layer after layer of deception to reveal a man who lived a secret life for decades, a man so greedy that he would sacrifice anyone to gain what he desired. One of his many mistresses—all of whom were unknown to one another—was Deborah MacIntyre, an attractive and wealthy member of one of Wilmington's oldest families and an administrator of an elite private school. She, too, would become part of the mystery surrounding Anne Marie's disappearance. As three prominent families are destroyed to satisfy one man's jealous obsessions, this unfathomable tragedy becomes a tale that few would believe if it were presented as fiction. Shockingly, it is all true. Destined to become a classic, And Never Let Her Go is a riveting account of forbidden love and murder among the rich and powerful, and a chilling insight into the evil that sometimes hides behind even the most charming façade. lessOn the morning of April 29, 1986, a fire alarm sounded in the Los Angeles Public Library. As the moments passed, the patrons and staff who had been cleared out of the building realized this was not the usual fire alarm. As one fireman recounted, "Once that first stack got going, it was 'Goodbye, Charlie.'" The fire was disastrous: it reached 2000 degrees and burned for more than seven hours. By the time it was extinguished, it had consumed four hundred thousand books and damaged seven hundred thousand more. Investigators descended on the scene, but more than thirty years later, the mystery... moreOn the morning of April 29, 1986, a fire alarm sounded in the Los Angeles Public Library. As the moments passed, the patrons and staff who had been cleared out of the building realized this was not the usual fire alarm. As one fireman recounted, "Once that first stack got going, it was 'Goodbye, Charlie.'" The fire was disastrous: it reached 2000 degrees and burned for more than seven hours. By the time it was extinguished, it had consumed four hundred thousand books and damaged seven hundred thousand more. Investigators descended on the scene, but more than thirty years later, the mystery remains: Did someone purposefully set fire to the library—and if so, who? Weaving her lifelong love of books and reading into an investigation of the fire, award-winning New Yorker reporter and New York Times bestselling author Susan Orlean delivers a mesmerizing and uniquely compelling book that manages to tell the broader story of libraries and librarians in a way that has never been done before. In The Library Book, Orlean chronicles the LAPL fire and its aftermath to showcase the larger, crucial role that libraries play in our lives; delves into the evolution of libraries across the country and around the world, from their humble beginnings as a metropolitan charitable initiative to their current status as a cornerstone of national identity; brings each department of the library to vivid life through on-the-ground reporting; studies arson and attempts to burn a copy of a book herself; reflects on her own experiences in libraries; and reexamines the case of Harry Peak, the blond-haired actor long suspected of setting fire to the LAPL more than thirty years ago. Along the way, Orlean introduces us to an unforgettable cast of characters from libraries past and present—from Mary Foy, who in 1880 at eighteen years old was named the head of the Los Angeles Public Library at a time when men still dominated the role, to Dr. C.J.K. Jones, a pastor, citrus farmer, and polymath known as "The Human Encyclopedia" who roamed the library dispensing information; from Charles Lummis, a wildly eccentric journalist and adventurer who was determined to make the L.A. library one of the best in the world, to the current staff, who do heroic work every day to ensure that their institution remains a vital part of the city it serves. Brimming with her signature wit, insight, compassion, and talent for deep research, The Library Book is Susan Orlean's thrilling journey through the stacks that reveals how these beloved institutions provide much more than just books—and why they remain an essential part of the heart, mind, and soul of our country. It is also a master journalist's reminder that, perhaps especially in the digital era, they are more necessary than ever. lessRecommended by Mike Birbiglia, and 1 others. Mike BirbigliaThis is a must read book by @susanorlean. Obviously. Everyone has read it. But I'm catching up. This is one of the most captivating paragraphs I've read in a while. (Source)A Con Artist's MasqueradeTanya Thompso | 4.13When it was over, there were a lot of questions. The detectives were embarrassed but they still wanted answered, "How did a 15-year-old runaway successfully pose as a world traveled countess?" The newspapers turned it back on them, practically sneering, "How did she do it while under investigation by the FBI, DEA, and Interpol?" The Mafia had been demanding the same thing for six months, "What is your real name?" And the psychologists asked the question they always ask, "Why?" It's the why of it that will keep a girl in trouble. moreWhen it was over, there were a lot of questions. The detectives were embarrassed but they still wanted answered, "How did a 15-year-old runaway successfully pose as a world traveled countess?" The newspapers turned it back on them, practically sneering, "How did she do it while under investigation by the FBI, DEA, and Interpol?" The Mafia had been demanding the same thing for six months, "What is your real name?" And the psychologists asked the question they always ask, "Why?" It's the why of it that will keep a girl in trouble. Assuming Names is the true story of a young con artist. It's the tale of a runaway that assumed the title of Countess and then went on to fool the FBI, DEA, and Interpol—as well as a number of other celebrities and institutions—with an elaborate tale of world intrigue.A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR: Hello everyone. This is Tanya. You may find yourself reading my book and saying, "No, this did not happen." You may be inclined to say it is too far-fetched and, quite frankly, impossible. I have provided evidence at my website that what I write is the truth. I mention it at the front of the book but it may be easy to overlook, so I am reiterating here.At my website are copies of the newspaper and magazine articles mentioned in the book. The articles are from the Austin American Statesman, The Dallas Morning News, and Woman's World Magazine. They are all nationally recognized media for news. Previous reviewers were concerned I may have gone to Photoshop to create them, and while my book does paint me as the sort that would do such a thing, the reality is that those media institutions would sue me into submission before the cache could be cleared. In the end, you may not believe me, but you can surely believe what the papers wrote. lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. Living in the Aftermath of TragedySue Klebold, Andrew Solomon, et al | 4.13On April 20, 1999, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold walked into Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Over the course of minutes, they would kill twelve students and a teacher and wound twenty-four others before taking their own lives.   For the last sixteen years, Sue Klebold, Dylan's mother, has lived with the indescribable grief and shame of that day. How could her child, the promising young man she had loved and raised, be responsible for such horror? And how, as his mother, had she not known something was wrong? Were there subtle signs she had missed? What, if anything,... moreOn April 20, 1999, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold walked into Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Over the course of minutes, they would kill twelve students and a teacher and wound twenty-four others before taking their own lives.   For the last sixteen years, Sue Klebold, Dylan's mother, has lived with the indescribable grief and shame of that day. How could her child, the promising young man she had loved and raised, be responsible for such horror? And how, as his mother, had she not known something was wrong? Were there subtle signs she had missed? What, if anything, could she have done differently?   These are questions that Klebold has grappled with every day since the Columbine tragedy. In A Mother's Reckoning, she chronicles with unflinching honesty her journey as a mother trying to come to terms

with the incomprehensible. In the hope that the insights and understanding she has gained may help other families recognize when a child is in distress, she tells her story in full, drawing upon her personal journals, the videos and writings that Dylan left behind, and on countless interviews with mental health experts.   Filled with hard-won wisdom and compassion, A Mother's Reckoning is a powerful and haunting book that sheds light on one of the most pressing issues of our time. And with fresh wounds from the recent Newtown and Charleston shootings, never has the need for understanding been more urgent. All author profits from the book will be donated to research and to charitable organizations focusing on mental health issues. lessThe unbelievable true story of the man who built a billion-dollar online drug empire from his bedroom—and almost got away with it. In 2011, a twenty-six-year-old libertarian programmer named Ross Ulbricht launched the ultimate free market: the Silk Road, a clandestine Web site hosted on the Dark Web where anyone could trade anything—drugs, hacking software, forged passports, counterfeit cash, poisons—free of the government's watchful eye. It wasn't long before the media got wind of the new Web site where anyone—not just teenagers and weed dealers but terrorists... moreThe unbelievable true story of the man who built a billion-dollar online drug empire from his bedroom—and almost got away with it. In 2011, a twenty-six-year-old libertarian programmer named Ross Ulbricht launched the ultimate free market: the Silk Road, a clandestine Web site hosted on the Dark Web where anyone could trade anything—drugs, hacking software, forged passports, counterfeit cash, poisons—free of the government's watchful eye. It wasn't long before the media got wind of the new Web site where anyone—not just teenagers and weed dealers but terrorists and black hat hackers—could buy and sell contraband detection-free. Spurred by a public outcry, the federal government launched an epic two-year manhunt for the site's elusive proprietor, with no leads, no witnesses, and no clear jurisdiction. All the investigators knew was that whoever was running the site called himself the Dread Pirate Roberts. The Silk Road quickly ballooned into $1.2 billion enterprise, and Ross embraced his new role as kingpin. He enlisted a loyal crew of allies in high and low places, all as addicted to the danger and thrill of running an illegal marketplace as their customers were to the heroin they sold. Through his network he got wind of the target on his back and took drastic steps to protect himself—including ordering a hit on a former employee. As Ross made plans to disappear forever, the Feds raced against the clock to catch a man they weren't sure even existed, searching for a needle in the haystack of the global Internet.Drawing on exclusive access to key players and two billion digital words and images Ross left behind, Vanity Fair correspondent and New York Times bestselling author Nick Bilton offers a tale filled with twists and turns, lucky breaks and unbelievable close calls. It's a story of the boy next door's ambition gone criminal, spurred on by the clash between the new world of libertarian-leaning, anonymous, decentralized Web advocates and the old world of government control, order, and the rule of law. Filled with unforgettable characters and capped by an astonishing climax, American Kingpin might be dismissed as too outrageous for fiction. But it's all too real. lessRecommended by Casey Neistat, and 1 others. Casey NeistatIt is unbelievably riveting. It does that thing where at the end of every chapter it leaves you just enough we're like "aah!" and you have to read the first paragraph of the next chapter and then before you know it is a downward spiral and you end up finishing this book. Took me four days to get through this. (Source)The Incredible True Story of One Addict's Double LifeTiffany Jenkins | 4.13A few years ago, Tiffany Jenkins was detoxing behind bars at a Florida prison, incarcerated on 20 felony charges. Now, she's clean and sober, a married mother of three. As she found her way in her new life, she started sharing on social media as an outlet for her depression and anxiety. She struck a chord, several of her videos went viral (one with 46million views), and in the past year her following exploded from a few hundred thousand to more than 3 million.The memoir opens in the Florida women's prison where Tiffany was incarcerated for 180 days. The memoir flashes back in time... moreA few years ago, Tiffany Jenkins was detoxing behind bars at a Florida prison, incarcerated on 20 felony charges. Now, she's clean and sober, a married mother of three. As she found her way in her new life, she started sharing on social media as an outlet for her depression and anxiety. She struck a chord, several of her videos went viral (one with 46million views), and in the past year her following exploded from a few hundred thousand to more than 3 million.The memoir opens in the Florida women's prison where Tiffany was incarcerated for 180 days. The memoir flashes back in time to the events that led to Tiffany's imprisonment (during the time of her active addiction, Tiffany was dating and living with a cop), and moves forward to her eventual sobriety. lessThe Untold Story of the Golden State Killer InvestigationPaul Holes | 4.12The Golden State Killer. The East Area Rapist. The Original Night Stalker. The Visalia Ransacker.The monster who preyed on Californians from 1976 to 1986 was known by many aliases. And while numerous police sketches tried to capture his often-masked visage, the Golden State Killer spent more than 40 years not only faceless, but nameless.For his victims, for their families and for the investigators tasked with finding him, the senselessness and brutality of the Golden State Killer's acts were matched only by the powerlessness they felt at failing to uncover his... moreThe Golden State Killer. The East Area Rapist. The Original Night Stalker. The Visalia Ransacker.The monster who preyed on Californians from 1976 to 1986 was known by many aliases. And while numerous police sketches tried to capture his often-masked visage, the Golden State Killer spent more than 40 years not only faceless, but nameless.For his victims, for their families and for the investigators tasked with finding him, the senselessness and brutality of the Golden State Killer's acts were matched only by the powerlessness they felt at failing to uncover his identity. To be sure, the chances of obtaining closure—or any form of justice—after so many years were slim to none, at best.Then, on April 24, 2018, authorities arrested 72-year-old Joseph James DeAngelo at his home in Citrus Heights, Calif., based on DNA evidence linked to the crimes. After a decades-long hunt, a suspect was behind bars. Could it be that evil finally had a name? Delivering all-new details about the investigation and a stunning final act to the events of Michelle McNamara's haunting bestseller, I'll Be Gone in the Dark, this is the true story of how the suspected Golden State Killer was captured, as told, first-hand, by those closest to the case:Paul Holes—the forensic criminologist and retired Costa County detective who spent 20 years trying to crack the Golden State Killer case, and finally did.Jim Clemente (Host)—a retired FBI profiler and former New York City prosecutor who has investigated some of the highest profile criminal cases in U.S. history, including the Unabomber.Please note: This work contains descriptions of violent crime and sexual assault and may not be suitable for all listeners. lessYou only think you know this story. In 1991, Jeffrey Dahmer — the most notorious serial killer since Jack the Ripper — seared himself into the American consciousness. To the public, Dahmer was a monster who committed unthinkable atrocities. To Derf Backderf, "Jeff" was a much more complex figure: a high school friend with whom he had shared classrooms, hallways, and car rides. In My Friend Dahmer, a haunting and original graphic novel, writer-artist Backderf creates a surprisingly sympathetic portrait of a disturbed young man struggling against the morbid urges... moreYou only think you know this story. In 1991, Jeffrey Dahmer — the most notorious serial killer since Jack the Ripper — seared himself into the American consciousness. To the public, Dahmer was a monster who committed unthinkable atrocities. To Derf Backderf, "Jeff" was a much more complex figure: a high school friend with whom he had shared classrooms, hallways, and car rides. In My Friend Dahmer, a haunting and original graphic novel, writer-artist Backderf creates a surprisingly sympathetic portrait of a disturbed young man struggling against the morbid urges emanating from the deep recesses of his psyche — a shy kid, a teenage alcoholic, and a goofball who never quite fit in with his classmates. With profound insight, what emerges is a Jeffrey Dahmer that few ever really knew, and one readers will never forget. lessA True Story of Murder and BetrayalAnn Rule | 4.11Jenn Corbin, a lovely, slim, brown-eyed blonde, appeared to have it all: two dear little boys, a posh home in one of the upscale suburbs of Atlanta, expensive cars, a plush houseboat, and a husband -- Dr. Bart Corbin, a successful dentist -- who was tall, handsome, and brilliant. But gradually their seemingly idyllic life together began to crumble. There was talk of seeing a marriage counselor. Bart was distraught; Jenn seemed disenchanted. She needed to reach out to someone she could confide in -- beyond her mother and her sisters. Then, just a few weeks before Christmas 2004, Jenn was found... moreJenn Corbin, a lovely, slim, brown-eyed blonde, appeared to have it all: two dear little boys, a posh home in one of the upscale suburbs of Atlanta, expensive cars, a plush houseboat, and a husband -- Dr. Bart Corbin, a successful dentist -- who was tall, handsome, and brilliant. But gradually their seemingly idyllic life together began to crumble. There was talk of seeing a marriage counselor. Bart was distraught; Jenn seemed disenchanted. She needed to reach out to someone she could confide in -- beyond her mother and her sisters. Then, just a few weeks before Christmas 2004, Jenn was found dead with a bullet in her head, a revolver beside her. From the position of the body her death appeared to be a suicide. But Gwinnett County detective Marcus Head was not totally convinced, nor was Jenn's family, who could not believe she would take her own life.And how was this death related to another apparent suicide fourteen years earlier -- that of Dorothy "Dolly" Hearn, a spectacularly beautiful dental student? A star athlete and homecoming queen in high school, Dolly later dated Bart Corbin in dental school. Was there a connection, or was the answer to be found in a secret -- even dangerous -- relationship Jenn Corbin was having outside her marriage? For "Too Late to Say Goodbye," Ann Rule has interviewed virtually everyone in any way related to the story -- the victims' families, police investigators, prosecutors, and sources from Georgia to Australia -- to uncover the truth behind the headlines of these two sensational deaths. What emerges is an incredible tale of jealous rage; of stunning circumstantial and physical evidence that runs from the steamy to the macabre toalmost-unheard-of forensic techniques; and of a tragic irony -- a fateful discovery that motivated the killing. The definitive unraveling of one of the strangest murder investigations of our time, "Too Late to Say Goodbye" is perhaps the finest achievement of a truly great writer's career. lessIn what is arguably his greatest work, America's most heroically ambitious writer follows the short, blighted career of Gary