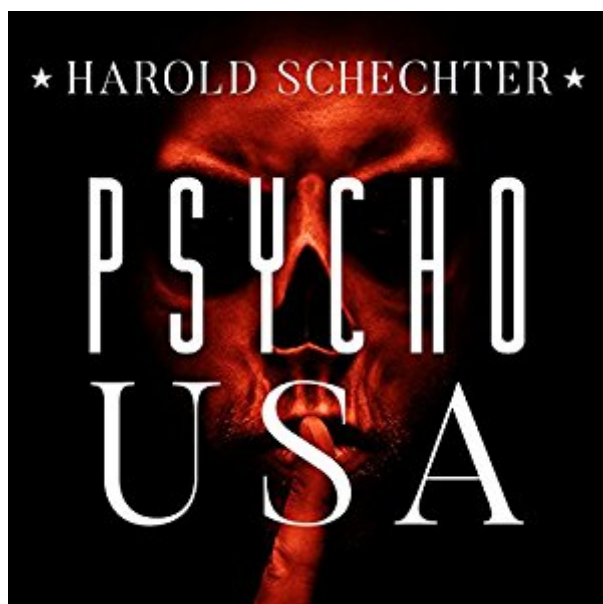


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Psycho USA: Famous American Killers You Never Heard Of



Synopsis

In the horrifying annals of American crime, the infamous names of brutal killers such as Bundy, Dahmer, Gacy, and Berkowitz are writ large in the imaginations of a public both horrified and hypnotized by their monstrous, murderous acts. But for every celebrity psychopath who's gotten ink for spilling blood, there's a bevy of all-but-forgotten homicidal fiends studding the bloody margins of US history. In this book you'll meet: Robert Irwin, "The Mad Sculptor": He longed to use his carving skills on the woman he loved, but had to settle for making short work of her mother and sister instead. Peter Robinson, "The Tell-Tale Heart Killer": It took two days and four tries for him to finish off his victim, but no time at all for keen-eyed cops to spot the fatal flaw in his floor plan. Anton Probst, "The Monster in the Shape of a Man": The ax-murdering immigrant's systematic slaughter of all eight members of a Pennsylvania farm family matched the savagery of the Manson murders a century later. Edward H. Ruloff, "The Man of Two Lives": A genuine Jekyll and Hyde, his brilliant scholarship disguised his bloodthirsty brutality.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The skull on the cover didn't bother me at all. Even cozy mysteries had skulls on their covers for years, especially during the 1980s, so I've long since gotten over finding skulls creepy. Out of this collection of once-famous American serial killers, the Smutty Nose Butcher is the only one I recall ever hearing about before. (That was on a program on one of the Discovery or History channels. If the greater detail this book provides for the case is correct, the program's pick for the murderer is

unlikely.)I found the cases interesting. I particularly appreciated the illustrations, photographs, quotations from contemporary sources, and the added material after the cases (often comparisons with other cases or information about the period, as well as murder ballads, if any). Edmund Pearson's "Rules For Murderesses" on page 294 is funny as well as grim. Of the main cases, the Bath School Disaster of 1927 was the most harrowing. As the author states, it combined features of the Oklahoma City Bombing with the Columbine Massacre, and added a suicide bomber. The period covered is 1782 to 1961. Here's a list of the killers: William Beadle, Polly Bodine, Dr. Valorous F. Coolidge, Robert Edwards, Franklin Evans, Charles Freeman, Francis Gouldy, Samuel Green, Martha Grinder, Carlyle Harris, Julian Harvey, Harry Hayward, William Edward Hickman, Albert Hicks, Robert Irwin, Scott Jackson, Andrew P. Kehoe, Joseph LaPage, Ada LeBoeuf, Eddie Leonski, Robert McConaghy, Emeline Meaker, Pearl O' Loughlin, Harry Powers, Anton Probst, Henrietta Robinson, Peter Robinson, Sarah Jane Robinson, Edward H. Rulloff, Lydia Sherman, Jesse Strang, Louis Wagner, and Return J. M. Ward.

*This book was given to me by Ballantine Books in exchange for a honest review. Thank you!-----I've taken a lot of comfort lately in knowing that I'm not the only one who has a fascination with serial killers. No, I don't condone their hideous activities but I do believe it is necessary to explore just how depraved the human mind can be. I had seen the author of this book, Harold Schechter on one of my favorite shows Deadly Women. As soon as I saw this was available on Netgalley for review I snatched it up. This true crime writer always sounds like he knows his stuff and this book just enforced my belief. The only non-fiction books I read are true crime books and I've read some that put me to sleep within a few minutes. This was not one of those books. From the introduction to the final word the book kept me hooked to every word and every page. Since I'm a serial killer enthusiast I took it as a challenge to see if this book really had "killers you never heard about," again, the book did not disappoint. This true crime book has a ton of cut-throat, down right revolting criminals that for some reason didn't get the same spotlight treatment as those such as the notorious Ted Bundy or John Wayne Gacy. If you're wondering why that is, reading this book will give you the answers. I loved how Schechter broke down why some crimes and criminals didn't get the spotlight and why some did. Another thing I enjoyed about the book was reading the "murder ballads" that were literally ballads written about a murder. They were equal to the true crime shows we enjoy today, just in a different form. The author posted excerpts and full ballads they were really interesting (and sometimes heart wrenching) to read.

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