



The Jeffrey Dahmer Story: An American Nightmare

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They smelled the foul odors. They heard the power saw buzzing in the dead of night but neighbors never imagined the horrors happening right next door.

The hot sultry night of July 22, 1991 was one the tenants of the Oxford Apartments would never forget. A panic stricken young man--a pair of handcuffs still dangling from his wrists--ran out of Apartment 213 and told police an incredible tale of terror.

Shaking with fear, he led officers back to his captor's lair, where they made the gruesome discovery. Inside were the body parts of at least fifteen men--including torsos stuffed into a barrel, severed heads in a refrigerator, and skulls boiled clean and stashed in a filing cabinet. Tacked to the freezer were Poloroid photographs of mutilated corpses.

When investigators arrested 31-year-old Jeffrey Dahmer, they realized they had stumbled onto a "real-life Hannibal Lecter"--a sadistic murderer who told them he had saved a human heart "to eat later". What could turn a handsome, former tennis player, the son of middle-class parents, into a perverse serial killer whose unthinkable acts shocked the nation?

The Jeffrey Dahmer Story takes you into Jeffrey Dahmer's twisted world of bizarre sexual encounters, mutilation and cannibalism--in one of history's most appalling true crime cases.

With 8 pages of chilling photographs.

The Jeffrey Dahmer Story: An American Nightmare Details

Date : Published November 15th 1991 by St. Martin's Paperbacks (first published 1991)

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Author : Don Davis

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From Reader Review The Jeffrey Dahmer Story: An American Nightmare for online ebook

Molly Gothic says

In general the book was pretty good. I just did not understand why the author kept getting into the history of all the places where Dahmer lived from childhood on up? I don't know if he was trying to fill pages up (?) or perhaps thought Dahmer's residence and environment influenced his lifestyle, but it would have been more interesting if he would have deducted all the tire companies, breweries, what happened way back when in Wisconsin or Ohio, etc. and filled those pages with interviews/quotes from Dahmer's family or people who knew him personally. That part of the book frustrated me.

Matt says

If you're looking for something that contains the straight facts with the occasional pointless history lesson on areas in which Dahmer lived, then this book is for you. Quite frankly, for something that claims to be a "New York Times Bestseller" it leaves a lot to be desired.

It was interesting in the way a news report about the subject matter would be, but there was no real insight. No hypothesis or attempts to understand the case by Davis.

To me it seemed to be nothing more than a collection of other people's transcripts, work, and hypothesis surrounded by Davis's annoying references to the history of the mundane (for example, a rather large chunk of one of the early chapters was devoted to the rubber industry and the jobs it brought to the area some 50 years before Dahmer was even born.

♥ Marlene♥ says

on Sunday, November 13, 2005 I wrote about this book:

I did read just a bit. I had to stop cause when I read about the 14 year old boy Konerak, who ran away with Dahmer following him, and the police believing Dahmer'who said the boy was a gay drunk, the boy still had a pair of handcuff's on his wrist!!! and bringing the boy back to Dahmers apartment where he was slaughtered....

No this was to emotional for me.

on Saturday, September 22, 2007 I wrote further:

Well I did manage to read it. Very sad story and Jeffrey Dahmer is pictured so different when you compare it to The Shrine of Jeffrey Dahmer written by Brian Masters. I read both books at once.

Masters tries to see the human side of Dahmer where Davis pictures him as a monster.

Both books were very interesting.

Brenna says

The original title, *The Milwaukee Murders*, fit this book better than the more generic, more ubiquitous *The Jeffrey Dahmer Story: An American Nightmare*. This is because writer Don Davis goes into great unnecessarily graphic detail about the *geography* of Wisconsin. The reader is, in fact, given an impromptu history lesson regarding the German origins of Milwaukee, placing emphasis on the beer-based economy thereof.

While it can be said that Jeffrey Dahmer was an alcoholic, having been discharged from the army for his potable indiscretions, the focus on this does come across as exceptionally superficial - filler for a book that would otherwise have been significantly stunted. Several chapters are devoted to the geography and history of the area, rattling off factoids and statistics for upwards of eight pages in certain passages of the book.

Too, various trite phrasings apparently intended to enhance suspense fall flat, almost abrasive in their blatant sensationalism. In one particularly absurd entry, Davis describes the apprehension experienced by a former fellow soldier stationed in Dahmer's battalion in Germany, "realizing that when Dahmer had looked at him in that small barracks room, he could have been visualizing dinner." This immediately follows Davis' derision of a German publication's headline which "left absolutely nothing to the imagination."