Gilmore, an intractably violent product of America's prisons who became notorious for two reasons: first, for robbing two men in 1976, then killing them in cold blood; and, second, after being tried and convicted, for insisting on dying for his crime. To do so, he had to fight a system that seemed paradoxically intent on keeping him alive long after it had sentenced him to death.Norman Mailer tells Gilmore's story--and those of the men and women caught up in his... moreIn what is arguably his greatest work, America's most heroically ambitious writer follows the short, blighted career of Gary Gilmore, an intractably violent product of America's prisons who became notorious for two reasons: first, for robbing two men in 1976, then killing them in cold blood; and, second, after being tried and convicted, for insisting on dying for his crime. To do so, he had to fight a system that seemed paradoxically intent on keeping him alive long after it had sentenced him to death.Norman Mailer tells Gilmore's story--and those of the men and women caught up in his procession toward the firing squad--with implacable authority, steely compassion, and a restraint that evokes the parched landscapes and stern theology of Gilmore's Utah. The Executioner's Song is a trip down the wrong side of the tracks to the deepest sources of American loneliness and violence. It is a towering achievement--impossible to put down, impossible to forget.Winner of the 1980 Pulitzer Prize lessWAS SHE A SWEET SOUTHERN CHARMER?OR A COLD-BLOODED KILLER?For their wedding portrait, petite Pat Taylor and handsome Tom Allanson posed as Rhett and Scarlett. Both came from fine Southern families, and dreamed of the Tara-like plantation where they would grow roses, raise horses, and move in the genteel circles of Atlanta society. Less than two months later, their dream exploded in terror and murder: their beautiful home mysteriously burned to the ground and Tom was convicted of the brutal slaying of his mother and father.Pat's only brother had died in a... moreWAS SHE A SWEET SOUTHERN CHARMER?OR A COLD-BLOODED KILLER?For their wedding portrait, petite Pat Taylor and handsome Tom Allanson posed as Rhett and Scarlett. Both came from fine Southern families, and dreamed of the Tara-like plantation where they would grow roses, raise horses, and move in the genteel circles of Atlanta society. Less than two months later, their dream exploded in terror and murder: their beautiful home mysteriously burned to the ground and Tom was convicted of the brutal slaying of his mother and father.Pat's only brother had died in a puzzling suicide, her grandparents-in-law were poisoned with arsenic, and no one—from her wealthy employers to her own children—was safe when Pat Allanson didn't get her way. It took Georgia lawmen more than two decades to stop her for good—if indeed they have.In this fascinating account, Ann Rule delivers a tour de force: a whirlwind of misguided love, denial, guilt, and passions out of control; a series of brilliantly manipulated crimes; the bizarre and horrifying tale of two families brought to ruin; and, at the center of it all, the heartless, supremely selfish sociopath whose evil hid behind soft words and gentle manners, but who destroyed—without mercy—those who loved her. lessMurder Was the Least of His Crimes...The truth behind the twisted crimes that inspired the films Psycho, The Texas Chain Saw Massacre, and The Silence of the Lambs... From Harold Schechter, "America's principle chronicler of its greatest psychopathic killers" (The Boston Book Review), comes the definitive account of Ed Gein, whose ghoulish crimes stunned an unsuspecting nation.The year is 1957. Photographs would show him across the country: a slight, Midwestern man with a twisted little smile, a man who had lived for ten years... moreMurder Was the Least of His Crimes...The truth behind the twisted crimes that inspired the films Psycho, The Texas Chain Saw Massacre, and The Silence of the Lambs... From Harold Schechter, "America's principle chronicler of its greatest psychopathic killers" (The Boston Book Review), comes the definitive account of Ed Gein, whose ghoulish crimes stunned an unsuspecting nation.The year is 1957. Photographs would show him across the country: a slight, Midwestern man with a twisted little smile, a man who had lived for ten years in his own world of murder and depravity.Here is the grisly true story of Ed Gein, the killer whose fiendish fantasies inspired Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho"—the mild-mannered farmhand bound to his domineering mother, driven into a series of gruesome and bizarre acts beyond all imagining. In chilling detail, Deviant explores the incredible career of one of the most twisted madmen in the annals of American crime—and how he turned a small Wisconsin farmhouse into his own private playground of ghoulishness and blood.From the Heartland of America comes a true story more horrifying than any movie or novel...Harold Schechter's acclaimed true-crime chronicle...DEVIANT lessAs seen on the Oxygen mini-series The Disappearance of Maura MurrayWhen an eleven-year-old James Renner fell in love with Amy Mihaljevic, the missing girl seen on posters all over his neighborhood, it was the beginning of a lifelong obsession with true crime. That obsession led James to a successful career as an investigative journalist. It also gave him PTSD. In 2011, James began researching the strange disappearance of Maura Murray, a UMass student who went missing after wrecking her car in rural New Hampshire in 2004. Over the course of his investigation, he... moreAs seen on the Oxygen mini-series The Disappearance of Maura MurrayWhen an eleven-year-old James Renner fell in love with Amy Mihaljevic, the missing girl seen on posters all over his neighborhood, it was the beginning of a lifelong obsession with true crime. That obsession led James to a successful career as an investigative journalist. It also gave him PTSD. In 2011, James began researching the strange disappearance of Maura Murray, a UMass student who went missing after wrecking her car in rural New Hampshire in 2004. Over the course of his investigation, he uncovers numerous important and shocking new clues about what may have happened to Maura, but also finds himself in increasingly dangerous situations with little regard for his own well-being. As his quest to find Maura deepens, the case starts taking a toll on his personal life, which begins to spiral out of control. The result is an absorbing dual investigation of a complicated case that has eluded authorities for more than a decade and a journalist's own complicated true-crime addiction. lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. There were dozens of books about Watergate, but only All the President's Men gave readers the full story, with all the drama and nuance and exclusive reporting. And thirty years later, if you're going to read only one book on Watergate, that's still the one. Today, Enron is the biggest business story of our time, and Fortune senior writers Bethany McLean and Peter Elkind are the new Woodward and Bernstein.Remarkably, it was just two years ago that Enron was thought to epitomize a great New Economy company, with its skyrocketing profits and share price. But that was... moreThere were dozens of books about Watergate, but only All the President's Men gave readers the full story, with all the drama and nuance and exclusive reporting. And thirty years later, if you're going to read only one book on Watergate, that's still the one. Today, Enron is the biggest business story of our time, and Fortune senior writers Bethany McLean and Peter Elkind are the new Woodward and Bernstein.Remarkably, it was just two years ago that Enron was thought to epitomize a great New Economy company, with its skyrocketing profits and share price. But that was before Fortune published an article by McLean that asked a seemingly innocent question: How exactly does Enron make money? From that point on, Enron's house of cards began to crumble. Now, McLean and Elkind have investigated much deeper, to offer the definitive book about the Enron scandal and the fascinating people behind it.Meticulously researched and character driven, Smartest Guys in the Room takes the reader deep into Enron's past—and behind the closed doors of private meetings. Drawing on a wide range of unique sources, the book follows Enron's rise from obscurity to the top of the business world to its disastrous demise. It reveals as never before major characters such as Ken Lay, Jeff Skilling, and Andy Fastow, as well as lesser known players like Cliff Baxter and Rebecca Mark. Smartest Guys in the Room is a story of greed, arrogance, and deceit—a microcosm of all that is wrong with American business today. Above all, it's a fascinating human drama that will prove to be the authoritative account of the Enron scandal. lessRecommended by Warren Buffett, and 1 others. Warren BuffettWell-reported and well-written. (Source)Love, Arson, and Life in a Vanishing LandMonica Hesse | 4.09Shocked by a five-month arson spree that left rural Virginia reeling, Washington Post reporter Monica Hesse drove down to Accomack County to cover the trial of Charlie Smith, who pled guilty to sixty-seven counts of arson. But Charlie wasn't lighting fires alone: he had an accomplice, his girlfriend Tonya Bundick. Through her depiction of the dangerous shift that happened in their passionate relationship, Hesse brilliantly brings to life the once-thriving coastal community and its distressed inhabitants, who had already been decimated by a punishing economy before they were terrified by a... moreShocked by a five-month arson spree that left rural Virginia reeling, Washington Post reporter Monica Hesse drove down to Accomack County to cover the trial of Charlie Smith, who pled guilty to sixty-seven counts of arson. But Charlie wasn't lighting fires alone: he had an accomplice, his girlfriend Tonya Bundick. Through her depiction of the dangerous shift that happened in their passionate relationship, Hesse brilliantly brings to life the once-thriving coastal community and its distressed inhabitants, who had already been decimated by a punishing economy before they were terrified by a string of fires they could not explain. Incorporating this drama into the long-overlooked history of arson in the United States, American Fire re-creates the anguished nights that this quiet county spent lit up in flames, mesmerizingly evoking a microcosm of rural America - a land half gutted before the fires even began. less A violent ex-con forces his son to commit crimes in this riveting new memoir Growing up on the Navajo Indian Reservation, David Crow and his three siblings idolized their dad. Tall, strong, smart, and brave, the self-taught Cherokee regaled his family with stories of his World War II feats. But as time passed, David discovered the other side of Thurston Crow, the ex-con with his own code of ethics that justified cruelty, violence, lies—even murder.A shrewd con artist with a genius IQ, Thurston intimidated David with beatings to coerce him into... more A violent ex-con forces his son to commit crimes in this riveting new memoir Growing up on the Navajo Indian Reservation, David Crow and his three siblings idolized their dad. Tall, strong, smart, and brave, the self-taught Cherokee regaled his family with stories of his World War II feats. But as time passed, David discovered the other side of Thurston Crow, the ex-con with his own code of ethics that justified cruelty, violence, lies—even murder.A shrewd con artist with a genius IQ, Thurston intimidated David with beatings to coerce him into doing his criminal bidding. David's mom, too mentally ill to care for her children, couldn't protect him. One day, Thurston packed up the house and took the kids, leaving her with nothing. Soon he remarried, and David learned that his stepmother was just as vicious and abusive as his father.Through sheer determination, and with the help of a few angels along the way, David managed to get into college and achieve professional success. When he finally found the courage to stop helping his father with his criminal activities, he unwittingly triggered a plot of revenge that would force him into a showdown with Thurston Crow. With lives at stake, including his own, David would have only twenty-four hours to outsmart his father—the brilliant, psychotic man who bragged that the three years he spent in the notorious San Quentin State Prison had been the easiest time of his life.The Pale-Faced Lie is a searing, raw, palpable memoir that reminds us what an important role our parents play in our lives. Most of all, it's an inspirational story about the power of forgiveness and the ability of the human spirit to rise above adversity, no matter the cost. lessIn If I Can't Have You, bestselling author Gregg Olsen and co-author Rebecca Morris investigate one of the 21st Century's most puzzling disappearances and how it resulted in the murder of two children by their father.Every once in a great while a genuine murder mystery unfolds before the eyes of the American public. The tragic story of Susan Powell and her murdered boys, Charlie and Braden, is the only case that rivals the Jon Benet Ramsey saga in the annals of true crime. When the pretty, blonde Utah mother went missing in December of 2009 the media was swept... moreIn If I Can't Have You, bestselling author Gregg Olsen and co-author Rebecca Morris investigate one of the 21st Century's most puzzling disappearances and how it resulted in the murder of two children by their father.Every once in a great while a genuine murder mystery unfolds before the eyes of the American public. The tragic story of Susan Powell and her murdered boys, Charlie and Braden, is the only case that rivals the Jon Benet Ramsey saga in the annals of true crime. When the pretty, blonde Utah mother went missing in December of 2009 the media was swept up in the story – with lenses and microphones trained on Susan's husband, Josh. He said he had no idea what happened to his young wife, and that he and the boys had been camping in the middle of a snowstorm.Over the next three years bombshell by bombshell, the story would reveal more shocking secrets. Josh's father, Steve, who was sexually obsessed with Susan, would ultimately be convicted of unspeakable perversion. Josh's brother, Michael, would commit suicide. And in the most stunning event of them all, Josh Powell would murder his two little boys and kill himself with brutality beyond belief. lessT. Christian Miller and Ken Armstrong | 4.08Soon to be the Netflix Limited Series Unbelievable, starring Toni Collette, Merritt Wever, and Kaitlyn Dever • Two Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists tell the riveting true crime story of a teenager charged with lying about having been raped—and the detectives who followed a winding path to arrive at the truth.On August 11, 2008, eighteen-year-old Marie reported that a masked man broke into her apartment near Seattle, Washington, and raped her. Within days police and even those closest to Marie became suspicious of her story. The police swiftly pivoted and began... moreSoon to be the Netflix Limited Series Unbelievable, starring Toni Collette, Merritt Wever, and Kaitlyn Dever • Two Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists tell the riveting true crime story of a teenager charged with lying about having been raped—and the detectives who followed a winding path to arrive at the truth.On August 11, 2008, eighteen-year-old Marie reported that a masked man broke into her apartment near Seattle, Washington, and raped her. Within days police and even those closest to Marie became suspicious of her story. The police swiftly pivoted and began investigating Marie. Confronted with inconsistencies in her story and the doubts of others, Marie broke down and said her story was a lie--a bid for attention. Police charged Marie with false reporting, and she was branded a liar.More than two years later, Colorado detective Stacy Galbraith was assigned to investigate a case of sexual assault. Describing the crime to her husband that night, Galbraith learned that the case bore an eerie resemblance to a rape that had taken place months earlier in a nearby town. She joined forces with the detective on that case, Edna Hendershot, and the two soon discovered they were dealing with a serial rapist: a man who photographed his victims, threatening to release the images online, and whose calculated steps to erase all physical evidence suggested he might be a soldier or a cop. Through meticulous police work the detectives would eventually connect the rapist to other attacks in Colorado--and beyond.Based on investigative files and extensive interviews with the principals, Unbelievable is a serpentine tale of doubt, lies, and a hunt for justice, unveiling the disturbing truth of how sexual assault is investigated today--and the long history of skepticism toward rape victims. Previously published as A False Report lessA True Story of Murder in AmericaJill Leovy | 4.08On a warm spring evening in South Los Angeles, a young man was shot and killed on a sidewalk minutes away from his home, one of hundreds of young men slain in LA every year. His assailant ran down the street, jumped into an SUV, and vanished, hoping to join the vast majority of killers in American cities who are never arrested for their crimes. But as soon as the case was assigned to Detective John Skaggs, the odds shifted. Here is the kaleidoscopic story of the quintessential American murder--one young black man slaying another--and a determined crew of detectives whose creed was to pursue... moreOn a warm spring evening in South Los Angeles, a young man was shot and killed on a sidewalk minutes away from his home, one of hundreds of young men slain in LA every year. His assailant ran down the street, jumped into an SUV, and vanished, hoping to join the vast majority of killers in American cities who are never arrested for their crimes. But as soon as the case was assigned to Detective John Skaggs, the odds shifted. Here is the kaleidoscopic story of the quintessential American murder--one young black man slaying another--and a determined crew of detectives whose creed was to pursue justice at all costs for its forgotten victims. Ghettoside is a fast-paced narrative of a devastating crime, an intimate portrait of detectives and a community bonded in tragedy, and a surprising new lens into the great subject of murder in America--why it happens and how the plague of killings might yet be stopped. lessAn epic true-tale of hubris and greed from two Pulitzer-finalist Wall Street Journal reporters, Billion Dollar Whale reveals how a young social climber pulled off one of the biggest financial heists in history--right under the nose of the global financial industry--exposing the shocking secret nexus of elite wealth, banking, Hollywood, and politics. The dust had yet to settle on the global financial crisis in 2009 when an unlikely Wharton grad was setting in motion a fraud of unprecedented gall and magnitude--one that would come to symbolize the next great... moreAn epic true-tale of hubris and greed from two Pulitzer-finalist Wall Street Journal reporters, Billion Dollar Whale reveals how a young social climber pulled off one of the biggest financial heists in history--right under the nose of the global financial industry--exposing the shocking secret nexus of elite wealth, banking, Hollywood, and politics. The dust had yet to settle on the global financial crisis in 2009 when an unlikely Wharton grad was setting in motion a fraud of unprecedented gall and magnitude--one that would come to symbolize the next great threat to the global financial system. Billion Dollar Whale will become a classic, harrowing parable about the financial world in the twenty-first century. lessRecommended by Bill Gates, Alexis Ohanian, Morgan Housel, and 5 others. Bill GatesAs Bad Blood is to biotech, Billion Dollar Whale is to international finance... a wonderful read... Thrilling. (Source)Alexis OhanianAn incredible story.... If you need some billionaires to despise--look no further than these charlatans. (Source)Morgan