



The Open Curtain

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When Rudd, a troubled teenager, embarks on a school project, he runs across a series of articles from the 1902 *New York Times* chronicling a vicious murder committed by the grandson of Brigham Young. Delving deeply into the Mormon ritual of blood sacrifice used in the murders, Rudd, along with his newly discovered half-brother, Lael, becomes swept up in the psychological and atavistic effects of this violent, antique ritual.

As the past and the present become an increasingly tangled knot, Rudd is found at the scene of a multiple murder at a remote campsite with minor injuries and few memories. Lyndi, the daughter of the victims, tries to help Rudd recover his memory and, together, they find a strength unique to survivors of terrible tragedies. But Rudd, desperate to protect Lyndi and unable to let the past be still, tries to manipulate their Mormon wedding ceremony to trick the priests (and God) by giving himself and Lyndi new secret namesâ€”names that match the killer and the victim in the one hundred-year-old murder. The nightmare has just begun . . .

The Open Curtain Details

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From Reader Review The Open Curtain for online ebook

Mariel says

Not sure where to begin with this one. As other reviews have pointed it out, it has a much better set up than ending, but that's not where the real trouble is. It's too messy of a novel; messy in theme, content, and character. Predictable story, This book didn't capture me and take me away...it just made me want it to be over.

2 stars instead of 1 on this one because Evenson really is a fairly skilled writer. Better than Dan Brown and Stephenie Meyer certainly, so he deserves that credit. And like I said earlier, I really was interested in the beginning. It just got lost along the way.

EDIT: All right maybe I was too harsh. That's what I get for reviewing a book at 2:00 am. Evenson obviously put a lot of thought and work into this novel and it shows. Also, my view of it has changed slightly in light of the fact that he apparently wrote each section as its own distinct novella. In this regard, I think each section read as its own book is very good and this novel only loses points because the stringing together of the three made for a disappointing experience. He also admits having had a ridiculous amount of trouble writing the third section (he said something about having to toss out 200 pages that were taking the book in the wrong direction). Writing is hard, and getting it just right is even harder. As a writer comrade in arms I can't berate him too much for trying.

Paul Eckert says

I think the best word to describe this book is...creepy. Throughout the entire story, I just had an uncomfortable feeling. Great writer that he is, Evenson draws you into it slowly, and at some point, you have to look back at what you've read to see where the insanity really began.

I don't want to say much about the premise so that nothing is given away. Here's the most spoiler-free blurb I can think of:

Rudd is a young Mormon boy living with his mother in Utah. His father is dead, and while he is rummaging through his father's belongings, he finds a note from a woman that claims her son is his father's son. That is to say, Rudd has a half-brother he never knew about. He sets out to track down this half-brother, Lael, who lives in the next town. This sets in motion a series of events which are sweet, horrifying, and unsettling.

This novel was much different than *The Wavering Knife*, the only other fiction I've read by Evenson. Those short stories tended to be more metaphorical, each sentence carrying a lot of weight. This novel drew me in with a seemingly simpler prose style that resembled the psyche of the characters. Similar to what I've seen in other Evenson fiction, the reader becomes aware of what's happening before the characters do, and we have the unsettling task of watching them slowly come to our realization. In the process, we witness their pain, struggle, and metamorphosis.

Wu Ming says

WM2: E' molto difficile parlare di questo libro senza rovinare ai lettori il piacere della scoperta. Non perché la trama sia un susseguirsi di colpi di scena, un meccanismo perfetto che non bisogna svelare. Il fatto è che il racconto cambia pelle almeno cinque volte nel corso di 280 pagine e ogni volta ti ritrovi a pensare che il romanzo non è più come lo immaginavi, che le tue aspettative erano sbagliate e che dovrai fare i conti con qualcosa di diverso. Eppure, mentre superi lo choc, capisci che il racconto è sempre lo stesso, l'autore non ti ha ingannato, non sei vittima di un gioco di prestigio, messo in piedi per farti restare a bocca aperta e poi tutti a casa. Quando il protagonista è un adolescente come Rudd Theurer, la narrazione non può che essere mutante, la sua coerenza sta nel cambiamento, nel percorso di crescita contorto e allucinato di questo ragazzo dello Utah.

