



I Have Lived in the Monster: Inside the Minds of the World's Most Notorious Serial Killers

Robert K. Ressler , Tom Shachtman

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From their gruesome, body-strewn lairs, to the darkest regions of their twisted psyches, Robert K. Ressler shows you serial killers as you've never seen them before.

In his phenomenally successful *Whoever Fights Monsters*, Robert K. Ressler examined his brilliant twenty-year career hunting down killers for the FBI. Now, delving deeper than ever before into the criminal mind, Ressler recounts his years since leaving the FBI, working as an independent criminal profiler on some of the most famous serial murder cases of our day.

Ingeniously piecing together clues from crime scenes, along with killing patterns and methods, Ressler explains his role in assisting the investigations of such perplexing international cases as England's Wimbledon Common killing, the ABC Murders in South Africa, and the deadly gassing of Japan's subway. We're also witness to Ressler's fascinating, in-depth interviews with John Wayne Gacy, the first and last one America's most prolific serial killer would ever grant, plus a shockingly candid discussion with "cannibal killer" Jeffrey Dahmer.

Daring to understand the depraved minds of serial killers, Robert K. Ressler returns from the deepest abyss with an unforgettable account that is as riveting as it is shocking.

I Have Lived in the Monster: Inside the Minds of the World's Most Notorious Serial Killers Details

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Courtney Robley says

This book is great if you are interested in serial killers and the interviews in this book are great. Also the stories are very detailed and interesting.

Zach Fortier says

I have read all of Ressler's works, If you would like a real look into the FBI's serial unit, this is the work to read. It is not for the faint of heart and it answered many of my questions. Why it only has a 3.7 rating here is a mystery. It is an amazing book to read.

Greg Jolley says

A fine and rare insight into criminal monsters, from the experiences of one of the FBI's most brilliant minds. Read for research, was delighted with the story.

Jim says

While there was some interesting information, I wasn't really sure where it was trying to go and it felt more like an excuse for the author to stroke his ego and lash out at critics or others who misunderstood or misrepresented him, which is okay, but I didn't find it fun to read. A lot I was familiar with already. Obviously the guy is well known and an expert in his field, and this may have been just a quicky shot at making some money, but it isn't the best book on the subject I have tried.

Amber says

3.5

Mari Stroud says

Sexual Homicide is an incredible book, useful to everyone who has an interest in the psychology of crime. *I Have Lived in the Monster* is Ressler picking fights with imaginary enemies and preening for the camera. I didn't think anyone could actually have a bigger ego than Douglas, yet there he stands.

Anna says

The last book from the late, great Mr Ressler. I had to take a breather during one of the chapters, so I can't imagine how he was able to interview such monsters hours at a time. Mr Ressler is a true hero of mine for all the hard work given in the pioneering field of criminal profiling and helping to co-create VICAP.

Daniel Stern says

Former FBI criminal profiler Robert Ressler follows up his book "Whoever Fights Monsters" by reflecting on his post-FBI experiences. Especially noteworthy is his extensive interviews with serial killers John Wayne Gacy and Jeffrey Dahmer.

Ressler's interview with Dahmer is probably one of the most significant parts of the book for what it reveals about the psychology behind Dahmer's acts. Ressler does a good job of sorting through the bull and getting at what motivated Dahmer and his specific mental issues.

Also to the positive are the international cases Ressler details, especially the fact that the "serial killer phenomenon" is not unique to the United States. His case studies of the Railway Killer and the ABC Killings in South Africa are especially worth reading.

However, one particular annoyance trips up the reader and that's something other reviewers have pointed out. Ressler has no qualms in repeatedly pointing out his 25 years of experience with the bureau...again, again and again. He seems to take particular pleasure at pointing out how many trials he has testified in, how much demand there is for his expertise and how his work has made headlines around the world.

He makes it a point, for example, of saying that in the case of the Railway Killer, his help was sought but he was just so darned busy to go because of his role in other trials in the U.S. He also quotes a letter from one of the investigators, thanking him in glowing terms. He also has no qualms in taking a few swipes at his former co-workers in the FBI, including John Douglas.

Despite this issue, Ressler's book is worth reading for what it reveals.

Fishface says

This one focuses more on the author's life after the FBI, consulting on ever more serial-killing cases. It's a good read but you can almost feel how sick he is of the carnage.

A.J. Aalto says

An excellent read for anyone who wants to understand the psychology of the serial killer, includes interviews.

Juan de Dios Reyes says

La verdad es que es muy decepcionante. No es que me interese mucho el tema de asesinos seriales o similares, pero ya que lo tenía a mano lo leí con la intención de, ojalá, entender algo más del ser humano aún

desde sus aberraciones o extremos... Sólo encontré un libro donde el autor se hacía propaganda y alababa en forma descarada.

Catten says

Following his first book, *Whoever Fights Monsters*, Ressler's second book looks at more killers, in particular, serial killers.

Serial killer. These two words intrigue many people.

Once called stranger murders because of the lack of connection between victim and killer, this type of crime has become the popular topic of books, movies, and conversation. People fear the randomness and unpredictability of the serial killer. A victim is just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

But there is a victimology. Not always, but many times, victims are prostitutes or drifters, people who won't be missed or are less likely to be the subject of an intense search. Gacy and Dahmer lured victims to their homes - young men were tortured and killed by these two, whom Ressler calls "monsters." Most of these guys are after a particular type of victim.

Perhaps the scariest thing about serial killers - successful ones, anyway - is that they don't look like serial killers. The leering, weird, wild-eyed killer is likely to cause suspicion and likely will soon be caught. Dahmer, Bundy, and others functioned normally and looked like one of us. So while they behave like monsters, they certainly don't look like monsters.

Ressler, now retired from the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit, coined the term "serial killer." His book doesn't just deal with serial killers, though. He talks about several sarin gas attacks in Japan and a few cases in which ex-military men claimed Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome caused them to kill. The cases - in particular the interviews with Gacy and Dahmer - are interesting. The delivery, though, isn't impressive.

One of my frequent complaints about John Douglas' books is the look-how-great-I-am voice. Ressler does the same thing. Maybe it's just a byproduct of being good at one's job. But both men have coauthors and you'd think somewhere along the line one of them would step back and say, "Hey, I think this is a bit much." Call me crazy.

I also find it odd that these two very famous profilers have written books about their cases but they rarely mention each other. Is it just me or do these guys not like each other?

Anyway, back to the book at hand. The title seemed kind of strange to me but I figured after I read the book it would make sense. I guess I can sort of understand it now, as in he had to get into the killer's minds, but it's still weird...

Read Ressler when you get tired of reading the same set of stories over and over in John Douglas' books. Maybe by the time we work our way through the lot of them, a writer like Stephen Michaud (with Roy Hazelwood) will have a new book out.

Royce Ratterman says

Most books are rated related to their usefulness and contributions to my research.

Overall, a good book for the researcher and enthusiast.

Read for personal research

- found this book's contents helpful and inspiring - number rating relates to the book's contribution to my needs.

Jennifer Bradley says

I found this fascinating, but somehow just not as readable as *Whoever Fights Monsters* or *The Evil That Men Do*. Still a great read and would highly recommend to students of human darkness.

Valerie says

I had an obsession with this subject for a while so I read everything I could. This is a must read for anyone interested in serial killers. Beyond the movie stereotype to real people. It's hard to believe they exist in the same world as us as they are so out there they seem fictional, but they are very real and very complex.