HouselThis book on the 1MDB scandal was great, hard to put down. Low sophistication + huge brazenness is a powerful fraud combo. (Source)This is the frighteningly true story of two young cops and two young robbers whose separate destinies fatally cross one March night in a bizarre execution in a deserted Los Angeles field. moreThis is the frighteningly true story of two young cops and two young robbers whose separate destinies fatally cross one March night in a bizarre execution in a deserted Los Angeles field. lessThe People v. O.J. SimpsonJeffrey Toobin | 4.07A behind-the-scenes look at the crime of the century and the legal proceedings that followed sheds new light in the arrest and trial of O.J. Simpson, the evidence in the case, and the role of the prosecution and defense. moreA behind-the-scenes look at the crime of the century and the legal proceedings that followed sheds new light in the arrest and trial of O.J. Simpson, the evidence in the case, and the role of the prosecution and defense. lessSerial told Only Part of the Story...In early 2000, Adnan Syed was convicted and sentenced to life plus thirty years for the murder of his ex-girlfriend Hae Min Lee, a high school senior in Baltimore, Maryland. Syed has maintained his innocence, and Rabia Chaudry, a family friend, has always believed him. By 2013, after almost all appeals had been exhausted, Rabia contacted Sarah Koenig, a producer at This American Life, in hopes of finding a journalist who could shed light on Adnan's story. In 2014, Koenig's investigation turned into Serial, a Peabody... moreSerial told Only Part of the Story...In early 2000, Adnan Syed was convicted and sentenced to life plus thirty years for the murder of his ex-girlfriend Hae Min Lee, a high school senior in Baltimore, Maryland. Syed has maintained his innocence, and Rabia Chaudry, a family friend, has always believed him. By 2013, after almost all appeals had been exhausted, Rabia contacted Sarah Koenig, a producer at This American Life, in hopes of finding a journalist who could shed light on Adnan's story. In 2014, Koenig's investigation turned into Serial, a Peabody Award-winning podcast with more than 500 million international listenersBut Serial did not tell the whole story. In this compelling narrative, Rabia Chaudry presents new key evidence that she maintains dismantles the State's case: a potential new suspect, forensics indicating Hae was killed and kept somewhere for almost half a day, and documentation withheld by the State that destroys the cell phone evidence -- among many other points -- and she shows how fans of Serial joined a crowd-sourced investigation into a case riddled with errors and strange twists. Adnan's Story also shares Adnan's life in prison, and weaves in his personal reflections, including never-before-seen letters. Chaudry, who is committed to exonerating Adnan, makes it clear that justice is yet to be achieved in this much examined case. lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. Jack the Ripper - Case ClosedPatricia Cornwell | 4.06Now updated with new material that brings the killer's picture into clearer focus.In the fall of 1888, all of London was held in the grip of unspeakable terror. An elusive madman calling himself Jack the Ripper was brutally butchering women in the slums of London's East End. Police seemed powerless to stop the killer, who delighted in taunting them and whose crimes were clearly escalating in violence from victim to victim. And then the Ripper's violent spree seemingly ended as abruptly as it had begun. He had struck out of nowhere and then vanished from the scene. ... moreNow updated with new material that brings the killer's picture into clearer focus.In the fall of 1888, all of London was held in the grip of unspeakable terror. An elusive madman calling himself Jack the Ripper was brutally butchering women in the slums of London's East End. Police seemed powerless to stop the killer, who delighted in taunting them and whose crimes were clearly escalating in violence from victim to victim. And then the Ripper's violent spree seemingly ended as abruptly as it had begun. He had struck out of nowhere and then vanished from the scene. Decades passed, then fifty years, then a hundred, and the Ripper's bloody sexual crimes became anemic and impotent fodder for puzzles, mystery weekends, crime conventions, and so-called "Ripper Walks" that end with pints of ale in the pubs of Whitechapel. But to number-one New York Times bestselling novelist Patricia Cornwell, the Ripper murders are not cute little mysteries to be transformed into parlor games or movies but rather a series of terrible crimes that no one should get away with, even after death. Now Cornwell applies her trademark skills for meticulous research and scientific expertise to dig deeper into the Ripper case than any detective before her—and reveal the true identity of this fabled Victorian killer.In Portrait of a Killer: Jack the Ripper, Case Closed, Cornwell combines the rigorous discipline of twenty-first century police investigation with forensic techniques undreamed of during the late Victorian era to solve one of the most infamous and difficult serial murder cases in history. Drawing on unparalleled access to original Ripper evidence, documents, and records, as well as archival, academic, and law-enforcement resources, FBI profilers, and top forensic scientists, Cornwell reveals that Jack the Ripper was none other than a respected painter of his day, an artist now collected by some of the world's finest museums: Walter Richard Sickert.It has been said of Cornwell that no one depicts the human capability for evil better than she.   Adding layer after layer of circumstantial evidence to the physical evidence discovered by modern forensic science and expert minds, Cornwell shows that Sickert, who died peacefully in his bed in 1942, at the age of 81, was not only one of Great Britain's greatest painters but also a serial killer, a damaged diabolical man driven by megalomania and hate. She exposes Sickert as the author of the infamous Ripper letters that were written to the Metropolitan Police and the press. Her detailed analysis of his paintings shows that his art continually depicted his horrific mutilation of his victims, and her examination of this man's birth defects, the consequent genital surgical interventions, and their effects on his upbringing present a casebook example of how a psychopathic killer is created.New information and startling revelations detailed in Portrait of a Killer include:- How a year-long battery of more than 100 DNA tests—on samples drawn by Cornwell's forensics team in September 2001 from original Ripper letters and Sickert documents—yielded the first shadows of the 75- to 114 year-old genetic evid... lessThe #1 New York Times Bestseller and inspirational memoir by Michelle Knight, whose survival story gripped the world and continues to inspire and offer hope. Michelle was a young single mother when she was kidnapped by a local school bus driver named Ariel Castro. For more than a decade afterward, she endured unimaginable torture at the hand of her abductor. In 2003 Amanda Berry joined her in captivity, followed by Gina DeJesus in 2004. Their escape on May 6, 2013, made headlines around the world.Barely out of her own tumultuous childhood, Michelle was... moreThe #1 New York Times Bestseller and inspirational memoir by Michelle Knight, whose survival story gripped the world and continues to inspire and offer hope. Michelle was a young single mother when she was kidnapped by a local school bus driver named Ariel Castro. For more than a decade afterward, she endured unimaginable torture at the hand of her abductor. In 2003 Amanda Berry joined her in captivity, followed by Gina DeJesus in 2004. Their escape on May 6, 2013, made headlines around the world.Barely out of her own tumultuous childhood, Michelle was estranged from her family and fighting for custody of her young son when she disappeared. Local police believed she had run away, so they removed her from the missing persons lists fifteen months after she vanished. Castro tormented her with these facts, reminding her that no one was looking for her, that the outside world had forgotten her. But Michelle would not be broken.In Finding Me, Michelle will reveal the heartbreaking details of her story, including the thoughts and prayers that helped her find courage to endure her unimaginable circumstances and now build a life worth living. By sharing both her past and her efforts to create a future, Michelle becomes a voice for the voiceless and a powerful symbol of hope for the thousands of children and young adults who go missing every year. lessThe Life and Times of Charles MansonJeff Guinn | 4.06Based on new interviews with previously undiscovered relatives and filled with revelations and unpublished photographs, this is the most authoritative account of the life of Charles Manson. The most authoritative account ever written of how an ordinary juvenile delinquent named Charles Manson became the notorious murderer whose crimes still shock and horrify us today. More than forty years ago Charles Manson and his mostly female commune killed nine people, among them the pregnant actress Sharon Tate. It was the culmination of a criminal career that author Jeff Guinn... moreBased on new interviews with previously undiscovered relatives and filled with revelations and unpublished photographs, this is the most authoritative account of the life of Charles Manson. The most authoritative account ever written of how an ordinary juvenile delinquent named Charles Manson became the notorious murderer whose crimes still shock and horrify us today. More than forty years ago Charles Manson and his mostly female commune killed nine people, among them the pregnant actress Sharon Tate. It was the culmination of a criminal career that author Jeff Guinn traces back to Manson's childhood. Guinn interviewed Manson's sister and cousin, neither of whom had ever previously cooperated with an author. Childhood friends, cellmates, and even some members of the Manson Family have provided new information about Manson's life. Guinn has made discoveries about the night of the Tate murders, answering unresolved questions, such as why one person on the property where the murders occurred was spared. Manson puts the killer in the context of his times, the turbulent late sixties, an era of race riots and street protests when authority in all its forms was under siege. Guinn shows us how Manson created and refined his message to fit the times, persuading confused young women (and a few men) that he had the solutions to their problems. At the same time he used them to pursue his long-standing musical ambitions, relocating to Los Angeles in search of a recording contract. His frustrated ambitions, combined with his bizarre race-war obsession, would have lethal consequences as he convinced his followers to commit heinous murders on successive nights. In addition to stunning revelations about Charles Manson, the book contains family photographs never before published. lessThe True Story of a Real FakeFrank Abagnale | 4.06I stole every nickel and blew it on fine threads, luxurious lodgings, fantastic foxes and other sensual goodies. I partied in every capital in Europe and basked on all the world's most famous beaches'. Frank W Abagnale, alias Frank Williams, Robert Conrad, Frank Adams and Ringo Monjo, was one of the most daring con men, forgers, imposters and escape artists in history. In his brief but notorious career, Abagnale donned a pilot's uniform and co-piloted a Pan Am jet, masqueraded as a member of hospital management, practised law without a licence, passed himself off as a college sociology... moreI stole every nickel and blew it on fine threads, luxurious lodgings, fantastic foxes and other sensual goodies. I partied in every capital in Europe and basked on all the world's most famous beaches'. Frank W Abagnale, alias Frank Williams, Robert Conrad, Frank Adams and Ringo Monjo, was one of the most daring con men, forgers, imposters and escape artists in history. In his brief but notorious career, Abagnale donned a pilot's uniform and co-piloted a Pan Am jet, masqueraded as a member of hospital management, practised law without a licence, passed himself off as a college sociology professor, and cashed over $2.5 million in forged checks all before he was twenty-one. Known by the police of twenty-six foreign countries and all fifty states as 'The Skywayman', Abagnale lived a sumptuous life on the run - until the law caught up with him. Now recognised as the nation's leading authority on financial foul play, Abagnale is a charming rogue whose hilarious, stranger-than-fiction international escapades and ingenious escapes - including one from an aeroplane - make CATCH ME IF YOU CAN an irresistable tale of deceit. lessThe Inside Story of BTK, the Serial Killer Next DoorRoy Wenzl | 4.05For thirty-one years, a monster terrorized the residents of Wichita, Kansas. A bloodthirsty serial killer, self-named "BTK"—for "bind them, torture them, kill them"—he slaughtered men, women, and children alike, eluding the police for decades while bragging of his grisly exploits to the media. The nation was shocked when the fiend who was finally apprehended turned out to be Dennis Rader—a friendly neighbor . . . a devoted husband . . . a helpful Boy Scout dad . . . the respected president of his church.Written by four award-winning crime reporters who covered the story for more... moreFor thirty-one years, a monster terrorized the residents of Wichita, Kansas. A bloodthirsty serial killer, self-named "BTK"—for "bind them, torture them, kill them"—he slaughtered men, women, and children alike, eluding the police for decades while bragging of his grisly exploits to the media. The nation was shocked when the fiend who was finally apprehended turned out to be Dennis Rader—a friendly neighbor . . . a devoted husband . . . a helpful Boy Scout dad . . . the respected president of his church.Written by four award-winning crime reporters who covered the story for more than twenty years, Bind, Torture, Kill is the most intimate and complete account of the BTK nightmare told by the people who were there from the beginning. With newly released documents, evidence, and information—and with the full cooperation, for the very first time, of the Wichita Police Department's BTK Task Force—the authors have put all the pieces of the grisly puzzle into place, thanks to their unparalleled access to the families of the killer and his victims. lessThe Method and Madness of MonstersPeter Vronsky | 4.05A comprehensive examination into the frightening true crime history of serial homicide--including information on America's most prolific serial killers such as: Ted Bundy - "Co-ed Killer" Ed Kemper - The BTK Killer - "Highway Stalker" Henry Lee Lucas - Monte Ralph Rissell - "Shoe Fetish Slayer" Jerry Brudos - "Night Stalker" Richard Ramirez - "Unabomber" Ted Kaczynski - Ed Gein "The Butcher of Plainfield" - "Killer Clown" John Wayne Gacy - Andrew Cunanan - And more...In this unique book, Peter Vronsky documents the... moreA comprehensive examination into the frightening true crime history of serial homicide--including information on America's most prolific serial killers such as: Ted Bundy - "Co-ed Killer" Ed Kemper - The BTK Killer - "Highway Stalker" Henry Lee Lucas - Monte Ralph Rissell - "Shoe Fetish Slayer" Jerry Brudos - "Night Stalker" Richard Ramirez - "Unabomber" Ted Kaczynski - Ed Gein "The Butcher of Plainfield" - "Killer Clown" John Wayne Gacy - Andrew Cunanan - And more...In this unique book, Peter Vronsky documents the psychological, investigative, and cultural aspects of serial murder, beginning with its first recorded instance in Ancient Rome through fifteenth-century France on to such notorious contemporary cases as cannibal/necrophile Ed Kemper, the BTK killer, Henry Lee Lucas, Monte Ralph Rissell, Jerry Brudos, Richard Ramirez, "Unabomber" Ted Kaczynski, Ed Gein, John Wayne Gacy, Ted Bundy, and the emergence of what he classifies as the "serial rampage killer" such as Andrew Cunanan, who murdered fashion designer Gianni Versace.Vronsky not only offers sound theories on what makes a serial killer but also makes concrete suggestions on how to survive an encounter with one--from recognizing verbal warning signs to physical confrontational resistance. Exhaustively researched with transcripts of interviews with killers, and featuring up-to-date information on the apprehension and conviction of the Green River killer and the Beltway Snipers, Vronsky's one-of-a-kind book covers every conceivable aspect of an endlessly riveting true crime phenomenon.INCLUDES PHOTOGRAPHS lessThe dramatic story of the real-life murder that inspired the birth of modern detective fiction. In June of 1860 three-year-old Saville Kent was found at the bottom of an outdoor privy with his throat slit. The crime horrified all England and led to a national obsession with detection, ironically destroying, in the process, the career of perhaps the greatest detective in the land.At the time, the detective was a relatively new invention; there were only eight detectives in all of England and rarely were they called out of London, but this crime was so shocking, as Kate... moreThe dramatic story of the real-life murder that inspired the birth of modern detective fiction. In June of 1860 three-year-old Saville Kent was found at the bottom of an outdoor privy with his throat slit. The crime horrified all England and led to a national obsession with detection, ironically destroying, in the process, the career of perhaps the greatest detective in the land.At the time, the detective was a relatively new invention; there were only eight detectives in all of England and rarely were they called out of London, but this crime was so shocking, as Kate Summerscale relates in her scintillating new book, that Scotland Yard sent its best man to investigate, Inspector Jonathan Whicher. Whicher quickly believed the unbelievable—that someone within the family was responsible for the murder of young Saville Kent. Without sufficient evidence or a confession, though, his case was circumstantial and he returned to London a broken man. Though he would be vindicated five years later, the real legacy of Jonathan Whicher lives on in fiction: the tough, quirky, knowing, and all-seeing detective that we know and love today...from the cryptic Sgt. Cuff in Wilkie Collins's The Moonstone to Dashiell Hammett's Sam Spade. The Suspicions of Mr. Whicher is a provocative work of nonfiction that reads like a Victorian thriller, and in it Kate Summerscale has fashioned a brilliant, multilayered narrative that is as cleverly constructed as it is beautifully written. lessMy Year in a Women's PrisonPiper Kerman | 4.04With her career, live-in boyfriend and loving family, Piper Kerman barely resembles the rebellious young woman who got mixed up with drug runners and delivered a suitcase of drug money to Europe over a decade ago. But when she least expects it, her reckless past catches up with her; convicted and sentenced to 15 months at an infamous women's prison in Connecticut. From her first strip search to her final release, she learns to navigate this strange world with its arbitrary rules and codes, its unpredictable, even dangerous relationships. Now a major original television series, Piper's story... moreWith her career, live-in boyfriend and loving family, Piper Kerman barely resembles the rebellious young woman who got mixed up with drug runners and delivered a suitcase of drug money to Europe over a decade ago. But when she least expects it, her reckless past catches up with her; convicted and sentenced to 15 months at an infamous women's prison in Connecticut. From her first strip search to her final release, she learns to navigate this strange world with its arbitrary rules and codes, its unpredictable, even dangerous relationships. Now a major original television series, Piper's story is a fascinating, heartbreaking and often hilarious insight into life on the inside. lessA body stuffed in a car trunk swallowed by the swirling, muddy waters of the Missouri River. A hiker