



Journey Into Darkness

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There is only one John Douglas.

We first met John Douglas in *Mindhunter*, telling the story of his brilliant and terrifying career with the FBI, until his retirement in 1995. And now, working again with coauthor Mark Olshaker, acclaimed filmmaker, novelist, and journalist, John takes us even further. We accompany him on the *Journey into Darkness*, for every instance that helps police identify the unknown subject of a violent series of rapes, bombings, arsons, or murders is another trip to the dark side.

And here we travel with some of the brilliant and sensitive agent trained, and who have carried on the work: men like Jud Ray, who by phone gave Alaska the police the exact personality of the killer of a mother and her two young daughters; Gregg McCrary, who confronted an unknown killer of teenagr girls on national television and assured him he would be caught; and Steve Marfigian, who formulated a complex strategy for solving a years-old string of burglaries, rapes, and murders, and in the process helped free the wrong convicted man.

Here also we get a startling fresh look at the murders if Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman, as if John had been called in by the LAPD to profile the killer. And finally we hear how his experiences have shaped his views on justice and punishment.

The *Journey into Darkness* is a perilous one, but ultimately hopeful as well. Not only do we see through the men and women who track the most sadistic of criminals what a powerful weapon behavioral science has become, but we also get advice on how we might better keep our children, our families, and ourselves safe from harm. By making the *Journey into Darkness* with John Douglas and his colleagues, we come away with an insight into the human condition that no one else can offer.

Journey Into Darkness Details

Date : Published September 1st 1997 by Pocket Books (first published 1997)

ISBN :

Author : John Edward Douglas , Mark Olshaker

Format : Kindle Edition 414 pages

Genre : Crime, True Crime, Nonfiction, Mystery, Psychology

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Trudy says

It is interesting to see what makes criminals tick. I like to think I learned ways to protect myself and the people I care about. I choose not to be a victim.

Shad says

I liked *Mindhunter* better because the author stuck to what he knew and kept to a tighter structure. This work was less organized and was all over the map on subject matter and purpose.

Sheila Myers says

"Enjoy" is a word most people probably wouldn't use to describe how they felt about a book of this type, but it's how I feel. There's a lot of interesting information presented in "Journey Into Darkness" and, even though I've done a lot of research for my novels, there's a lot in the book that's new to me. Instead of focusing only on the crime and the criminal like a lot of true crime books, I liked the way John Douglas also discusses how criminal profiling started and how it's used, along with telling the story of the victims and their families.

Nitsa says

Makes you think twice about walking alone at night. Or ever. Contemplating a large investment in a barbed fence, a pit bull and a mote after reading about some of the heinous crimes he's profiled.

Fishface says

Finished this on the anniversary of the murder of Kitty Genovese. That seems fitting. I picked this one up because I found out the authors discussed Ron Bailey, a local serial killer. But there is so very much more in here. I came away understanding better how the experts read and interpret crime scenes and I learned about a number of other books I want to seek out. I can warmly recommend this one, although it's far from a smiley read.

James says

Heartbreaking and gripping. John Douglas recounts several horrific murder cases he helped investigate, focusing on the victims and their families. They're haunting stories, both in the impact of the killings on the families and then in the stress and grief accompanying the convoluted legal processes that sometimes

followed, including a series of technical appeals, in a case cinched both by massive physical evidence and by a detailed confession, that had lasted - at the time of writing - more than two decades.

Dr. Douglas makes a compelling plea for victims' rights to be given a higher priority in the legal system, while being painstakingly clear in spelling out that he is not advocating taking away any of the rights of people accused of crimes. That last point is more emphasized by the story of one case, in which he, other FBI investigators, and police and prosecutors worked to overturn a wrongful conviction when new evidence indicated that a man who was already in prison for a murder was not the perpetrator after all.

Anyone interested in crime, psychopathology, or victims' rights needs to read this book.

Chris says

I've always been pretty intrigued by Serial Killers and the people who track them down. If there was a way to get a job tracking them without going through lower law enforcement and the possibility of being stuck in Robbery or Vice or another department I would have made that my career choice.

All told, this is a fascinating book... not for the faint of heart, some of the material is graphic and hard to read.

It is about as close to looking in the face of evil as most people would want to go.

Mkittysamom says

This was hard to read, especially to watch John suffer. It was great though, he always does a great job telling his story!

Robert Finnann says

John Douglas may or may not be a great profiler, he certainly seems to think he is and doesn't mind telling the reader so ad nauseum.

But whatever his merits as a profiler are, his ability to author a coherent, interesting book is nil.

He constantly loses focus and goes off on tangents completely irrelevant to the subject at hand.

Three long and boring chapters are devoted to one murder, that of a female Marine.