In principio, *La Colpa* è il romanzo di formazione di uno sfigato. Rudd è orfano di padre, non ha amici, sua madre lo opprime a colpi di buon senso e Libro di Mormon. E' timido, introverso e ha una spiccata attitudine per le ossessioni. Una frase, anche la più banale, può scavargli in testa per giorni.

Quando Rudd scopre di avere un fratellastro, Lael Korth, comincia a frequentarlo in maniera compulsiva, sebbene l'altro non gli dimostri la stessa dedizione e ammetta di essere suo fratello solo in maniera strumentale, per ottenere favori e complicità. Già qui il racconto ha fatto la prima svolta. Le disavventure sociali di Rudd passano in secondo piano e il suo rapporto ossessivo con Lael diventa il motore della narrazione. La colpa si trasforma in un romanzo sull'amicizia velenosa tra un ragazzo debole e affamato di conferme e un altro che si diverte a dominarlo.

Lael è un personaggio enigmatico, sua madre lo chiama Lyle e di lui non sappiamo nulla, se non quello che accade negli incontri con il (presunto) fratellastro. Rudd, al contrario, esiste anche al di fuori della coppia, sebbene in maniera sempre più faticosa, finché all'improvviso sembra trovarsi a un passo dal primo successo scolastico della sua carriera. Nel corso di un'attività didattica, sulle pagine del New York Times dei primi del Novecento, scopre una serie di articoli a proposito dell'assassinio di Anna Pulitzer. Accusato del delitto, un certo William Hooper Young, di religione mormone. Secondo una pista d'indagine, l'omicidio sarebbe da collegare al "sacrificio di sangue", un rito misterioso del quale i seguaci di Mormon hanno sempre negato l'esistenza. Rudd si lascia catturare dalla vicenda, la studia nei dettagli, la sogna. Coinvolge nella ricerca anche Lael, e per diverse pagine *La Colpa* cambia ancora aspetto, forse per la prima volta in maniera brusca e non del tutto riuscita, diventando un poliziesco sul caso Hooper Young.

Risultato: la professoressa chiede a Rudd di cambiare soggetto. Lui obbedisce e da quel momento comincia ad avere strane amnesie, vuoti di memoria, la sensazione di uscire dal proprio corpo.

Poi, quando le ossessioni di Rudd sembrano raggiungere l'apice, il romanzo scarta ancora. E' la seconda parte: cambia il punto di vista e la protagonista diventa Lyndi, una diciottenne appena investita da una terribile tragedia familiare. Sola al mondo, Lyndi conoscerà Rudd e inizierà a frequentarlo, fino alla decisione di sposarsi. In queste pagine *La Colpa* è il racconto implacabile di come una donna possa legarsi a un uomo per una sorta di crociata, contro i suoi fantasmi e contro la propria solitudine.

A proposito di fantasmi, Lael, Hooper Young e il suo complice Elling, sembrano scomparsi, dimenticati, ma la cerimonia nuziale nel tempio mormone li riporta in vita. Insieme a loro, emerge qui in maniera dirompente l'indagine filosofica che percorre tutto il libro: che legame esiste tra religione e violenza, tra fede e ossessione? Evenson risponde alla domanda riferendosi al culto che meglio conosce, per averlo professato, e descrive alcuni particolari del rito mormone: segni e simboli all'incrocio tra massoneria, cristianesimo e occultismo, considerati sacri dai praticanti, che giurano di non rivelarli mai, nemmeno sotto minaccia di morte.