brutally murdered, then thrown off a cliff in a remote mountain range. A devious killer who hid his wife's body under a thick cement patio. For investigators, the story is often the same: they know a murder took place, they may even know who did it. But without key evidence, pursuing a conviction is nearly impossible. That's when they call NecroSearch International. Necrosearch boasts a brain trust of the nation's top scientists, specialists, and behaviourists who use the latest technology and... moreA body stuffed in a car trunk swallowed by the swirling, muddy waters of the Missouri River. A hiker brutally murdered, then thrown off a cliff in a remote mountain range. A devious killer who hid his wife's body under a thick cement patio. For investigators, the story is often the same: they know a murder took place, they may even know who did it. But without key evidence, pursuing a conviction is nearly impossible. That's when they call NecroSearch International. Necrosearch boasts a brain trust of the nation's top scientists, specialists, and behaviourists who use the latest technology and techniques to help solve "unsolvable" crimes, no matter how decayed the corpse, no matter how cleverly the killer has hidden the victim's body. Now, for the first time ever, readers are taken on a fascinating, often-shocking journey into a realm of crime investigation of which few people are aware. Necrosearch's most challenging cases are described, step-by-step, as these modern-day Sherlock Holmes's detect bodies and evidence thought irretrievable, and testify in court to bring cold-blooded killers to justice. lessA true story of love, murder, and the end of the world's "great hush."In Thunderstruck, Erik Larson tells the interwoven stories of two men--Hawley Crippen, a very unlikely murderer, and Guglielmo Marconi, the obsessive creator of a seemingly supernatural means of communication--whose lives intersect during one of the greatest criminal chases of all time.Set in Edwardian London and on the stormy coasts of Cornwall, Cape Cod, and Nova Scotia, Thunderstruck evokes the dynamism of those years when great shipping companies competed to build... moreA true story of love, murder, and the end of the world's "great hush."In Thunderstruck, Erik Larson tells the interwoven stories of two men--Hawley Crippen, a very unlikely murderer, and Guglielmo Marconi, the obsessive creator of a seemingly supernatural means of communication--whose lives intersect during one of the greatest criminal chases of all time.Set in Edwardian London and on the stormy coasts of Cornwall, Cape Cod, and Nova Scotia, Thunderstruck evokes the dynamism of those years when great shipping companies competed to build the biggest, fastest ocean liners; scientific advances dazzled the public with visions of a world transformed; and the rich outdid one another with ostentatious displays of wealth. Against this background, Marconi races against incredible odds and relentless skepticism to perfect his invention: the wireless, a prime catalyst for the emergence of the world we know today. Meanwhile, Crippen, "the kindest of men," nearly commits the perfect murder.With his unparalleled narrative skills, Erik Larson guides us through a relentlessly suspenseful chase over the waters of the North Atlantic. Along the way, he tells of a sad and tragic love affair that was described on the front pages of newspapers around the world, a chief inspector who found himself strangely sympathetic to the killer and his lover, and a driven and compelling inventor who transformed the way we communicate. lessRecommended by Timothy J. Jorgensen, and 1 others. Shortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. Val McDermid is one of the finest crime writers we have, whose novels have captivated millions of readers worldwide with their riveting narratives of characters who solve complex crimes and confront unimaginable evil. In the course of researching her bestselling novels McDermid has become familiar with every branch of forensics, and now she uncovers the history of this science, real-world murders and the people who must solve them.The dead talk—to the right listener. They can tell us all about themselves: where they came from, how they lived, how they died, and, of course, who... moreVal McDermid is one of the finest crime writers we have, whose novels have captivated millions of readers worldwide with their riveting narratives of characters who solve complex crimes and confront unimaginable evil. In the course of researching her bestselling novels McDermid has become familiar with every branch of forensics, and now she uncovers the history of this science, real-world murders and the people who must solve them.The dead talk—to the right listener. They can tell us all about themselves: where they came from, how they lived, how they died, and, of course, who killed them. Forensic scientists can unlock the mysteries of the past and help serve justice using the messages left by a corpse, a crime scene, or the faintest of human traces. Forensics draws on interviews with some of these top-level professionals, ground-breaking research, and McDermid's own original interviews and firsthand experience on scene with top forensic scientists.Along the way, McDermid discovers how maggots collected from a corpse can help determine one's time of death; how a DNA trace a millionth the size of a grain of salt can be used to convict a killer; and how a team of young Argentine scientists led by a maverick American anthropologist were able to uncover the victims of a genocide. It's a journey that will take McDermid to war zones, fire scenes, and autopsy suites, and bring her into contact with both extraordinary bravery and wickedness, as she traces the history of forensics from its earliest beginnings to the cutting-edge science of the modern day. lessVincent Bugliosi, Bruce Henderson | 4.03Alone with her new husband on a tiny Pacific atoll, a young woman, combing the beach, finds an odd aluminum container washed up out of the lagoon, and beside it on the sand something glitters --a gold tooth in a scorched human skull. The investigation that follows uncovers an extraordinarily complex and puzzling true-crime story. Only Vincent Bugliosi, who recounted his successful prosecution of mass murderer Charles Manson in the bestseller Helter Skelter, was able to draw together the hundreds of conflicting details of the mystery and reconstruct what really... moreAlone with her new husband on a tiny Pacific atoll, a young woman, combing the beach, finds an odd aluminum container washed up out of the lagoon, and beside it on the sand something glitters --a gold tooth in a scorched human skull. The investigation that follows uncovers an extraordinarily complex and puzzling true-crime story. Only Vincent Bugliosi, who recounted his successful prosecution of mass murderer Charles Manson in the bestseller Helter Skelter, was able to draw together the hundreds of conflicting details of the mystery and reconstruct what really happened when four people found hell in a tropical paradise. And the Sea Will Tell reconstructs the events and subsequent trial of a riveting true murder mystery, and probes into the dark heart of a serpentine scenario of death. lessWhen young women begin mysteriously disappearing in Oregon, Police Lieutenant James Stovall leads a relentless search for a killer. With little evidence available, and the public screaming for answers, he must find a remorseless, brutal killer whose identity will shock them all ...One by one the young women vanished without a trace ...Pretty Linda Slawson disappeared while trying to make a living selling encyclopedias door to door.Lovely college girl Jan Whitney never completed her two-hour drive home on the freeway.Beautiful pre-med honor... moreWhen young women begin mysteriously disappearing in Oregon, Police Lieutenant James Stovall leads a relentless search for a killer. With little evidence available, and the public screaming for answers, he must find a remorseless, brutal killer whose identity will shock them all ...One by one the young women vanished without a trace ...Pretty Linda Slawson disappeared while trying to make a living selling encyclopedias door to door.Lovely college girl Jan Whitney never completed her two-hour drive home on the freeway.Beautiful pre-med honor student Karen Sprinker failed to show up for a lunch date with her mother.Stunningly attractive Linda Salee dropped out of sight while her boyfriend waited and worried for hours.By then the pattern was clear. Oregon's massive police search was under way. But not even Lt James Stovall, the brilliant investigator in charge, suspected how grisly the crimes were - or who the man who killed like a sadistic monster would turn out to be ..."Rule springs surprises and rvelations with a novelist's skill.' - Seattle Times lessLove, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's BerlinErik Larson | 4.03Erik Larson, New York Times bestselling author of Devil in the White City, delivers a remarkable story set during Hitler's rise to power.The time is 1933, the place, Berlin, when William E. Dodd becomes America's first ambassador to Hitler's Nazi Germany in a year that proved to be a turning point in history.   A mild-mannered professor from Chicago, Dodd brings along his wife, son, and flamboyant daughter, Martha. At first Martha is entranced by the parties and pomp, and the handsome young men of the Third Reich with their infectious enthusiasm for... moreErik Larson, New York Times bestselling author of Devil in the White City, delivers a remarkable story set during Hitler's rise to power.The time is 1933, the place, Berlin, when William E. Dodd becomes America's first ambassador to Hitler's Nazi Germany in a year that proved to be a turning point in history.   A mild-mannered professor from Chicago, Dodd brings along his wife, son, and flamboyant daughter, Martha. At first Martha is entranced by the parties and pomp, and the handsome young men of the Third Reich with their infectious enthusiasm for restoring Germany to a position of world prominence. Enamored of the "New Germany," she has one affair after another, including with the suprisingly honorable first chief of the Gestapo, Rudolf Diels. But as evidence of Jewish persecution mounts, confirmed by chilling first-person testimony, her father telegraphs his concerns to a largely indifferent State Department back home. Dodd watches with alarm as Jews are attacked, the press is censored, and drafts of frightening new laws begin to circulate. As that first year unfolds and the shadows deepen, the Dodds experience days full of excitement, intrigue, romance—and ultimately, horror, when a climactic spasm of violence and murder reveals Hitler's true character and ruthless ambition.   Suffused with the tense atmosphere of the period, and with unforgettable portraits of the bizarre Göring and the expectedly charming--yet wholly sinister--Goebbels, In the Garden of Beasts lends a stunning, eyewitness perspective on events as they unfold in real time, revealing an era of surprising nuance and complexity. The result is a dazzling, addictively readable work that speaks volumes about why the world did not recognize the grave threat posed by Hitler until Berlin, and Europe, were awash in blood and terror. lessRecommended by Steve Schmidt, Daniel Hamermesh, and 2 others. Steve Schmidt@egayle333 Ellyn, with respect Hitler was always clear about his intent. A great book to read from a US perspective is In the Garden of Beasts. Trump is much more analogous to Mussolini. (Source)Daniel HamermeshAt a time of increased danger of totalitarianism in the U.S., reading a history of an insider's view of its growth in Germany in the 1930s gives a good perspective on our contemporary problems, as well as being fascinating history and biography in its own right. (Source)Brooke Nolan is a battered child who makes an anonymous phone call about the escalating brutality in her home. When social services jeopardize her safety condemning her to keep her father's secret, it's a glass of spilled milk at the dinner table that forces her to speak about the cruelty she's been hiding. In her pursuit for safety and justice Brooke battles a broken system that pushes to keep her father in the home. When jury members and a love interest congregate to inspire her to fight, she risks losing the support of family and comes to the realization that some... moreBrooke Nolan is a battered child who makes an anonymous phone call about the escalating brutality in her home. When social services jeopardize her safety condemning her to keep her father's secret, it's a glass of spilled milk at the dinner table that forces her to speak about the cruelty she's been hiding. In her pursuit for safety and justice Brooke battles a broken system that pushes to keep her father in the home. When jury members and a love interest congregate to inspire her to fight, she risks losing the support of family and comes to the realization that some people simply do not want to be saved. Spilled Milk is a novel of shocking narrative, triumph and resiliency. lessAnn Rule's Crime Files books have delivered the very best in true crime reading since A Rose for Her Grave, first in the acclaimed series, made its debut. Distinguished by the former Seattle policewoman's razor-sharp eye for telling detail and her penetrating analysis of the criminal mind, this gripping collection of accounts drawn from her personal files features the twisting case of Randy Roth, who married -- and murdered -- for profit. In her trademark narrative style, Ann Rule weaves a tale that is riveting, enraging, and heartbreaking all at once, and brilliantly chronicles the... moreAnn Rule's Crime Files books have delivered the very best in true crime reading since A Rose for Her Grave, first in the acclaimed series, made its debut. Distinguished by the former Seattle policewoman's razor-sharp eye for telling detail and her penetrating analysis of the criminal mind, this gripping collection of accounts drawn from her personal files features the twisting case of Randy Roth, who married -- and murdered -- for profit. In her trademark narrative style, Ann Rule weaves a tale that is riveting, enraging, and heartbreaking all at once, and brilliantly chronicles the fateful confluence of a killer and his female victims, as well as the shattering investigation into Roth's heinous crimes. less"I heard you paint houses" are the first words Jimmy Hoffa ever spoke to Frank "the Irishman" Sheeran. To paint a house is to kill a man. The paint is the blood that splatters on the walls and floors. In the course of nearly five years of recorded interviews Frank Sheeran confessed to Charles Brandt that he handled more than twenty-five hits for the mob, and for his friend Hoffa. Sheeran learned to kill in the U.S. Army, where he saw an astonishing 411 days of active combat duty in Italy during World War II. After returning home he became a hustler and hit man, working for legendary crime... more"I heard you paint houses" are the first words Jimmy Hoffa ever spoke to Frank "the Irishman" Sheeran. To paint a house is to kill a man. The paint is the blood that splatters on the walls and floors. In the course of nearly five years of recorded interviews Frank Sheeran confessed to Charles Brandt that he handled more than twenty-five hits for the mob, and for his friend Hoffa. Sheeran learned to kill in the U.S. Army, where he saw an astonishing 411 days of active combat duty in Italy during World War II. After returning home he became a hustler and hit man, working for legendary crime boss Russell Bufalino. Eventually he would rise to a position of such prominence that in a RICO suit then-U.S. Attorney Rudy Giuliani would name him as one of only two non-Italians on a list of 26 top mob figures. When Bufalino ordered Sheeran to kill Hoffa, he did the deed, knowing that if he had refused he would have been killed himself. Sheeran's important and fascinating story includes new information on other famous murders, and provides rare insight to a chapter in American history. Charles Brandt has written a page-turner that is destined to become a true crime classic. lessRecommended by My Pal Andy, Jeremy Vine, and 2 others. Jeremy VineAlthough the Netflix film is called "The Irishman," the book's original title was better. It used the "paint houses" phrase and what makes it remarkable is that it tells, for the first time and with 100% certainty, how Hoffa was killed. (Source)Confessions of a Mafia Contract KillerPhilip Carlo | 4.02There were times at home when Richard would have one of his outbursts and break things and then lock himself in his office. Merrick would ask him to please calm down, to "please relax, Daddy." During these episodes, Richard would explain in a matter-of-fact way, "You know if . . . if I kill Mommy, if something happens and she dies, I'll have to kill you all . . . I can't leave any witnesses.""Yes, Daddy. I know, Daddy," she said.As strange and horrible a thing as this was to tell a child, Richard was trying to let Merrick know in advance—out of consideration—what... moreThere were times at home when Richard would have one of his outbursts and break things and then lock himself in his office. Merrick would ask him to please calm down, to "please relax, Daddy." During these episodes, Richard would explain in a matter-of-fact way, "You know if . . . if I kill Mommy, if something happens and she dies, I'll have to kill you all . . . I can't leave any witnesses.""Yes, Daddy. I know, Daddy," she said.As strange and horrible a thing as this was to tell a child, Richard was trying to let Merrick know in advance—out of consideration—what might happen. He wanted her to understand that he was doing such a thing out of . . . love. Only out of love.He loved Barbara too much. He loved the children too much.That was the problem. The only way he could deal with their loss, if he inadvertently killed Barbara, was to kill them. That was how Richard had dealt with all his problems since he was a child. "But you, Merrick . . . You'll be the hardest to kill. You understand that?""Yes. Daddy," she said, and she did understand this. She knew she was his favorite, and she coveted that. ---from The Ice Man lessWhat would it take to make you intervene?When Ella Longfield overhears two attractive young men flirting with teenage girls on a train, she thinks nothing of it—until she realises they are fresh out of prison and her maternal instinct is put on high alert. But just as she's decided to call for help, something stops her. The next day, she wakes up to the news that one of the girls—beautiful, green-eyed Anna Ballard—has disappeared.A year later, Anna is still missing. Ella is wracked with guilt over what she failed to do, and she's not the only one who can't forget.... moreWhat would it take to make you intervene?When Ella Longfield overhears two attractive young men flirting with teenage girls on a train, she thinks nothing of it—until she realises they are fresh out of prison and her maternal instinct is put on high alert. But just as she's decided to call for help, something stops her. The next day, she wakes up to the news that one of the girls—beautiful, green-eyed Anna Ballard—has disappeared.A year later, Anna is still missing. Ella is wracked with guilt over what she failed to do, and she's not the only one who can't forget. Someone is sending her threatening letters—letters that make her fear for her life.Then an anniversary appeal reveals that Anna's friends and family might have something to hide. Anna's best friend, Sarah, hasn't been telling the whole truth about what really happened that night—and her parents have been keeping secrets of their own.Someone knows where Anna is—and they're not telling. But they are watching Ella. lessJohn E. Douglas, Mark Olshaker | 4.02In the #1 "New York Times" bestseller "Mindhunter," John Douglas, who headed the FBI's elite Investigative Support Unit, told the story of his brilliant and terrifying career tracking down some of the most heinous criminals in history. Using behavioral profiling and criminal investigative analysis to get into the head and psyche of both the criminal and victim -- to feel what they felt at the critical moment -- Douglas helped crack many high profile cases, including the Trailside Killer, the Atlanta child murders, and the Tylenol murders. Now, working again with his co-author Mark Olshaker,... moreIn the #1 "New York Times" bestseller "Mindhunter," John Douglas, who headed the FBI's elite Investigative Support Unit, told the story of his brilliant and terrifying career tracking down some of the most heinous criminals in history. Using behavioral profiling and criminal investigative analysis to get into the head and psyche of both the criminal and victim -- to feel what they felt at the critical moment -- Douglas helped crack many high profile cases, including the Trailside Killer, the Atlanta child murders, and the Tylenol murders. Now, working again with his co-author Mark Olshaker, Douglas delves further into the criminal mind with a series of chilling new cases in "Journey into Darkness": Follow the FBI's premier investigative profiler as he penetrates the minds and motives of the most terrifying serial killers. In "Journey into Darkness," Douglas profiles vicious serial killers,