He goes into excruciating detail of her family's history in the most stultifying prose it has ever been my misfortune to read.

On some of the cases, he's also a bit of a Monday morning quarterback, informing the reader that he could have picked the killer, if only he'd been asked.

So what we have here is a book about an fascinating subject that is rendered as interesting as your Aunt's gall bladder operation story, written by an egomaniac and an incompetent ghostwriter and seemingly edited by a high school teenager.

April says

I skimmed most of this because the author can sort of go on and on but it was still interesting to a crime/FBI/profiling freak such as me. Plus I now see where Criminal Minds gets 99% of its storylines from!

Sara says

The subject matter was a little too dark for me here.

Having read *Mindhunter: Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit*, I was intrigued enough to look into some other true crime books by John Douglas. *Journey Into Darkness* claims to look into the why's of criminal deviant (mainly sexual) behaviour, and offers to explain the inner workings of these criminals minds. Although going into this I knew the descriptions and details of various violent crimes would be intense, I found them a little bit too intense. Crime scenes and acts are picked over in such a way that it made me feel very uneasy - especially the lines regarding young children, although it's undoubtedly interesting if you like reading this kind of thing.

There is also a lot of repetition here. Douglas mentions various issues already discussed in his previous novels, and one particular murder (that of Marine Suzanne Collins) is dissected over three chapters in obsessive detail. There is lots of legal talk that unfortunately I just didn't find that interesting or informative. It felt very disconnected compared to previous chapters.

The book is obviously also very dated. There are no updates of cases after the mid 90s, meaning I often found myself googling things to see if there were any new leads on cases. I don't think it would have taken much effort to include a paragraph here and there with updates etc.

Not as good as his previous.

Mizuki says

Pre-review: It is a re-read (I first read it when I was a teenage)! So happy to see a Taiwanese publisher republished this series after the success of the *Mindhunter* TV series!

(Link: <https://giphy.com/gifs/netflix-david-...>)

PS: I really like the part about Edmund Kemper although he is a mother freaking psychopath serial murderer! (The author of this book claims Ed Kemper is the serial killer with the highest IQ and most insight about himself he had encountered.)

(Link: <https://giphy.com/gifs/netflix-david-...>)

Rating: 5 full brilliant, disturbing and intriguing stars.

The first thing you should know about this book is: the author, John Douglas, a retired FBI detective and the first generation of detectives who mastered the art of criminal profiling, sure as hell knows his subjects well; and I'm both delighted and thankful to have him sharing his wealth of knowledge with the readers in such a systematical, easily understandable way; even adding in plenty of helpful hints to inform us about the signs of danger and how best to protect ourselves and the children.

What is there to say about serial killers? They are twisted and mostly unsympathetic creatures, but the author wants us to know they are not mad (at least most of them aren't insane) or entirely beyond our understanding. I like all the case studies the author and his fellow FBI detectives had done with these serial killers.

PS: when reading this book I'd gotten rather sick of hearing about pedophiles and what they had done to children. (okay, maybe not every one of them will wind up killing and raping children, but still)

Laurie says

Don't read too much of these, you will start seeing these traits in the most unlikely places... and people...

Maureen says

There is no question that John Douglas was good at his job as a profiler at the FBI, and he helped develop a methodology for interviewing serial killers that has provided valuable data. That being said, I have a few points of contention. One is that there has been such an emphasis on serial killers, that everyone who murders someone is liable to be viewed in the same way. Most murderers kill people they know, and much of the time alcohol or illegal substances are involved, or mental illness, or similar mitigating circumstances. I am not trying to justify murder, but rather to say that it is not all black and white. There are many shades of gray.

The extremity of the cases which Douglas depicts makes it easier to see the world in black and white. That attitude may assist him as a profiler, but it leaves a lot to be desired if the end question is one of trying to make the world a better place. After reading this book, I decided that I do not need to read any more books by this author.

Shawna says

What I didn't like about this book was Douglas's tendency to reference stories that he already explored in his first book. Like the offensive ploy he claims he used that got Richard Speck to finally speak to authorities. He also reiterated the medical condition that downed him during the Green River Killer investigation. (Way to go on that case man, you guys finally nailed him after what 20 years?)

Douglas did write about some interesting cases that I hadn't read about before, and the book held my attention.

Although, I do take issue with the way he characterized Karla Homolka as a victim of her husband Paul Bernardo. I have to wonder if at the time of the writing the videotapes depicting Karla's involvement with the

murders had come out. He seems to believe that Karla was as much a victim as Kristen French or Leslie Mahaffey. Not so. Any woman who participates in the rape (literally) and murder of her younger sister, is clearly depraved. He writes at one point in the book, "we all make our choices and must be held responsible for them." So why let this woman off the hook? I just couldn't buy his logic.