Da questi gesti, intrisi di sangue e vendetta, si scatenano le ultime, allucinate follie di Rudd Theurer. E' la terza parte del romanzo, dove *La colpa* si trasforma in incubo. Un incubo alla Stephen King, talmente

visionario e allo stesso tempo credibile da lasciare inquieti e nervosi oltre l'ultima pagina.
<http://www.wumingfoundation.com/italiano/Giap/nandropau...>

Stephen M says

I had some ideas about this book that I was pretty convinced were correct. Or as correct as an interpretation can be. That was until I read the author's afterword and sort of had the book spoiled for me. It was interesting to read the author's take on his own work but I felt let down that my way of seeing this book was not the way the author intended at all. In fact, it was the exact opposite. With friends, I've often discussed the significance of authorial intent in analyzing a novel. For us, it seems to mean practically bupkiss in the long run. But knowing that doesn't change how I felt when I read Evenson's afterword. I'm not going to go into much detail about my own interpretation versus Evenson's because in doing that would spoil the book. I will say that I was pining for a pro-religion reading (as crazy as that sounds to those of you who have read this book) but it was decidedly not a pro-religious book at all. Which on the surface makes sense, but upon closer analysis of the "Open Curtain" as a metaphor for divine inspiration, it makes sense to me. But again I am wrong and I officially hang my head in shame.

If you're wondering what this book is all about, I can't say much without spoiling a lot of it. All you need to know is that the book follows Rudd, a senior in high school, as he descends into madness. He becomes increasingly obsessed with some mormon murders that occur around the time of the early 1900's. As he investigates this murder and makes it the centerpiece for a high school essay, he starts his slow dissent into madness. That is only a small snippet of the first section. Two other sections follow and center on different characters; although the last section. . . well that's up for a bit of debate.

Overall I think that Evenson's handling of the story is impeccable. The glowing praise for his writing is no exaggeration. The dude can freaking write. But it was the story that I took issue with. I didn't like how depressing the whole story was. Which, I know is a bad reason not to like a piece of work but what I mean is that Evenson takes a myopic view of his own story. As in, there is little dynamic in the emotions and themes. Hell, even the love interest in this book is the most sad, stale and flaccid (pun very much intended) relationship. It is very important to keep a consistent tone throughout a story but come on! After reading this book, I felt like lighting a cigarette and reciting Nietzsche quotes. *puff puff* "All things are subject to interpretation whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth." *french inhales slowly*

Prose style: 4

Plot: 4

Depth of characters: 2

Overall sense of aesthetic: 3

Originality: 5

Entertaining: 2

Emotional Reaction: 1

Intellectual Stimulation: 5

Social Relevance: 2

Writerly Inspiration: 1

Average = 2.9

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Annet says

Wew, this is a dark book. I mean, dark black....

I read some reader's reviews, 'read with the light on' and one about a bad dream... yeah, I can see that this book does this to you.

But the thing is, this book is very well written, and the story just gruesomely fascinating and you keep wondering, what's going on, who is who now... etc.. I got to know this writer, Brian Evenson, through his apocalyptic book *Immobility* (highly recommended) and now I know this writer is good, though with its dark sides...

This book is about Rudd, a troubled Mormon teenager, who runs across an article about a vicious, seemingly ritual murder by the grandson of Brigham Young, possibly a Mormon blood atonement doctrine.

He starts following up on this story together with his newly discovered half-brother Lael, and slowly but surely spirals down a road to madness and obsession.

More can not be said, it would be spoiling...

Benoit Lelièvre says

This was great.

THE OPEN CURTAIN is a horror novel, a literary novel about overbearing religious heritage and a mystery wrapped up in one. It is, first and foremost, a fictional exploration of the blood sacrifice ritual in the Mormon religion, which Evenson was a part of when he started this book and that he was self-excommunicated from when he finished. The first two parts are rather straightforward although extremely well executed, and the closing section of THE OPEN CURTAIN throws a mystical curveball into what would otherwise be a just a super cool horror novel.

Loved it. Not quite as much as *LAST DAYS*, but almost. Evenson is a master and I don't use this term lightly.

Maciek says

Brian Evenson wrote the excellent *Last Days* which was my introduction to his work and became one of my favorite novels; I still think about it and will certainly re-read it. It's October, the time of the year to read spooky novels, and my first pick for the season had to be another of Evenson's novels, one which I haven't read yet - *The Open Curtain*.