rapists, and child molesters. He is straightforward, blunt, often irreverent, and outspoken, but takes pains not to glorify any of these murderers. Some of the unique cases Douglas discusses include: The Clairemont killer -- Six women were found stabbed to death in San Diego, three in the same apartment complex. In each case, the killer entered through an unlocked door or window in the late morning to early afternoon. A suspect was in custody, tied to one of the murders through a DNA match. Douglas was called upon to use his profiling techniques to link the other five murders to the suspect. Douglas looked at the "signature" of the killer, and found that all the murders were committed by the same man. The prosecution used the profile to force the jury to find the defendant guilty ofall six murders, if they felt he was guilty of the one murder. Celophus Prince was found guilty on all counts. The schoolgirl murders -- What became Canada's "trial of the century." Several schoolgirls disappeared in 1992; their bodies were dumped several weeks later, beaten and sexually attacked. Canadian police agencies contacted the FBI for help on the case and to get a profile on the killer and, according to witnesses, his accomplice. Following the advice of the Investigative Support Unit in Quantico, Canada aired a television special entitled "The Abduction of Kristin French, " allowing agent Gregg McCrary to describe the killer's profile on air. Knowing that the murderer and his accomplice would be watching, he planned to confront the unknown killer, assuring him he would be caught. Paul Bernardo was arrested on February 17, 1993, turned in by his wife and partner in crime, Karla Leanne Homolka.. The profile was dead on the money. Richmond's First Serial Murderer -- In 1987, Richmodd, Virginia, was struck by a serial rapist/murderer. The Richmond police called upon the Investigative Support Unit in Quantico to make up a profile of the perpetrator. The crimes and profile beared a remarkable resemblance to a string of burglaries, rapes and murders in Alexandria, Virginia, several years before. Agent Steve Mardigian then formulated a complex strategy that caught the killer who fit the profile to a tee. In the process he helped free a wrongly convicted man, who due to his low intelligence level, had become confused and confessed to the crime. The brutal and sadistic murder of Suzanne Marie Collins, a beautiful young Marine on the verge of a brilliant career. Theculprit was caught and confessed to her killing, but his story was very different than what really happened. By delving into Sedley Alley's mind, Douglas helped bring the murderer to justice, recreating the evening from the perspective of a sadistic and angry man. Suzanne Collins' horrifying end haunts Douglas to this day. Douglas delves into other cases, including Polly Klaas' abduction and murder by Richard Allen Davis, the tragedy that lead to the creation of Megan's Law; the abduction and murder of six-year-old Cassandra Lynn Hansen, who was snatched from an evening church service; and the vicious murder and sexual assault of Nancy Newman and her two daughters, eight-year-old Melissa and three-year-old Angie in Anchorage, Alaska. He also explores the murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman, focusing on the double homicide purely from a behavioral perspective. Douglas examines what the facts at and surrounding the crime scene told about the killer from a behavioral point of view. From Douglas's profile, the only viable suspect to date is O.J. Simpson.With "Journey into Darkness, " Douglas provides more than a glimpse into the minds of serial killers; he demonstrates what a powerful weapon behavioral science has become. Profiling criminals helps not only to capture them, but also helps society understand how these predators work and what can be done to prevent them from striking again. Douglas focuses especi lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. From legendary FBI profiler John Douglas and Mark Olshaker -- authors of the nonfiction international bestsellers Mindhunter, Journey into Darkness, and Obsession -- comes an unprecedented, insightful look at the root of all crime.Every crime is a mystery story with a motive at its heart. With the brilliant insight he brought to his renowned work inside the FBI's elite serial-crime unit, John Douglas pieces together motives behind violent sociopathic behavior. He not only takes us into the darkest recesses of the minds of arsonists, hijackers, bombers, poisoners,... moreFrom legendary FBI profiler John Douglas and Mark Olshaker -- authors of the nonfiction international bestsellers Mindhunter, Journey into Darkness, and Obsession -- comes an unprecedented, insightful look at the root of all crime.Every crime is a mystery story with a motive at its heart. With the brilliant insight he brought to his renowned work inside the FBI's elite serial-crime unit, John Douglas pieces together motives behind violent sociopathic behavior. He not only takes us into the darkest recesses of the minds of arsonists, hijackers, bombers, poisoners, assassins, serial killers, and mass murderers, but also the seemingly ordinary people who suddenly kill their families or go on a rampage in the workplace.Douglas identifies the antisocial personality, showing surprising similarities and differences among various types of deadly offenders. He also tracks the progressive escalation of those criminals' sociopathic behavior. His analysis of such diverse killers as Lee Harvey Oswald, Theodore Kaczynski, and Timothy McVeigh is gripping, but more importantly, helps us learn how to anticipate potential violent behavior before it's too late. less Surviving Severe Child Abuse, Sexual Assault and Leaving the Amish Church. A gripping true story that takes you on the journey of a child abuse and sexual assault survivor turned activist. Photo Gallery in the back of the book. True story of child abuse. When Misty Griffin was six years old, her family started to live and dress like the Amish. Misty and her sister were kept as slaves on a mountain ranch and subjected to almost complete isolation, sexual abuse, and extreme physical violence. Their step-father kept a loaded rifle by the door to make sure... more Surviving Severe Child Abuse, Sexual Assault and Leaving the Amish Church. A gripping true story that takes you on the journey of a child abuse and sexual assault survivor turned activist. Photo Gallery in the back of the book. True story of child abuse. When Misty Griffin was six years old, her family started to live and dress like the Amish. Misty and her sister were kept as slaves on a mountain ranch and subjected to almost complete isolation, sexual abuse, and extreme physical violence. Their step-father kept a loaded rifle by the door to make sure the young girls were too terrified to try to escape. No rescue would ever come since the few people who knew they existed did not care. Sexual abuse among the Amish. When Misty reached her teens, her parents feared she and her sister would escape and took them to an Amish community. Devastated to again find herself in a world of fear, cruelty, and abuse, Misty was sexually assaulted by the bishop. As Misty recalls, "Amish sexual abusers are only shunned by the church for six weeks, a punishment that never seems to work....I knew I had to get help, and one freezing morning in early March, I made a dash for a tiny police station in rural Minnesota. After reporting the bishop, I left the Amish and found myself plummeted into a strange modern world with only a second-grade education and no ID or social security card." Misty has a message for abuse survivors: "Please be encouraged, the cycle of abuse can be broken. This is my story of survival and moving past the abuse to embrace my dreams." In June 2019 Misty graduated nursing school. She continues to work to raise awareness about child abuse and sexual assault. Through Misty's story, discover: -You are not alone- Your past does not define your future-The abuse you endured was not your fault-Moving forward is possible If you have read Educated, A Child Called It, The Sound of Gravel, or Etched In Sand, then Tears of the Silenced is a must read. less"Wiseguy" is Nicholas Pileggi's remarkable bestseller, the most intimate account ever printed of life inside the deadly high-stakes world of what some people call the Mafia. "Wiseguy" is Henry Hill's story, in fascinating, brutal detail, the never-before-revealed day-to-day life of a working mobster - his violence, his wild spending sprees, his wife, his mistresses, his code of honor. more"Wiseguy" is Nicholas Pileggi's remarkable bestseller, the most intimate account ever printed of life inside the deadly high-stakes world of what some people call the Mafia. "Wiseguy" is Henry Hill's story, in fascinating, brutal detail, the never-before-revealed day-to-day life of a working mobster - his violence, his wild spending sprees, his wife, his mistresses, his code of honor. lessAn idyllic Hawaiian wedding held the promise of a wonderful future for handsome, athletic Chris Northon, an airline pilot, a confirmed bachelor-turned-devoted family man; and Liysa, an acclaimed surf photographer, loving mother, and aspiring Hollywood screenwriter. But few, including Chris, had seen Liysa's other side -- her controlling behavior and dark moods, her insatiable hunger for money and property. And no one anticipated the fatal outcome of a family camping trip in an Oregon forest. Liysa soon revealed herself as a victim of domestic abuse that culminated at the campsite, where she... moreAn idyllic Hawaiian wedding held the promise of a wonderful future for handsome, athletic Chris Northon, an airline pilot, a confirmed bachelor-turned-devoted family man; and Liysa, an acclaimed surf photographer, loving mother, and aspiring Hollywood screenwriter. But few, including Chris, had seen Liysa's other side -- her controlling behavior and dark moods, her insatiable hunger for money and property. And no one anticipated the fatal outcome of a family camping trip in an Oregon forest. Liysa soon revealed herself as a victim of domestic abuse that culminated at the campsite, where she shot Chris in self-defense. But crime scene evidence led detectives to wonder if Liysa was a killer, not a victim. Her controversial trial stunned all who thought they knew her. A lifetime of sociopathic manipulations and lies had been expertly hidden behind her façade of perfection -- as was her rage to destroy any obstacle to her ultimate happiness, even if it was the man she vowed to love forever. lessIn 1911 two wealthy British heiresses, Claire and Dora Williamson, came to a sanitorium in the forests of the Pacific Northwest to undergo the revolutionary “fasting treatment” of Dr. Linda Burfield Hazzard. It was supposed to be a holiday for the two sisters. But within a month of arriving at what the locals called Starvation Heights, the women were emaciated shadows of their former selves, waiting for death. They were not the first victims of Linda Hazzard, a quack doctor of extraordinary evil and greed who would stop at nothing short of murder to achieve her ambitions. As their jewelry... moreIn 1911 two wealthy British heiresses, Claire and Dora Williamson, came to a sanitorium in the forests of the Pacific Northwest to undergo the revolutionary “fasting treatment” of Dr. Linda Burfield Hazzard. It was supposed to be a holiday for the two sisters. But within a month of arriving at what the locals called Starvation Heights, the women were emaciated shadows of their former selves, waiting for death. They were not the first victims of Linda Hazzard, a quack doctor of extraordinary evil and greed who would stop at nothing short of murder to achieve her ambitions. As their jewelry disappeared and forged bank drafts began transferring their wealth to Hazzard’s accounts, Dora Williamson sent a last desperate plea to a friend in Australia, begging her to save them from the brutal treatments and lonely isolation of Starvation Heights.In this true story—a haunting saga of medical murder set in an era of steamships and gaslights—Gregg Olsen reveals one of the most unusual and disturbing criminal cases in American history. lessDr. Bill Bass, one of the world's leading forensic anthropologists, gained international attention when he built a forensic lab like no other: The Body Farm. Now, this master scientist unlocks the gates of his lab to reveal his most intriguing cases-and to revisit the Lindbergh kidnapping and murder, fifty years after the fact. moreDr. Bill Bass, one of the world's leading forensic anthropologists, gained international attention when he built a forensic lab like no other: The Body Farm. Now, this master scientist unlocks the gates of his lab to reveal his most intriguing cases-and to revisit the Lindbergh kidnapping and murder, fifty years after the fact. lessIn this powerful and riveting tale of three families connected by marriage and murder, of obsessive love and bitter custody battles, Jerry Bledsoe recounts the shocking events that ultimately took nine lives...The first bodies found were those of a feisty millionaire widow and her beautiful daughter in their posh Louisville, Kentucky, home. Months later, another wealthy widow and her prominent son and daughter-in-law were found savagely slain in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Mystified police first suspected a professional in the bizarre gangland-style killings that... moreIn this powerful and riveting tale of three families connected by marriage and murder, of obsessive love and bitter custody battles, Jerry Bledsoe recounts the shocking events that ultimately took nine lives...The first bodies found were those of a feisty millionaire widow and her beautiful daughter in their posh Louisville, Kentucky, home. Months later, another wealthy widow and her prominent son and daughter-in-law were found savagely slain in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Mystified police first suspected a professional in the bizarre gangland-style killings that shattered the quiet tranquility of two well-to-do southern communities. But soon a suspicion grew that turned their focus to family. The Sharps. The Newsoms. The Lynches. The only link between the three families was a beautiful and aristocratic young mother named Susie Sharp Newsom Lynch. Could this former child "princess" and fraternity sweetheart have committed such barbarous crimes? And what about her gun-loving first cousin and lover, Fritz Klenner, son of a nationally renowned doctor? lessA True Crime Story and the Birth of Forensic ScienceDouglas Starr | 4.00A riveting true crime story that vividly recounts the birth of modern forensics.At the end of the nineteenth century, serial murderer Joseph Vacher, known and feared as “The Killer of Little Shepherds,” terrorized the French countryside. He eluded authorities for years—until he ran up against prosecutor Emile Fourquet and Dr. Alexandre Lacassagne, the era’s most renowned criminologist. The two men—intelligent and bold—typified the Belle Époque, a period of immense scientific achievement and fascination with science’s promise to reveal the secrets of the human condition. moreA riveting true crime story that vividly recounts the birth of modern forensics.At the end of the nineteenth century, serial murderer Joseph Vacher, known and feared as “The Killer of Little Shepherds,” terrorized the French countryside. He eluded authorities for years—until he ran up against prosecutor Emile Fourquet and Dr. Alexandre Lacassagne, the era’s most renowned criminologist. The two men—intelligent and bold—typified the Belle Époque, a period of immense scientific achievement and fascination with science’s promise to reveal the secrets of the human condition. With high drama and stunning detail, Douglas Starr revisits Vacher’s infamous crime wave, interweaving the story of how Lacassagne and his colleagues were developing forensic science as we know it. We see one of the earliest uses of criminal profiling, as Fourquet painstakingly collects eyewitness accounts and constructs a map of Vacher’s crimes. We follow the tense and exciting events leading to the murderer’s arrest. And we witness the twists and turns of the trial, celebrated in its day. In an attempt to disprove Vacher’s defense by reason of insanity, Fourquet recruits Lacassagne, who in the previous decades had revolutionized criminal science by refining the use of blood-spatter evidence, systematizing the autopsy, and doing groundbreaking research in psychology. Lacassagne’s efforts lead to a gripping courtroom denouement. The Killer of Little Shepherds is an important contribution to the history of criminal justice, impressively researched and thrillingly told.From the Hardcover edition. lessA MemoirMichael Morton | 4.00“A devastating and infuriating book, more astonishing than any legal thriller by John Grisham” (The New York Times) about a young father who spent twenty-five years in prison for a crime he did not commit...and his eventual exoneration and return to life as a free man.On August 13, 1986, just one day after his thirty-second birthday, Michael Morton went to work at his usual time. By the end of the day, his wife Christine had been savagely bludgeoned to death in the couple’s bed—and the Williamson County Sherriff’s... more“A devastating and infuriating book, more astonishing than any legal thriller by John Grisham” (The New York Times) about a young father who spent twenty-five years in prison for a crime he did not commit...and his eventual exoneration and return to life as a free man.On August 13, 1986, just one day after his thirty-second birthday, Michael Morton went to work at his usual time. By the end of the day, his wife Christine had been savagely bludgeoned to death in the couple’s bed —and the Williamson County Sherriff’s office in Texas wasted no time in pinning her murder on Michael, despite an absolute lack of physical evidence. Michael was swiftly sentenced to life in prison for a crime he had not committed. He mourned his wife from a prison cell. He lost all contact with their son. Life, as he knew it, was over.Drawing on his recollections, court transcripts, and more than 1,000 pages of personal journals he wrote in prison, Michael recounts the hidden police reports about an unidentified van parked near his house that were never pursued; the bandana with the killer’s DNA on it, that was never introduced in court; the call from a neighboring county reporting the attempted use of his wife’s credit card, which was never followed up on; and ultimately, how he battled his way through the darkness to become a free man once again.