In this, its third printing (the first after the death of Dahmer himself), Davis includes a new chapter on the case of the homosexual necrophiliac who ran into a dead end of a *different* sort in a prison restroom, at the hands of a violent fellow prisoner. The chapters leading up to this final sequence of events clearly had not been edited to reflect this turn of events (referring to Dahmer as if he were, indeed, still alive at press time), and this subtle neglect reflects harshly on the book as well.

Not a challenging biography so much as an exploitative attempt to cash in on the infamy of a name, *The Jeffrey Dahmer Story* provides little by way of insight moreso than as an outsider's recanting of known elements in the highly-publicized case.

Alison says

He was one sick person and I think he got what he deserved when that black man killed him in jail.

Medhat The Book Fanatic says

4.5 stars.

This book, which exposed the facts behind the Jeffrey Dahmer murders back in the 70s, 80s, and 90s, fascinated me.

It was a terrifying book that would mess-up with your mind. I would have never expected or anticipated that a human being can do all these kinds of unspoken atrocities to another human being, which include murdering young men and adolescents in horrible ways, dismembering their bodies, necrophilia, and even,

the most shocking of all, CANNIBALISM.

I was impressed by the writer's style of writing, which was simplistic but also laid out with well-understanding to the layers and details of the murders and the murderer. The book was explicit and graphic, and not only did it study the nature of the crime but also of serial-killer Jeffrey Dahmer's psychology, which he presented with credible sources, such as his interview with a high-profile psychologist.

And the author also made the book even more interesting with his study of the times of the murders and the social time of that era that followed the Jeffrey Dahmer murders.

However, my only complaint was that the book needed some limitations concerning the author's mentions of the history of each town or area or state.

Ultimately, this book captivated my attention and curiosity in my exploration for a hard-boiled case in the dark human nature field, and the depth of deception and monstrosity that lied under a face of normality and oddness.

Annie says

This book was mostly filler based on lazy research. I've handed in many a last minute paper in college that was filled with quotes and pedestrian research and perhaps this is why I was able to see through it! There is no information in this book that one could not have gathered by watching news coverage of these crimes, except maybe the pages long histories of several midwest towns that took place generations before Jeffery Dahmer was born.

My issue with all of the filler is this:

This guy is one of the most notorious criminals ever. He committed unimaginable acts and hours later shows up to meetings with a parole officer. Two of his victims turned out to be brothers (one escaped). He was dissolving bodies in acid in his one bedroom apt (ala breaking bad) and nobody noticed. His story is filled with stuff you just can't make up. There is enough crazy to fill several books, why do you need filler?

The author conducted no interviews with JD, his family members, victims' families, police who worked the case, lawyers, neighbors, co-workers, etc that one would expect from a true crime book.

Waste of time unless you've never heard of Jeffery Dahmer.

Kerri says

This was an ok book. If you go into it knowing next to nothing about the Dahmer case you'll probably enjoy it. But I went in with a pretty good understanding of the case already and this book just seemed to gloss over a lot of details. Random tidbits seemed to be tossed in at the end, that were actually pretty important. Dahmer's attempt at creating zombies? The contents of his 'sleeping potion'? These were significant details that were just paid so little attention. A lot of the victims were glossed over as well.

Taylor Schmac says

This book approaches a topic in which can only be successfully carried out with a lot of research. It is quite apparent that the author did his research in order to write this book, but one of the many things it lacks is detail. Each topic that is brought up is briefly viewed except for Dahmer's childhood, which is not the main focus of the book. Another thing I disliked about the book is a lack of organization. It jumps from his childhood to Dahmer's first victim and then to his high school life. It was a bit confusing to follow until you realized it was not in correct order. The book contains interesting content, but I do not suggest reading this book, especially if you're looking for new information on him that you haven't read before. Everything in the book is a brief overview, and contains nothing that other books haven't covered.

Rachel says

Well I haven't had a book rated less than 3 stars all year so I guess I was due for a stinker.

I started a book club last month for fans of the new podcast My Favorite Murder. If you're a fan of true crime, I highly recommend it. This book was the first selection and it was not good. It reminded me of a few papers I wrote in college (thankfully just a few) where I procrastinated like hell and when I finally sat down to write, I realized I did not have enough information gathered and I had zero time gather more. I just bullshitted and quoted like crazy to fill the space until I was done. That's what this book reads like; A half-assed research paper.