Brian Evenson is not strictly a horror writer; his work defies categorization. *Last Days* is a detective novel, a story of religious obsession and a Kafkaesque dystopia; *The Open Curtain* is a much different book - one thing which connects both is religion. However the cult of *Last Days* was one which exists only in that book (at least I hope so), while *The Open Curtain* features a real church, and one of which Evenson himself was a longtime member - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The church and its doctrines and customs feature prominently throughout the book - the novel is set in Utah,

the cradle of Mormonism, and oscillates around a real historical event: a murder committed by William Hooper Young, the grandson of Brigham Young, the legendary Mormon pioneer and successor of Joseph Smith.

The protagonist of *The Open Curtain*, Rudd, is a young Mormon living with his mother; Rudd is a disaffected teen, a loner without any real friends. One day, while rummaging through his late father's belongings, he finds letters he didn't know about - one of them is from a woman named Anne Korth, who claims that Rudd's father has fathered her child, a boy named Lael. The box also contained his father's reply where he denied fathering the child and claimed that the woman must be mistaken; Rudd's mother also insists that Anne Korth mistook Rudd's father for someone else and refuses to talk about the subject. In secret Rudd decides to track down Anne Korth and the boy who might or might not be his half-brother; he eventually finds out that she lives just a town away. Although she refuses to speak to him, he discovers that a teenager does live with her - one the same age as Rudd, named Lael, who becomes his only companion and allows Rudd to slowly slip away from the influence of his domineering mother.

At school, Rudd is asked to write a paper on his personal hero; during research he discovers the murder with which he slowly becomes obsessed. In 1902 William Young was tried and convicted for the murder of Anna Pulitzer, and because of his connection to the leader of the Mormon Church speculation surfaced that the murder was motivated by this religion. Young was to kill Pulitzer according to the Mormon doctrine of Blood Atonement, propagated by Brigham Young - where a murder is considered to be a crime which is so horrible that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ does not apply to the perpetrators, who must shed their own blood on the ground as sacrificial offering. Investigators found Young's notebook with his notes about scripture and the doctrine, but the actual motive for the murder was never determined.

Both Rudd and his newfound half-brother become consumed with Young and his bloody crime, and the horrifying antique doctrine that might have motivated it - and soon Rudd will himself witness a terrible murder and emerge as the only survivor. With his mind unclear and memories blank, he'll be approached by a 19 year old Lyndi - daughter of the victims, who wishes to help him get his memory back and with whom he'll develop an unique bond. Rudd hope that Lyndi will help him find peace, but this might not be the case - he can't remember details about the murder he witnessed, but the crime of William Hooper Young has never left his mind.

In the afterword Evenson writes that he started writing *The Open Curtain* as a younger writer, and when he was still a Mormon; he finished it as a much older one, and after his excommunication from the Church. This shows, as the opening part of the novel is well-written but much more straightforward and very different from the second part, where times and places mix fluently in a way similar to Evenson's later novels and stories. While Evenson has a history with the Mormon Church which is not pleasant, the book itself is not an attack on Mormonism and Mormons themselves - rather it uses the lesser-known doctrine and a forgotten murder to to create an uncompromising contemporary gothic novel of religious obsession and violence. This is a very dark and disturbing book, but like Evenson's other writing is also unique and very good and memorable. While *Last Days* might be a better introduction to the author, I doubt that anyone wishing to read a dark and brooding novel during these upcoming cold and somber months will be disappointed with *The Open Curtain*.

Kathryn says

I am going to straight-up admit that after reading this book, the Mormon church kind of freaks me out, more than it already did. Honestly, all religions freak me out but the amount of secrecy surrounding the Mormon church provides that extra shiver factor which I could do without. Not that this book paints a negative picture of the LDS. I think it paints an accurate picture, an important distinction, especially considering the author's experience. Evenson states in his afterward that this book was written over the course of his beliefs changing, which is reflected in the book, and ended with his self-requested excommunication. From the religious standpoint alone, this book is incredibly interesting and informative, especially involving the LDS ceremonies for initiated members, something I knew next to nothing about, except for the requirement of the undergarments.