“Even for readers who may feel practically jaded about stories of injustice in Texas—even those who followed this case closely in the press—could do themselves a favor by picking up Michael Morton’s new memoir...It is extremely well-written [and] insightful” (The Austin Chronicle). Getting Life is an extraordinary story of unfathomable tragedy, grave injustice, and the strength and courage it takes to find forgiveness. lessOn February 4, 1974, Patty Hearst, a sophomore in college and heiress to the Hearst Family fortune, was kidnapped by a ragtag group of self-styled revolutionaries calling itself the Symbonese Liberation Army. The weird turns that followed in this already sensational take are truly astonishing--the Hearst family tried to secure Patty's release by feeding the people of Oakland and San Francisco for free; bank security cameras captured "Tania" wielding a machine gun during a roberry; the LAPD engaged in the largest police shoot-out in American history; the first breaking news event was broadcast... moreOn February 4, 1974, Patty Hearst, a sophomore in college and heiress to the Hearst Family fortune, was kidnapped by a ragtag group of self-styled revolutionaries calling itself the Symbonese Liberation Army. The weird turns that followed in this already sensational take are truly astonishing--the Hearst family tried to secure Patty's release by feeding the people of Oakland and San Francisco for free; bank security cameras captured "Tania" wielding a machine gun during a roberry; the LAPD engaged in the largest police shoot-out in American history; the first breaking news event was broadcast live on televlsion stations across the country; and then there was Patty's circuslike trial, filled with theatrical courtroom confrontations and a dramatic last-minute reversal, after which the term "Stockholm syndrome" entered the lexicon. Ultimately, the saga highlighted a decade in which America seemed to be suffering a collective nervous breakdown. lessShortform summaries help you learn 10x faster by: Being comprehensive: you learn the most important points in the book Cutting out the fluff: you focus your time on what's important to know Interactive exercises: apply the book's ideas to your own life with our educators' guidance. © 2025 Shortform 2027 W. Division St Chicago, IL 60622 help@shortform.com True crime is one of the most popular genres of TV shows and podcasts, but many of the most shocking and compelling investigations into murder, scams, and other illegal acts were first documented on the page. In fact, some of the most acclaimed true crime series are adaptations of books (and many of those books are expanded versions of magazine articles). So if you’re looking to explore the depths of human depravity—or witness the efforts good people take to bring such criminals to justice—read on for 25 of the best true crime books ever published. We've got deep dives into serial killers, frauds, addiction, and even stealing a bunch of feathers.Knopf Doubleday Publishing GroupNot all true crime is about murder. In the 2018 book Bad Blood, journalist John Carreyrou expands on the reporting he did for the Wall Street Journal about biotech startup Theranos. The company promised that it had invented a game-changing medical device that could run countless medical tests with only a single drop of blood and its founder, Elizabeth Holmes, was positioned as the next Steve Jobs. Turns out it was all lies and fraud, as Bad Blood reveals.Little, Brown and CompanyRonan Farrow’s 2019 book documents his part in the beginning of the #MeToo movement. The author, who used to work for NBC News, had done extensive investigative reporting about the many rape and sexual assault allegations circling major Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein. However, NBC refused to run the story due to what Farrow alleges was pressure from Weinstein, prompting him to take his reporting to the New Yorker for what would become a groundbreaking expose. Catch and Kill is a gripping tale about journalism and the lengths that powerful men will go to in order to cover up their crimes.Hatchette Book GroupDave Cullen’s 2009 book explores, at times in harrowing details, the infamous Columbine High School mass shooting. The book follows the two gunmen in the lead-up to the April 20, 1999 attack, and checks in on many of the survivors as they struggle in the decades afterwards. The book also serves as a correction to many of the myths that surround the massacre, including the widely held belief that the shooters were bullied or influenced by shock rocker Marilyn Manson.CrownErik Larson’s extremely readable 2003 book (seriously, this thing is in every airport bookstore for a reason) tells two twin stories set in Chicago at the end of the 19th century. The first is that of the 1983 Chicago World’s Fair and the many efforts that went into making such an important, influential event. The other is that of H. H. Holmes, arguably the first serial killer in American history whose spree was at its peak around the time of the fair.DoubledayThis 2021 book expands on journalist Patrick Radden Keefe’sNew Yorker article about the Sacklers, the family behind Purdue Pharma, the company widely considered responsible for the opioid epidemic. Empire of Pain traces the family’s history, the development of Oxycodone, and the Sacklers' efforts to escape any repercussions for the tragic damage caused by the highly addictive drug (and Purdue’s lies about its addictive qualities).RELATED: 25 Romance Books to Take to the Beach This Summer.Penguin BooksIf you’re in the mood for a true crime story that’s not about murder or violence or anything else that will make you depressed, check out Kirk Wallace Johnson’s 2018 book about a very singular crime. In 2009, a man stole several valuable, irreplaceable taxidermied birds and feathers from London's Royal Academy of Music. Why? Because the perpetrator was part of the niche subculture of salmon fly-tying, and some of the Victorian-era designs for fly-fishing lures involved rare feathers, including from a few birds that have since gone extinct. The Feather Thief explores the history of fly-tying, this unique crime, and its aftermath.VintageTo Kill a Mockingbird features what is widely regarded as one the greatest court cases in all of fiction, so perhaps it shouldn’t be surprising that author Harper Lee, who was also friends with In Cold Blood’s Truman Capote, tried her hand at true crime as well. Casey Cep’s 2019 book documents Lee’s life and experience covering the vigilante killing of an Alabama preacher who was found innocent of the crime of murdering his five family members for insurance money.W. W. Norton & CompanyThe Manson Family’s brutal 1969 murder of actor Sharon Tate and her friends in the Hollywood Hills is among the most infamous crimes in American pop culture, and Helter Skelter is the definitive book about the killings. Vincent Bugliosi, who co-wrote the 1974 book with Curt Gentry, had firsthand experience with Charlie Manson as he served as the prosecutor in his 1970 trial. At the time of Bugliosi’s death, Helter Skelter was the bestselling true crime book of all time.Thomas & MercerGregg Olsen’s 2019 book is a harrowing true story of abuse, murder, survival, and perseverance. Sisters Nikki, Sami, and Tori Knotek suffered horribly at the hands of their mother growing up in Raymond, Washington, but far from breaking under the stress of their mother’s torture, the trio formed a powerful bond that allowed them to fight for their freedom.Harper PerennialNot many true crime books can claim that they’re fairly directly responsible for bringing the perpetrator to justice. Michelle McNamara developed an interest in a relatively under-discussed serial killer who terrorized California in the ’70s and ’80s, eventually coining the moniker "the Golden State Killer" as her investigation drew renewed attention to the case and prompted breakthroughs. The author tragically died before the book’s completion but her widower, comedian Patton Oswalt, finished the book with the help of crime writer Paul Haynes and investigative journalist Bill Jensen to release it in February 2018. Two months later, the Golden State Killer was finally arrested and brought to justice.RELATED: The 15 Best Psychological Thrillers to Keep You on the Edge of Your Seat.VintageFull disclosure: From a strict journalism standpoint, Truman Capote’s iconic 1966 work of narrative nonfiction doesn’t quite hold up. The writer invented and altered details about the 1959 quadruple homicide of a Kansas farm family to make for a better story. Still, In Cold Blood is a gripping read and arguably the first true crime book.VintageJohn Grisham is probably the most famous author of fictional crime stories, but the legal literary giant has also penned one nonfiction book, 2006’s The Innocent Man. The book tells the story of a minor league baseball player who spent 11 years on death row after he was wrongly convicted of a 1988 rape and murder and before DNA evidence exonerated him.VintageIn 1983, author Joe McGinniss wrote a true crime book called Fatal Vision. Though that book, which covers Army captain Jeffrey R. MacDonald’s murder of his wife and children, was a bestseller, it’s arguably more famous now because of Janet Malcolm’sThe Journalist and the Murderer, which paints a complicated, unflattering picture of the ethics of journalism. MacDonald thought McGinniss was his friend who was trying to help exonerate him. As The Journalist and the Murderer details, the author was really using that assumption to get the story and write his book.VintageRecently adapted into an acclaimed movie by the great Martin Scorsese, David Grann’s 2017 book Killers of the Flower Moon is an engrossing history of one of America’s great sins, the systemic killings of Osage people by white men who stood to inherit control of the Indigenous American tribe’s immensely lucrative oil rights. These killings were one of the first major tests for the then-nascent Federal Bureau of Investigation, though the damage was largely done by the time they cracked the case. Note that, unlike the film, the identity of the people or persons behind the killings is deliberately left a mystery as you read the book, making it a page-turning work of history.Celadon BooksElon Green’s 2021 book Last Call tells the story of a serial killer who preyed on gay men in New York City in the ’80s and ’90s. The Last Call Killer’s victims didn’t make sensational headlines at the time, back when murder rates were high in the city, because of their identity. Last Call is a revealing, nuanced look at a vibrant culture that had to face a serial killer in addition to the AIDs epidemic and other struggles of the era.RELATED: The 25 Best Film Noirs Every Classic Movie Fan Needs to See.Harper PerennialThe identity of the serial killer responsible for the deaths of several young women whose remains were found on Long Island’s Gilgo Beach may have been recently uncovered. But Robert Kolker’s 2014 book fittingly focuses on the lives of five of his presumed victims, all of whom were sex workers with personal lives and people who loved them. It’s a touching, deeply cutting exploration of American society and who is overlooked.VintageJohn Berendt’s 1990 debut nonfiction novel tells the story of Jim Williams, an antiques dealer in Savannah, Georgia who was accused of killing Danny Hansford, his live-in lover, as part of an argument. Williams was tried four times for the crime, and Berendt, who lived in Savannah for many years as the trials were going on, paints an engrossing portrait of the killer, the victim, and many other fascinating characters from the community.Farrar, Straus & GirouxRichard Lloyd Parry, Asia correspondent for The Times of London, delves deep into Japan’s culture and legal system in 2012’s The People Who Eat Darkness. Lucie Blackman, a young, blonde British woman, went missing one night in Tokyo in 2000. The search for her—and eventually her killer after her remains were found in a cave—reveals a lot about the limits of Japanese law enforcement, cultural clashes, and a deeply evil man responsible for Blackman’s death and hundreds of other crimes.Penguin BooksIf you wanted somebody dead in early 1900s New York City and you didn’t want to get caught, poison was the weapon of choice, as the science and protocols weren’t developed enough to reliably detect poisoners’ tools and bring them to justice. But as Deborah Blum documents in her 2011 book, that began to change when Charles Norris became chief medical examiner in 1918 and worked with toxicologist Alexander Gettler to revolutionize forensics.SphereYou know the line about how nobody suspected that the nice guy next door was actually a serial killer? That was the case for author Ann Rule, who met and became close friends with Ted Bundy in the early ’70s. They fell out of touch before the decade was over, but Bundy came back into Rule’s life when he became a suspect in a string of serial killings in Seattle—suspicions that Rule shared. Rule’s 1980 book, which has been reprinted with revisions and new additions four times since, is a gripping examination of one of the country’s most infamous serial killers blended with autobiography.RELATED: 27 Movies With Shocking Twist Endings You Won't Recover From.Bloomsbury USAInspector Jonathan Whicher was England’s greatest detective in the mid-1800s; his manners and skills at solving crimes were so great that he would go on to be the inspiration for several fictional detectives. However, his inability to definitively solve a gruesome killing proved to be his ruin, even if the circumstantial evidence was right. Kate Summerscale tells the story in her 2009 page-turner.Simon & SchusterCara Robertson goes deep on one of America’s earliest, most sensational court cases in her 2019 book The Trial of Lizzie Borden. Accused of hacking her father and stepmother to death with an ax in their Massachusetts home, Borden’s subsequent trial—and eventual acquittal—captivated the nation, and Robertson draws upon tons of research and material to make it equally captivating (and perhaps more thoroughly examined) today.VintageAdapted into a Hulu drama series in 2022, author Jon Krakauer’s 2003 book of the same name tells the story of a brutal 1984 double murder committed by two members of a fundamentalist Mormon sect. The book also zooms out to explore the history of the Mormon faith and how such extreme fundamentalism arose and led to violence of the sort brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty committed in the name of their version of the faith.Random House Trade PaperbacksSierra Crane Murdoch’s 2020 book follows Lissa Yellow Bird, a Native woman who took it upon herself to try to solve a missing persons case that nobody else in North Dakota’s Fort Berthold Indian Reservation seemed too keen on investigating—especially since the oil industry had become such a powerful force in her home.BerkleyRobert Graysmith, the editorial cartoonist-turned-true crime author Jake Gyllenhaal plays in David Fincher’sZodiac film, wrote about his efforts to identify the infamous serial killer who plagued San Francisco in the '60s. Combining the investigative efforts of law enforcement with his own research into the case (including some information that had not been shared with the public before the book’s original 1986 release date), Zodiac reads as a horror novel almost as much as it does an iconic work of true crime. What do William F. Buckley, Jr., an aspiring book editor, and a convicted killer have in common? More than you’d expect. In Scoundrel, Sarah Weinman traces the path of destruction of Edgar Smith, a manipulator and misogynist who was sentenced to death for the murder of a teenage girl in 1960s New Jersey. While on death row, Smith caught the attention of conservative pundit Buckley, who advocated for Smith’s release and also got him a deal with a book editor at Knopf. Weinman goes deep into the archives to show how Smith, a provocative letter-writer, convinced a wide variety of people of his innocence even as she makes a larger, salient point about whose lives get cut short, and who gets second chances (and book contracts!).A saga that’s more about intergenerational greed than intergenerational trauma, Empire of Pain chronicles the rise and fall of the Sackler family. Although their name can be found on many buildings and museums, the Sacklers are now most widely known for owning Purdue Pharma, the drug company that marketed the painkiller Oxycontin knowing it would be addictive. Patrick Radden Keefe traces the family’s earliest days in America when the patriarch’s compulsive work ethic launched the family up by the bootstraps, and the latter generations who became so inured to wealth that they seemingly lacked awareness or compunction for significantly contributing to the opioid epidemic that destroyed so many lives.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowAs a Harvard undergrad, Becky Cooper had heard rumors about an ambitious female grad student in anthropology who had an affair with a professor, and who had then been murdered in 1969. The killer was never found. Forty years later, Cooper begins an investigation herself, slowly and steadily becoming more and more obsessed with the case. Even as Cooper reveals a complicated list of suspects that expands rather than narrows through the book's unfolding, We Keep the Dead Close implicates the institution of Harvard as a whole and the ways its centuries of elitism and discrimination have caused many kinds of violence.A winning combination of true crime and literary biography, Furious Hours introduces readers to the book that Harper Lee meant to write after the wild success of her 1960 debut, To Kill a Mockingbird. In the 1970s, Lee began to study the real-life case of the Reverend Willie Maxwell, a Southern preacher who was accused of murdering five family members for insurance money, and who was later killed himself at a family member’s funeral. Cep details how Lee became obsessed with getting all of the nuanced details of the case right (unlike her childhood friend Truman Capote did in his true crime opus In Cold Blood), and writes an illuminating chunk of the book that Lee was never able to finish.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowMore business books should show up on best true crime lists. Here’s a juicy one that’s about the miraculous machine that can pull detailed health data from just a small drop of blood. It once was worth millions. Trouble is, it doesn’t work and has never worked. The focus of Bad Blood is on Elizabeth Holmes, the young and ambitious CEO of Theranos, who hoodwinked some of the most prominent businesspeople and politicians in America in her quest to build a company and girlboss the device to market. Wall Street Journal reporter Carreyrou takes readers from the first tip he ever received about the wild misdeeds happening at Theranos, to the many hours he spent building a case, to the moment when he finally published his exposé and the dominos began to fall.In the 1980s while the AIDS epidemic was ravaging New York City, it was also turbocharging anti-queer hate crimes. Such crimes were often unreported because victims didn’t trust that the police would help or protect them. Against this backdrop, a serial killer lured victims from the relative safety of Manhattan’s piano bars, those oases in the city where all were welcome to schmooze over music and drinks. Elon Green’s extraordinary reporting uncovers a case that has gone under the radar too long, giving victims and their loved ones the attention they deserveAdvertisement - Continue Reading BelowSavage Appetites is not so much a straightforward true crime book as it is a captivating exploration into why women in particular are drawn to the darkest and most depraved of real life stories. Rachel Monroe is a generous guide through the world of true crime, never dismissive of enthusiasts even as she turns a critical eye toward our consumption of the genre and the problems that arise when we look for simple stories to explain complicated situations. Savage Appetites is a great book to have on hand and refer back to as you’re reading other titles on this list.Originally titled Disco Bloodbath, this is a true account of a murder within a particular subculture: the New York City club kids of the late eighties and early nineties who partied like it was their jobs. Written by one of the most over the top insiders, Party Monster details the highs and lows of the scene—the fashion, the sex, the indulgence, the nasty drug hangovers. The work culminates in the 1997 conviction of a club promoter named Michael Alig, who committed a particularly gruesome crime.