Unless you've been living under a rock or maybe if you're super young, you know who Jeffrey Dahmer was. He was a serial killer who murdered 17 young men, mostly gay and mostly racial minorities. This book was originally published in 1991, before Dahmer's trial had even concluded and the ramifications of his crimes could truly be felt. The writer tried for a more high brow approach to crime writing by adding local history. This can be an effective technique if it's done correctly and it's relevant to the narrative. The writer spends dozens of pages on the history of Akron, Ohio. Dahmer's childhood home is located in Bath Township, which is a suburb of Akron but otherwise has nothing to do with the story. I can only assume Don Davis is from Akron and wanted to use some hometown history to fill out his book.

There are some interesting parts. The murders did expose the racial divides that existed in Milwaukee and caused a great deal of social and political tension in the city. It would have been interesting to see how all of that shook out given some time and perspective. But this was lost in the rush to publish this book while Jeffrey Dahmer was still in the news.

There are excellent true crime books. Ann Rule, Jon Krakauer and Erik Larsen have written some great ones. Do yourself a favor and pick up one of their books and give this one a pass.

Brandon Wayne says

I left the star "rating" blank, because I still have hopes that this book will improve. I am a little more than halfway through reading it and I am yet to be impressed. Don Davis writing is that of a pretentious high school jack ass. One of the things I love most about true crime books is that they read like fiction. One can get lost in the content of a true crime book, and once the realization of its 'based on a true story' stance comes

back to the mind, it becomes more terrifying. However, Don's style of writing seems as though he is trying too hard to make it sound like fiction (in some areas).

He begins his book with Dahmer's Laotian victim. Several chapters later, he brings up the exact same content again. A few more chapters go by and he talks about it again. Amidst another chapter (in which he talks about a couple victims leading up to the Laotian boy), he details this victim again. He leaves out some very important details about the manner in which he treated his victims (such as his 'zombifying' treatments), and makes every victim's death seem exactly the same as the one before.

Don titles all of his chapters, and starts writing about things that seem to fit that title for a paragraph or two, and then rambles on with something completely different. (Eg: the chapter titled Grandma's House talks more about the history of the city as apposed to Dahmer's grandmother's house).

I keep hoping that the book will get better as I read further, but I continue to be let down. According to several reviews on here, I don't think it will get any better (thanks for the warning). And some of the reviews on here seem to have read another book (not this one), because they mention the graphic detail of the book. The graphic detail in which the book actually lacks. Yes it discusses the murders, and what he did with the bodies, but non of it is as graphic (in my opinion).

I would strongly advise that you don't read this book. There are far better true crime books about serial killers than this.

Rebecca McNutt says

This book was pretty disturbing, but it was detailed, accurate and gripping at the same time and a very suspenseful true crime novel.

Kendra says

This book was horrible (in my opinion of course). It had a multitude of grammar errors and typos. It also left out a ton of details about the case. Some of the murders were summed up in a paragraph or two that basically said "he did this just like he did the other ones." He uses very unscientific and sometimes plain-out biased language. He keeps calling the mixture that Dahmer gives to his victims a "sleeping potion" and never says what is in the concoction. He talks about rock and metal music as if it's the evil scourge that causes teenagers to perform actions maybe they shouldn't. Instead of realizing that not all metal and rock music is as vulgar as he suggests. The author also leaves a lot of loose ends dangling, which perturbs me because I want to know what happened! That's why I am reading a true crime book in the first place. This book was just not for me and I most likely won't read anything by Don Davis again. I had to drag myself through this book and in my opinion it was horribly written. I haven't read a book this bad in quite a while. I am sure there are many other true crime books written on the Dahmer case, my advice is to skip "The Jeffrey Dahmer Story" and read one of those instead.

Steph says

After reading a graphic novel about Dahmer, I was intrigued and wanted to know more about him so I picked this book up at the library.

It started off strong and read like a fiction novel which really captivated me because I knew it was all true, but a third of the way in, it lost that element. The last two thirds felt rushed and disorganized. It felt more like a textbook. 3/5

Kimberly Hicks says

Jeffrey Dahmer certainly was a serial killer that will forever be etched in America's history--not the sort of notariety one might seek, but so goes it for the tragic life of Dahmer.

I have always been intrigued as to what made this man do the heinous acts in which he committed upon seventeen unsuspecting victims. Most of what is reported in this book was just a small fraction of what most of us heard or read about in the news, at the time Dahmer was arrested. In fact, I learned a great detail of the life of Jeffrey Dahmer. It gave me chills just reading the words knowing what was going to happen, and powerless to stop it.

If you have children, love them and nurture them so that this tragedy never occurs again in human kind! Outstanding read!