As for the book, I loved the character of Rudd but had some problems relating to Lyndi. Maybe this should have been reversed considering everything that happens, the fact that Lyndi is a woman feeling many things I have felt and Rudd is, well, not someone most people will be able to connect with, at least not later in the book. There are some seriously disturbing parts and the ending was a satisfactory culmination of events. Though I much prefer Evenson's Last Days, I think The Open Curtain will appeal to a greater number of readers. This book is more accesible. Evenson is a gifted writer, one of the few authors I have read who writes horrific literature, literature being the key word.

Greg says

Brian Evenson is a writer I've been meaning to read for quite some time but who I never got around to buying a book of until this past weekend's book fair. I don't think they are all like this one. By the back cover one might think this is a horror novel, or apocalyptic based on the blurbs by Peter Straub and George Saunders, but I think those are blurbs for Evenson in general and not for this novel. Although there is something kind of psychologically horror like in this book. Normally in my reviews I make little or no reference to the actual plot of the books, and this review will not break that tradition. This time though instead of pushing the plot aside for my self-indulgent asides and not so clever novelty shit, I'm just going to add this to the small group of books reviewed that I'm consciously choosing not to say anything. Any kind of plot summation would give away something. What I can say is that if you like the idea of reading about Mormons and murder than you could have come to the right book.

"It's the fucking government and they are fucking with my balls." This has nothing to do with the book, but someone just said this while walking under my window, and I hope that the government stops fucking with his balls, and even more hope that the government never starts fucking with my balls. That must not be good.

Back to the review. A few blocks from where I'm typing this is a Mormon temple, and I've learned things about the Mormons in this book that makes me a little fearful, and also it's going to make for weird encounters the next time I'm behind some mormons on line at the post-office. I had no idea they had special undergarments. I'm going to be trying really hard to make them out under their clothes now. I do like the idea that God dwells in a little room only a few blocks from me though and that only a sheet hangs between him and me (well and the walls to the building, some other buildings, train tracks, and other shit, but I still feel pretty close to god now, something I'd been missing ever since the Pentecostals moved out from directly below my apartment, and I was living right in the trajectory of the holy spirit coming right from heaven and into their (heads? minds? lungs?) whatever and letting them speak in tongues. I never heard speaking in tongues though, just a loud drum being played by someone with no sense of time, and a woman preaching / crying. I still felt very in with the big 3 though during my first year here when they lived below me.

Now you know very little about this book, but more about the religious geography of Woodside NY. Thank

you for your time.

Charles Dee Mitchell says

Brian Evenson's psychological horror story is a convincing and unnerving portrait of mental disintegration. He brings together the life of Rudd Theurer, a disaffected Mormon teenaged boy; that boy's fascination with a 1902 murder involving William Hooper Young, who was a grandson of Brigham Young; and a social setting that allows the boy's growing madness to pass unnoticed in an atmosphere that combines neglect, abuse, and denial. The book skirts becoming overloaded with complications and references, but Evenson knows how to pay off plot twists and shock elements while maintaining the readers sympathy – up to a point – with his severely disturbed protagonist.

The title refers to Mormon ritual, and the violent undercurrents of Mormon history inform the plot. In a afterward, Evenson reveals that during the writing of *The Open Curtain* he fully disengaged from the LDS Church and formally requested excommunication. His horror story is not an anti-Mormon diatribe, but he is unrelenting in his exploration of the corrosive effect of Mormon theology on his mentally fragile protagonist.

Vaughn Entwistle says

It's not often that I stumble upon a writer who blows me away not only with his/her storytelling, but also with his/her prose style. Recently, however, I discovered the short stories and novels of Brian Evenson.

I just finished the *THE OPEN CURTAIN* and am currently reading through two of Evenson's short story collections: *FUGUE STATE* and *WINDEYE*. Evenson's fiction is classified as Horror, but this is not the horror of shambling zombies with a bad case of the brain-munchies, or sparkly vampires with supermodel cheekbones. In the 21st century, believing in monsters requires a willing suspension of disbelief; however, Evenson draws upon the all-too-believable bogeyman that has haunted humanity since the earliest days and still retains its ability to terrify—the monster that dwells within us all, that which is cruel, violent . . . and inhuman.