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowA gripping, fast-paced story with an asset that few true crime books have: no body count. The story of serial arsonists who tore through the economically depressed rural Accomack County, American Fire is more about the good people of the area and the volunteer firefighters working overtime than it is about the villains—but even then, and with no spoilers, the Freudian motivation of the culprits are fascinating.Author Michelle McNamara died suddenly in the process of writing this game-changing investigation of the Golden State Killer. That the book feels triumphant even after tragedy upon tragedy is a testament to McNamara’s skill as a reporter and the determination of her husband (comedian Patton Oswalt) to tie up loose ends and push forward with the publication.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowNorman Mailer’s The Executioner’s Song told the story of Gary Gilmore, the first murderer to be executed in the United States (in 1977) in nearly a decade. That Gary’s younger brother Mikal is a celebrated journalist in his own right makes him the ideal writer to tell the story from a much different perspective, weaving a multigenerational story of dysfunction, abuse, and what drives a person to become a killer.At a time when the job of the detective was fairly new, Inspector Jonathan Whicher was the best of the bunch in Victorian London. When a young child was found dead with a slit throat in 1860, Whicher was brought in to investigate. Unfortunately, his hunch that the child’s family was involved was true, although there was no way for him to prove such a thing at the time. Although his story ends with perceived failure, the clever and tough Whicher became the real life model on whom so many of literature’s best detectives are based.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowIn an age when school shootings take place in America nearly every day, it can become way too easy to tune them out. Dave Cullen’s reportage on the shooting at Columbine High School in 1999 is more important now than ever. Even as he details how Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold managed to plan and execute a massacre, he is careful to give dignity to all involved—the teachers, the students, their parents.Part memoir, part investigation into the murder of a six year old boy in the early nineties, The Fact of a Body explores how our personal experiences shape how we see crimes and the people who perpetrated them. The author’s own experience with sexual abuse is the lens through which she approaches the pedophile and confessed murderer who she’s supposed to help defend in court.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowIn the early days of the twentieth century, murdering people with arsenic or cyanide was easy-ish because such poisons were untraceable. That changed in 1918. Deborah Blum’s history of the birth of forensic science in New York City, when a new medical examiner made great strides in toxicology, is a must-read for fans of Jazz Age transgressions with a generous dose of chemistry.No one covered the lifestyles of the rich and infamous better than Dominick Dunne. His novels covered ripped from the headlines gossipy tales of upper class evil, but his Vanity Fair columns still had keen observations with the extra bonus of being fact-checked. Ranging from subjects like O.J. Simpson and the Menendez Brothers, to Claus von Bülow and the man who murdered Dunne’s own daughter, the essays in this collection are unmissable and haunting.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowOne of the best living crime writers, James Ellroy reveals the personal tragedy from which his obsessions emerged in his most personal book. Ellroy’s mother was murdered in 1958 when he was ten years old, and as an adult in 1994 he teams up with an LAPD officer to find her killer. Even when the murderer appears to be in reach, it’s clear that the chaos he brought to the author’s life remains unresolvedA 1981 shooting and its fallout are the subject of this epic about life and death in the city of Savannah. Rich with the kind of diverse cast of characters you’d find in a novel, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil is as rich in ambience and local color as it is in plot.Advertisement - Continue Reading BelowA wonderfully researched, beautifully written history of injustice taken to horrifying lengths. When a string of murders plagued the oil rich Osage Indian nation in the 1920s, the Feds were brought in to investigate. David Grann traces their probe, revealing corruption at every layer of law enforcement and government, and the inhumanity that rampant greed so often breeds.It isn’t enough to just track the American experience of the two Chechnyan brothers who were responsible for the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. Journalist and activist Masha Gessen provides context for the actions of the siblings, tracing their lineage through a stream of war-torn countries so that by the time they arrived in America, their (often righteous) anger elevated to unforgivable, murderous levels.Watch Next Advertisement - Continue Reading Below It’s now a widespread cultural phenomenon, but the true crime genre started on the page. Truman Capote’s acclaimed In Cold Blood, published in 1966, is thought by many to be the original true crime book, while TV series Making a Murderer and White House Farm were both books before making their way to our screens. If you’re up to date with your favourite true crime podcast and wondering where to turn to next, here’s our edit of the best true crime books, covering mass murders to business scandals. In April 1929, British artist Olive Branson's body was found in a water tank outside her farmhouse in Provence, with a bullet wound to the head and a revolver by her side. Though initially ruled a suicide, doubts from her family prompted detective Alexandre Guibbal to investigate further. Drawing on never-before-seen evidence, Stapleton pieces together a vivid account of Olive's unconventional life, her tragic death, and the secrets of a village simmering with tension and rivalries. John Carreyrou documents the rise and shocking collapse of the multibillion biotech startup Theranos in this riveting story of corporate fraud and ambition. In 2014, Theranos promised to revolutionize the medical industry with a machine that would make blood testing both faster and easier. With the charismatic Elizabeth Holmes at the helm, and backed by investors such as Larry Ellison and Tim Draper, the business was valued at more than $9 billion. The problem was, the technology didn’t work. Victoria Cilliers and her husband, British army sergeant Emilie Cilliers shared a life, a family, and a passion for skydiving. On Easter Sunday in 2015, while undertaking a parachute jump gifted to her by her husband, Victoria experienced every diver’s worst nightmare: her parachute failed to open. Despite sustaining serious injuries against the odds she survived, and her husband was arrested for her attempted murder. I Survived is Victoria’s extraordinary tale of courage and resilience, the story of a woman who experienced a living hell but made it through against the odds. Credit Suisse was once a 166-year-old reputable Swiss financial institution serving a high clientele. Then it collapsed, revealing the wider corruption and dirty scandals of the most wealthy and controversial leaders including drug dealers, dictators and former Nazi officers. The bank granted its executives lucrative bonus contracts and fleeced clients out of billions of dollars, to name just a few of their exploits. In Meltdown, Bloomberg investigative journalist, Duncan Mavin, exposes the corrupt decision-making made by a handful of men at the top, which ultimately led to disaster. An epic true story of ambition, greed and hubris – the collapse of Greensill Capital is a billion pound scandal that shredded the reputation of a British Prime Minister. Lex Greensill disrupted a trillion dollar industry and drew in Swiss bankers, global CEOs, and world leaders, including former British Prime Minister, David Cameron. But a staid business model concealed dubious practices; Greensill made increasingly risky loans to fraudulent companies using other people’s money. With a globe-circling narrative full of scandal and intrigue, Pyramid of Lies reveals how the grubby world of shadow banking really operates. From the rural communities ravaged by the impact of opioid addiction to the hallowed halls of some of the world’s most respected cultural and education institutions, the Sackler’s unsavoury legacy in America is undeniable. As compelling as a thriller, in the award-winning Empire of Pain Patrick Radden Keefe masterfully weaves a story of ambition, greed and secrecy and uncovers how the Sackler family made a fortune from other people’s pain and how they were allowed to get away with it. Cheng Chui Ping, an elderly noodle shop owner and grandmother, was once a mainstay of New York’s Chinatown. But, unbeknownst to almost all who knew her, the noodle shop was a front for one of America’s biggest people smuggling operations, operated by the unlikeliest of kingpins, Ping herself. Examining the broader human and economic impact of undocumented immigration in the United States through the story of Ping’s underground empire, The Snakehead is a stunning true-crime tale from expert storyteller, Patrick Radden Keefe. From forgers to money launderers to arms merchants and those on death row, this is a book about behaving badly. Award-winning and hypnotically brilliant New Yorker writer and author of Empire of Pain Patrick Radden Keefe takes readers on a gripping but also humane trip into the psyches of those who society would rather forget. With global reach and meticulous research, this is a bravura piece of journalism. Originally published as The Hard Sell, and now a major film on Netflix. In the early 2000s during the boom of painkillers, John Kapoor founded Insys Therapeutics. He had developed a novel formulation of fentanyl and he was determined to make the most of this innovation. While the drug was only approved for a small group of cancer patients, Kapoor employed a variety of deceptive techniques to ensure his drug flew. That is, until insiders reached their breaking point and blew the whistle. With colourful characters and true suspense, The Hard Sell lays bare the pharma playbook and looks at how opioids are sold at the point they first enter the national bloodstream – in the doctor’s office. Based on the Netflix documentary of the same name, in I Am A Killer Ned Parker and Danny Tipping get underneath the skin of some of America’s killers and find out what motivated them to commit their crimes. By gaining exclusive access to inmates in the high-security prisons they now call home, speaking to the perpetrator’s families, and examining police and court documents, the authors have created a fascinating, intimate portrait of some of America’s most destructive and dangerous criminals. Gomorrah is the story of Italy’s other Mafia, the Camorra. Known by insiders as ‘the System’, the Camorra exerts a malign grip on cities and villages along the Neapolitan coast is the deciding factor in why Campania has the highest murder rate in all of Europe. To get inside this deadly organisation, Roberto Saviano disappeared into the Camorra and witnessed at close range its audacious, sophisticated, and far-reaching corruption that has paralyzed his city. On 10 October 1986, the bodies of two young girls were found in a Brighton park. The girls were nine-year-olds Nicola Fellows and Karen Hadaway who had gone out to play the day before. Evidence mounted against a local man Russell Bishop, but a shock trial result saw him walk free. Three years later, Graham Bartlett was working for Brighton CID when a seven-year-old was abducted and left to die. She survived, and connections were made to Russell Bishop. Will the police put him away this time? With unique access to the officers involved in the investigation this is the fascinating inside story of what became a thirty-two year fight for justice. The book that inspired the hit Netflix documentary Making A Murderer. Steven Avery spent eighteen years in prison for a crime he didn’t commit. In 2003, he was exonerated after new DNA testing revealed that another man had committed the crime. Only two years later, Steven Avery was arrested again for the brutal murder of Teresa Halbach – a photographer who went missing several days earlier. Had the so called "Inncocent Man" turned into acold blooded killer? Or was he wrongly accused, again . . . Carol Ann Lee's account of the White House Farm murders was the inspiration for ITV's series White House Farm. Nevill and June Bamber, their daughter Sheila and her two young sons were discovered shot to death in their home. All the windows and doors of the farmhouse were secure. The Bambers' son, 24-year-old Jeremy, alerted the police after apparently receiving a phone call from his father who told him Sheila had 'gone berserk' with the gun. At first it appeared to be a straightforward case of murder-suicide, but a dramatic turn of events was to disprove the police's theory and Jeremy was convicted of killing his entire family. Bestselling author Peter James has done plenty of in-depth research into the lives of the Brighton and Hove police when researching his novels, and they are just as gritty as the real thing. Here, Peter and his friend Graham Bartlett, once a long-serving detective in the city once described as Britain’s ‘crime capital’, have written a gripping account of the city’s most challenging cases. From Sussex’s worst non-terrorist murder to the brutal execution of a surfer, this is the dangerous inside story of policing and the toll it takes on the force. 1977, the Thunderbird Motel. J. J. Wedick and Jack Brennan, two fresh-faced FBI agents, were about to go undercover. Their target: the charismatic, globe-trotting con man Phil Kitzer, who was responsible for swindling (and spending) millions of dollars. One problem: Wedick and Brennan weren’t trained for the job. As the young agents became entangled in Kitzer’s outrageous schemes, they also grew to respect him – even to care for him. And Kitzer began to think of Wedick and Brennan as best friends. Chasing Phil is the story of an incredible round-the-world manhunt, a charismatic con man and a friendship that changed crime forever. Michael Maisey was excited the day he was locked up in the notorious Feltham Young Offenders Institute; he was going to be a legend to all his mates. The sixteen-year-old was in for attempted murder. He was innocent of this particular crime but amongst the violent and dangerous young men on his wing he was about to learn exactly how far he’d go to survive. In Young Offender we see what turned a good kid into a wanted criminal. For five years Michael was in and out of Feltham, on a downward spiral of crime and drug and alcohol addiction. The road to recovery would mean changing himself in the deepest possible ways. When law student Alexandria Marzano-Lesnevich is asked to work on a death row hearing for convicted murderer and child molester Ricky Langley, she finds herself thrust into the tangled story of his childhood. As she digs deeper and deeper into the case she realizes that, despite their vastly different circumstances, something in his story is unsettlingly, uncannily familiar. The Fact of a Body is both an enthralling memoir and a groundbreaking, heart-stopping investigation into how the law is personal, composed of individual stories, and proof that arriving at the truth is more complicated, and powerful than we could ever imagine. You may not wish to think about it, but one day you or someone you love will almost certainly appear in a criminal courtroom. You might be a juror, a victim, a witness or – perhaps through no fault of your own – a defendant. Whatever your role, you’d expect a fair trial. I’m a barrister. I work in the criminal justice system, and every day I see how fairness is not guaranteed. In The Secret Barrister, I want to share some stories from my daily life to show you how the system is broken, who broke it and why we should start caring before it’s too late. The Kray twins ruled Sixties London underworld for more than a decade. As gang lords they were among the most powerful and feared men in the city. Their reign of terror ended on 8 March 1969 when they were sentenced to life for the East End gangland murders with which their names have become synonymous. Compiled from a series of interviews with Fred Dinenage from inside their prison walls, Our Story explodes the myths surrounding the Kray twins as they set the record straight in their own words. Now a major TV miniseries starring Andrew Garfield, Jon Krakauer raises provocative questions about faith-based violence in Under The Banner of Heaven. In July 1984, Dan and Ron Lafferty entered the home of their brother Allen and killed Allen’s wife and daughter. They insisted they were commanded to kill by God. Examining the origins of the Mormon faith, along with the events that led the brothers to kill, this gripping work of non-fiction illuminates an otherwise confounding realm of human behaviour. Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia were enjoying a Sunday together, completely unaware that they had been poisoned with the deadly nerve agent Novichok. Hours later both were found slumped on a park bench close to death. Following their attempted murders on British soil, Russia was publicly accused by the West of carrying out the attack, marking a new low for international relations between the two since the end of the Cold War. The Skripal Files tells the full story behind the Salisbury Poisonings, one of the most shocking incidents to occur in Britain in recent memory. San Pedro is Bolivia's most notorious prison. Small-time drug smuggler Thomas McFadden found himself on the inside. He ended up making a living by giving backpackers tours of the prison – he became a fixture on the backpacking circuit and was named in the Lonely Planet guide to Bolivia. When he was told that for a bribe of $5000 his sentence could be overturned, it was the many backpackers who'd passed through who sent him the money. Written by lawyer Rusty Young, Marching Powder – sometimes shocking, sometimes funny – is a riveting story of survival. The rise of George Villiers from minor gentry to royal power seemed to defy gravity. Tthe young gallant enraptured James, Britain’s first Stuart king. For a decade, Villiers was at the king’s side – right up to James’s death in March 1625. Almost immediately, Villiers’ enemies accused him of poisoning the king. A parliamentary investigation was launched, but the charges came to nothing, and were relegated to a historical footnote. Now, new historical scholarship suggests that a deadly combination of hubris and vulnerability did indeed drive Villiers to kill the man who made him. In The King’s Assassin, Benjamin Wooley examines this remarkable story. From journalist Chris Blackhurst, Too Big to Jail unveils how HSBC facilitated mass money laundering schemes for brutal drug kingpins and rogue nations – and thereby helped to grow one of the deadliest drug empires the world has ever seen. It brings together an extraordinary cast of politicians, bankers, drug dealers, FBI officers and whistle-blowers, and asks what price does greed have? Whose job is it to police global finance? And why did not a single person go to prison for facilitating the murderous expansion of a global drug empire? Maud West ran her detective agency in London for more than thirty years, having started sleuthing on behalf of society’s finest in 1905. Her exploits grabbed headlines throughout the world but, beneath the public persona, she was forced to hide vital aspects of her own identity in order to thrive in a class-obsessed and male-dominated world. And – as historical researcher Susannah Stapleton reveals – she was a most unreliable witness to her own life. Who was Maud? And what was the reality of being a female private detective in the Golden Age of Crime? Bringing together ground-breaking forensic dicoveries, including vital DNA evidence and gripping historical detective work, Naming Jack the Ripper constructs the first truly convincing case for identifying the world's most notorious serial killer. In 2007, Jack Edwards bought a shawl believed to have been left beside the body of Jack the Ripper’s fourth victim, Catherine Eddowes. The shawl was not only proven to be genuine and stained with Catherine Eddowes’ blood, the killer’s DNA was also discovered. This evidence would allow Edwards to finally identify Jack the Ripper. For decades, private forensic search expert Peter Faulding has helped investigators to discover the secrets of the country’s most harrowing and perplexing crime scenes. Now, for the first time, Peter is telling his life story. From a childhood exploring caves and tunnels to becoming a pioneer of search and rescue techniques and working on some of Britain’s most high-profile murder cases, Peter’s extraordinary story of a life and career spent helping others will have you on the edge of your seat. In 2013, twenty-nine-year-old Edward Snowden shocked the world when he broke with the American intelligence establishment and revealed that the United States government was secretly pursuing the means to collect every single phone call, text message, and email. The result would be an unprecedented system of mass surveillance with the ability to pry into the private lives of every person on earth. Here, Snowden reveals for the very first time how he helped to build this system and why he was moved to expose it. True crime in the American heartland. Under the Banner of Heaven is a riveting account of Mormon fundamentalism and renegade prophets. Brothers Ron and Dan Lafferty insist they were commanded to kill by God. Jon Krakauer‘s investigation into the murder of a mother and her child is a meticulously researched, bone-chilling narrative of polygamy, savage violence and unyielding faith. An incisive look inside isolated Mormon Fundamentalist communities in America, this gripping work of non-fiction illuminates an otherwise confounding realm of human behaviour. In the early morning of 15 November 1959, Dick Hickock and Perry Smith broke into the home of Herbert Clutter. On discovering there was no money in the house, the two men brutally killed Herb, his wife and his two younger children. Skilfully researched and powerfully evocative, Truman Capote's In Cold Blood offers insight into the nature of American violence. This grimly funny and devastating account of prison life tells the story of those on the wrong side of the cell doors. It is written by Neil ‘Sam’ Samworth, who for eleven years was a prison officer at HMP Manchester, guarding gangsters, serial criminals and those who had just made bad decisions. This page-turning tale, which takes in riots, feuds, fights and injustices, is a gripping exposé of dysfunctional life behind the bars in modern Britain. Gripping and eye opening, The Girl for the Job is an exciting account of life as a female undercover cop by Danni Brooke. For over a decade Danni was one of the most effective female undercover cops in the UK. Whether she was infiltrating organized crime gangs or disrupting drug supply lines, Danni played the innocent Essex girl, fooling even the most suspicious villains, using her quick wits to keep her out of trouble. In her honest, warm and gripping memoir, Danni also reveals why she left the police, how she found a new career and why the thrill of covert work still pulls her into private investigations. In 2003, art critic Richard Dorment answered a telephone call from a stranger. The caller was Joe Simon, an American film producer and art collector. He was ringing at the suggestion of David Hockney, his neighbour in Malibu. A committee of experts called the Andy Warhol Art Authentication Board had declared the two Warhols in his collection to be fake. He wanted to know why and thought Dorment could help. This call would mark the beginning of an extraordinary story that would play out over the next ten years and would involve a cast of characters straight out of fiction. Nonfiction literary, radio, and film genre For other uses, see True Crime. True crime is a genre of non-fiction work in which an author examines a crime, including detailing the actions of people associated with and affected by the crime, and investigating the perpetrator's motives. True crime works often deal with violent crimes such as murders and serial killers, including high-profile cases (such as JonBenét Ramsey, O. J. Simpson, and Pamela Smart), and more obscure or unsolved cases that the author wishes to bring wider attention to. A true crime work may use either a journalistic style with a focus on known facts, or a speculative style with a larger focus on the author's personal conclusions regarding a crime. True crime has taken the form of various media, including literature such as magazines and books, television series and documentaries (which may sometimes feature dramatized scenes of the crime based on published accounts), and digital media such as podcasts and internet video. A true crime series may be structured as an anthology of stories focusing on different cases, or cover a single case in a serialized format. True crime podcasts experienced a major growth in popularity in the mid-2010s, with Serial setting listenership records, and the genre as a whole having seen long-term gains in overall listenership. True crime works have been particularly popular among women. True crime has been credited with helping to increase interest in crime among the general public, while decreasing trust in the criminal justice system. Some true crime series have influenced perceptions of specific cases among the public and authorities. The genre has faced criticism for often relying on sensationalism and shock value, with concerns that true crime works are disrespectful to crime victims and their families, may emphasize specific points over others in order to suit an author's preferred narrative or opinion, or may contain fictionalized content. Further criticism, based on analysis of popular podcasts, suggests that the genre's narrative conventions can lead to the dehumanisation of female victims, whose stories are often framed around their bodies rather than their personhood.[1] Murder pamphlet, 1812 Zhang Yingyu's The Book of Swindles (c. 1617) is a late Ming dynasty collection of stories about alleged cases of fraud.[2] Works in the related Chinese genre of court case fiction (gong'an xiaoshuo), such as the 16th-century Cases of Magistrate Bao were both fiction & based on actual accounts. Hundreds of pamphlets, broadsides, chapbooks and other street literature about murders and other crimes were published from 1550 to 1700 in Britain as literacy increased and cheap new printing methods became widespread. They varied in style: some were sensational, while others conveyed a moral message. Most were purchased by the "artisan class and above", as the lower classes did not have the money or time to read them. Ballads were also created, the verses of which were posted on walls around towns, that were told from the perpetrator's point of view in an attempt to understand the psychological motivations of the crime. Such pamphlets remained in circulation in the 19th century in Britain and the United States, even after widespread crime journalism was introduced via the penny press.[3] In 1807, Henry Tufts published A Narrative of the Life, Adventures, Travels and Sufferings of Henry Tufts, which is likely the first extensive biography of an American criminal.[4] Thomas De Quincey published the essay "On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts" in Blackwood's Magazine in 1827, which focused not on the murder or the murderer but on how society views crime.[3] Starting in 1889, Scottish lawyer William Roughead wrote and published essays for six decades about notable British murder trials he attended, with many of these essays collected in the 2000 book Classic Crimes. Many regard Roughead "as the dean of the modern true crime genre."[5] An American pioneer of the genre was Edmund Pearson, who was influenced in his style of writing about crime by De Quincey. Pearson published a series of books of this type starting with Studies in Murder in 1924 and concluding with More Studies in Murder in 1936. Before being collected in his books, Pearson's true crime stories typically appeared in magazines like Liberty, The New Yorker, and Vanity Fair. Inclusion in these high-class magazines distinguished Pearson's crime narratives from those found in the penny press.[6] The foreword of a 1964 anthology of Pearson's stories contains an early mention of the term "true crime" as a genre.[7] Truman Capote's "non-fiction novel" In Cold Blood (1965) is usually credited with establishing the modern novelistic style of the genre[8] and the one that rocketed it to great profitability.[6] The first true crime magazine, True Detective, was published in 1924. It featured fairly matter-of-fact accounts of crimes and how they were solved. During the genre's heyday, before World War II, 200 different true crime magazines were sold on newsstands, with six million magazines sold every month. By itself, True Detective had two million in circulation. The covers of the magazines generally featured women being menaced in some way by a potential criminal perpetrator, with the scenarios being more intense in the 1960s. Public interest in the magazines began declining in the 1970s, and by 1996, almost none were being published, including True Detective, which had been bought and shut down by a new owner.[9] True crime books often center on sensational, shocking, or strange events, particularly murder. Even though murder makes up less than 20% of reported crime, it is present in most true crime stories. Typically, the crimes most commonly include murder; about 40 percent focus on tales of serial killers.[8][10] Serial killers have been a highly profitable sub-genre. An informal survey conducted by Publishers Weekly in 1993 concluded that the more popular true crime books focus on serial killers, with the more gruesome and grotesque content performing even better.[6] Some true crime works are "instant books" produced quickly to capitalize on popular demand; these have been described as "more than formulaic" and hyper-conventional.[11] Others may reflect years of thoughtful research and inquiry and may have considerable literary merit.[8] A milestone of the genre was Norman Mailer's The Executioner's Song (1979), which was the first book in the genre to win a Pulitzer Prize.[12] Other prominent true crime accounts include Truman Capote's In Cold Blood;[13] the best-selling true crime book of all time, Helter Skelter, by the lead Manson family prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi and Curt Gentry;[14] and Ann Rule's The Stranger Beside Me, about Ted Bundy.[13] Rule's 1987 work, Small Sacrifices, tells the story of Diane Downs, an Oregon woman who in May 1983 murdered her daughter and attempted to murder her other two children.[15] An example of a modern true crime book is I'll Be Gone in the Dark by Michelle McNamara.[16] Erik Larson's The Devil in the White City gives a novelistic account of H. H. Holmes' operations during the 1893 World's Fair. In 2006, Associated Content stated that since the start of the 21st century, the genre of writing that was growing the quickest was true crime. Much of this is due to the ease of recycling materials and the publication of numerous volumes by the same authors differing only by minor updates.[17] The majority of readers of true crime books are women.[18][19] True crime documentaries have been a growing medium in the last several decades. One of the most influential documentaries in this process was The Thin Blue Line (1988), directed by Errol Morris. This documentary, among others, feature reenactments, although other documentary filmmakers choose not to use them since they do not show the truth.[20] In the early 1990s, a boom of true crime films began in Hong Kong. These films ranged from graphic Category III–rated films such as The Untold Story and Dr. Lamb (based on serial killers Wong Chi Hang and Lam Kor-wan, respectively) to more general audience fare such as the film Crime Story (based on the kidnapping of businessman Teddy Wang Tei-huei), which featured action star Jackie Chan.[21][22] Multiple cable networks in the United States focus predominantly on true crime, including Investigation Discovery, and Oxygen—a network that originally aired a generalist format targeting women, but pivoted entirely to true crime and police procedurals in 2017 amid the success of series such as Snapped among its target demographic.[23][24][25] An earlier example—Court TV—featured a mix of true crime-oriented programming (such as Forensic Files), as well as a daytime news block featuring coverage of legal news and jury trials. The channel later shifted to primarily airing reality television programming, and then relaunched as the more generalized TruTV in 2008.[26][27][28] Turner Broadcasting later syndicated some of Court TV's library to the digital multicast television network Justice Network (which itself rebranded as "True Crime Network" in 2022).[29][30][31] In 2018, the rights to the Court TV brand and much of its library was sold to the E. W. Scripps Company, who subsequently relaunched the Court TV brand as a digital television network.[32][33] Streaming services have also carried true crime programming; Netflix experienced success with its 2015 series Making a Murderer, leading the service to make further investments into the genre to ride off its popularity.[34][35] Paradise Lost: The Child Murders at Robin Hood Hills (1996)[36] Making a Murderer [36] The Jinx[36] The Sons of Sam: A Descent Into Darkness[37] The Keepers[36] Don't F**k with Cats: Hunting an Internet Killer[37] Evil Genius[37] Serial host and producer Sarah Koenig Podcasts with a true crime theme are a recent trend. The 2014 true crime podcast Serial broke podcasting records when it achieved 5 million downloads on iTunes quicker than any previous podcast.[38][39][40] As of September 2018, it had been downloaded more than 340 million times.[41] Other notable true crime podcasts have included Criminal, Dirty John, My Favorite Murder, Someone Knows Something, and Up and Vanished among others.[42][43] Podcasts have now expanded to more platforms, such as Spotify,

Apple Music, YouTube and others. Spotify has an expanding number of true crime podcasts with Rotten Mango, Conviction American Panic, Bed of Lies, Catch & Kill among many more. This genre has been on the rise as psychologist, Amanda Vicary, said her report found "women were most drawn to true crime stories that gave them tips for spotting danger and staying alive".[44] Apple Podcasts added a dedicated "True Crime" category in 2019, and until then the podcasts that would be moved into the section had existed across many other categories, such as History, News & Politics, and even Comedy.[45] It has been speculated that fear could play a role in the popularity of true crime podcasts. These podcasts often recount horrific crimes, which triggers the fear response and the release of adrenaline in the body. Due to the possibility of binge-watching podcasts, adrenaline rushes can be experienced in quick bursts.[46] Another explanation for the popularity of true crime podcasts is due to the serialized nature of crime, in which events happen one after another. Podcasts that explore a crime episodically can utilize this aspect in their storytelling.[46] Another strength of these podcasts is use of typical sensationalist techniques, such as inclusion of direct dialogue and focus on victims and their families. Podcasts can use music or other sound cues to maximize the intended impact or shock value of a fact, as seen in Serial.[47] In the U.S. women are predominantly the consumers of digital true crime podcasts, in 2019 making up around 73%[48] of the content audience. The 2019 Edison Research Report found that at the time of data collection, an estimated 90 million of the U.S. population older than 12 had listened to a podcast in the last month,[49] and of those polled, around 28% were interested in true crime as a topic to listen to in a podcast. In 2020, true crime podcasts held many of the U.S. top 50 spots for popularity by most listens, with Crime Junkie at No. 3, My Favorite Murder at No. 5, and others scattered among the top 50, such as; Serial at No. 13, Dateline NBC at No. 22, and Criminal at No. 30.[50][51] In that year, true crime ranked third overall for genres by listen[50][52] behind both comedy and news. From November 2019 through May 2022, true crime podcast listening increased the most of the top three genres by percentage gain in listeners, with a 66% gain (from ~12.9 million to ~21.5 million) in current listeners, versus the 44% and 37% gain in listeners by comedy and news respectively.[53] On Apple Podcasts, True Crime podcasts make up just less than half a percent of the total number of podcasts on the platform. On a collated list of 432 podcasts from the most-visited results of a search for "Top Podcasts of 2021", true crime podcasts made up more than 20% of the podcasts constituting the lists.[45] In 2017, as many as 30% of podcast listeners had listened to true crime podcasts, and in 2019, this had increased to up to 44%.[54][55] True crime works can impact the crimes they cover and the audience who consumes it. Also, coverage of true crime events can have a direct effect on the aftermath of the crime and how it is dealt with by authorities or a given community.[56] The Netflix show Making A Murderer has had a range of real-life effects, ranging from the show being shown in law schools as instructional material to increased mistrust in criminal investigators.[57] The investigative process of the true crime genre can lead to changes in the cases being covered, such as when Robert Durst seemingly confessed to murder in the documentary The Jinx and was arrested.[58][59] A study conducted in 2011, in Nebraska, showed that consuming non-fiction crime shows is correlated with an increased fear of being a victim of crime. As the frequency of watching true crime shows increased, support for the death penalty increased, while support for the criminal justice system decreased.[60] In Australia, the amount of reports given to the crime reporting network Crime Stoppers Australia that led to charges being pressed doubled from 2012 to 2017. This increased interest in crime is attributed to popular true crime podcasts.[61] The true crime genre has been criticized as being disrespectful to crime victims and their families and is described by some as trash culture.[62] Author Jack Miles believes this genre has a high potential to cause harm and mental trauma to the real people involved.[63] True crime media can be produced without the consent of the victim's family, which can lead to them being re-traumatized.[64] Recent discussions about the consumption of true crime media have also focused on the impact on the audience's mental health.[56] Depending on the writer, true crime can adhere strictly to well-established facts in journalistic fashion or can be highly speculative.[11] Writers can selectively choose which information to present and which to leave out in order to support their narrative.[64][65] Artists have offered fact-based narratives blending fiction and historical reenactment.[66] Author Christiana Gregoriou analyzed several books of the genre and concluded that tabloidization and fictionalization are pervasive in the works of some of the authors of true crime literature. In some cases, even books by the same author disagree on specifics about the same killer or events.[11] For instance, some facts reported in Capote's In Cold Blood were challenged in 2013.[67] Capote's second attempt at a true crime book, Handcarved Coffins (1979), despite being subtitled "Nonfiction Account of an American Crime", was already noted for containing significant fictional elements.[68]

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