In his short stories and novels, Evenson evokes the existential terror that results from the collapse of consensus reality, a recurring theme where the hapless protagonist finds himself flailing in a familiar world turned suddenly alien, where personality disintegrates and time becomes as fractured and non-linear as a dream—or, more accurately, a nightmare from which the dreamer cannot awaken.

Evenson was brought up and educated in the Mormon religion. Although he has since left the church, *THE OPEN CURTAIN* draws upon his experiences and knowledge of the violent history and arcane practices of the early LDS Church. The protagonist of the novel, Rudd Thayer, becomes embroiled with his shady half-brother Lael, who exerts a hypnotic influence over him. The two begin an investigation of a vicious murder committed by a grandson of Brigham Young. They soon discover that the decades-old murder may be tied into a ritual blood sacrifice of atonement. As they continue their pursuit of the truth, the novel steadily darkens as Rudd's grip on reality loosens. As the end of the book looms, the protagonist is trapped in a waking nightmare. In a deeply disturbing fashion that only fiction can achieve, the images continue to play out behind the reader's eyes long after the book has been closed.

Be warned, this is not a light beach read. Evenson submerges the reader in the murkiest depths of the human psyche. It's a week now since I finished the book, and I still have a bad case of the bends.

Panagiotis says

Ο ?βενσον ε?ναι ?να μικρ? μυστικ? μεταξ? των βιβλι?φιλων. Απ? 'κε?νους τους συγγραφε?ς που παρ?τι ?χουν σπ?νιες αρετ?ς, ?πως ξεχωριστ? ?φος και προσωπικ? ?ραμα, λ?γοι τους γνωρ?ζουν. Εγ? ?πεσα π?νω του τυχα?α μια μ?ρα, ?πιασα το The Last Days, σαγηνε?τηκα απ? τις νοσηρ?ς εικ?νες του και ?κτοτε ?χει μπει στη λ?στα μου ?λη του η εργογραφ?α.

Δεν ε?ναι διασκεδαστικ?ς ο ?βενσον. Στο πρ?το βιβλ?ο που δι?βασα ε?χα αν?μεικτα συναισθ?ματα τα οπο?α εκφρ?στηκαν με τρ?α αστ?ρια. Κ?τι ?μως με μαγν?τισε στον τ?νο του. Εδ? ?νας νεαρ?ς, απ? οικογ?νεια Μορμ?νων, π?φτει π?νω σε μια παλι? εφημερ?δα, ?που διαβ?ζει για ?ναν φ?νο σχεδ?ν ?ναν αι?να παλι?ν, βασισμ?νο σε τελετουργικ? των Μορμ?νων. Θ?λει να μ?θει περισσ?τερα, κ?τι μ?λλον που δεν θα του βγει σε καλ?, γιαντ? αυτ? το περιστατικ? τον καταλαμβ?νει με ?ναν ανεξ?γητο, τρομακτικ? τρ?πο.

Ε?ναι το χρονικ? της καταβ?θισης στην παρ?νοια. Κ?που στο τ?λος, στο τρ?το σημει?ο, ο αναγν?στης αποσυντονισμ?νος θα νι?σει πω? τρελα?νεται και ο ?διος. Υπ?ρχει κ?τι ενοχλητικ? σε αυτ? το βιβλ?ο - μ? ?ναν τρ?πο που για κ?ποιους μπορε? να ε?ναι απωθητικ?, για ?λλους ?κρως δημιουργικ?. ?πως και να ?χει, νι?θεις ?σχημα που διαβ?ζεις ?λα αυτ? τα πρ?ματα. Γιατ? ο κ?σμος του ?βενσον ε?ναι νοσηρ?ς. ?χι με παιχνιδι?ρικο ? γκροτ?σκο τρ?που, αλλ? με μια ηρεμ?α, σαν να ε?ναι η μ?νη ανθρ?πινη πτυχ? που γνωρ?ζει. Η εκκλησ?α των Μορμ?νων λ?ει ο ?βενσον ε?ναι βασισμ?νη στην β?α. Το λ?ει με την ιστορ?α του, το λ?ει και στο σημει?ωμα στο τ?λος του βιβλ?ου, ?που κ?νει μια αναδρομ? στο δικ? του παρελθ?ν ως Μορμ?νος και πω? τελικ? αποκ?ρυξε την π?στη του. Με αυτ? το βιβλ?ο εξορκ?ζει τους δα?μον?ς του.

Δεν διασκ?δασα με το βιβλ?ο. Σε μερικ? σημει?α δεν καταλ?βαινα το τι συμβα?νει και γιαντ? συμβα?νει. Η κλιμακο?μενη α?σθηση κινδ?νου που μου δημιουργο?ταν ?σο δι?βαζα ηχο?σε σαν καμπ?να μ?σα στο κεφ?λι μου, ?θελα να κλε?σω το βιβλ?ο. Ξ?ρω ?μω? τι μ' αρ?σει σε αυτ? τον συγγραφ?α. ?χει την φων? που μ' αρ?σει, προσεγγ?ζοντας την αφ?γηση με ?ναν αφαιρετικ? τρ?πο. Οι πρ?ξεις χαρακτηρ?ζουν τους χαρακτ?ρες του που φαντ?ζουν δυσεπ?λυτα προβλ?ματα. Οι περιγραφ?ς ε?ναι ελ?χιστες, το οπο?ο τελικ? σημα?νει πω? ε?ναι οι περιγραφ?ς που θα κ?ναμε ?ταν θα εξιστορο?σαμε κι εμε?ς μια ιστορ?α που θ?λουμε να βγ?λουμε απο μ?σα μας: μ?νο τα βασικ? και οτιδ?ποτε ?λλο ε?ναι κ?τι που εμποδ?ζει τον ρου. Επιπλ?ον ο ?βενσον ?χει εμμον?ς και ?ραμα, κ?τι που γ?νεται αντιληπτ? απ? ?να και μ?νο του βιβλ?ο και το οπο?ο ε?ναι κατ' εξοχ?ν δε?γμα σπουδα?ου συγγραφ?α.

Jamie Grefe says

Review coming... as soon as I calm down from how good this book is.

Amanda Davidson says

the writing is cold, plain, tense, clean, disturbing. a week after i read it, i had a bad dream. there is no bloat, nothing extra in the prose, nothing pretty. as i read it i felt that i was absorbing a lesson about how to write sparely.

i read the author's afterward, about how the novel investigates the integral relationship between mormonism and violence. this idea is dramatized in traumatizing detail. i'm interested in how evenson uses and questions religious symbolism on so many levels. marks on the sacred garmet become patterns of bodies laid out on the ground, or, later, the basis of a secret ritual. the curtain of the title refers to the veil separating god and people, or church insiders and outsiders, or the church's image of purity and its old rituals or intimations of violence for those who have soiled their purity; the final terms are those which evenson seems most interested in exposing. the final section brilliantly and disturbingly interweaves past and present into a scary denouement.

i also felt a tug of identification when i read, again in the afterward, that although he has left the church, evenson attributes his relationship with language to his religious upbringing. me too. i'll be reading more by this author, for sure.

<http://www.bookslut.com/features/2005...>

Jeff Jackson says

'The Open Curtain' is a strong suspense novel, but given the rapturous praise it's received I was expecting a bit more. For the first two sections, the prose is a bit pedestrian and plodding. Also it's hardly a Spoiler Alert to say that you realize Rudd is schizophrenic early on and everything that follows is predictably the result of this condition. Throughout there are a number of creepy moments, haunting narrative ellipses, insightful and indelible descriptions. But the book really burst to life for me in the hallucinatory third and final section, offering an inventive narration of past and current events and raising the bar for the entire novel. Be interested to learn if there other Evenson books written more fully in the style of this remarkable last section...?
