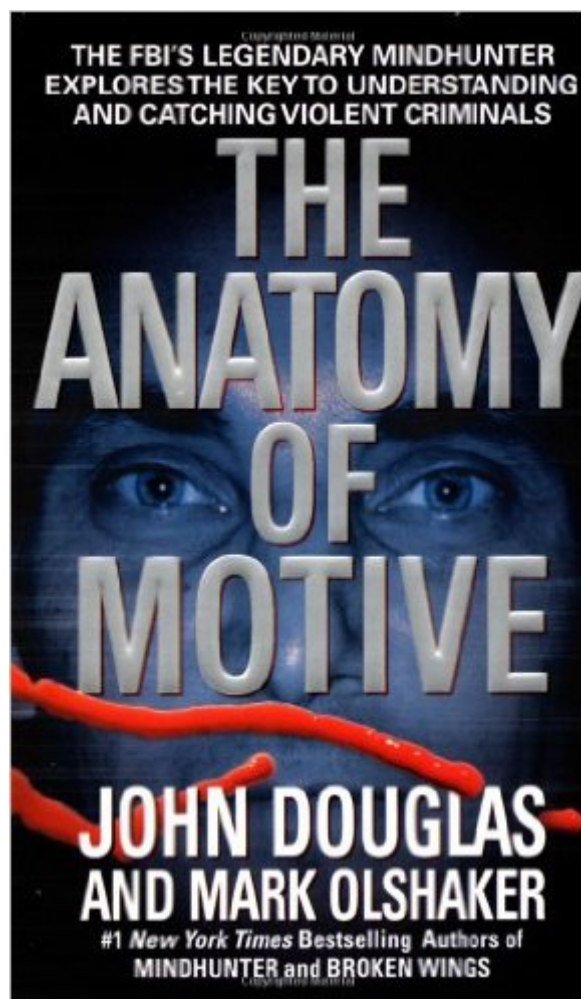


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The Anatomy Of Motive



Synopsis

From legendary FBI profiler John Douglas and Mark Olshaker -- authors of the nonfiction international bestsellers *Mindhunter*, *Journey into Darkness*, and *Obsession* -- comes an unprecedented, insightful look at the root of all crime. Every crime is a mystery story with a motive at its heart. With the brilliant insight he brought to his renowned work inside the FBI's elite serial-crime unit, John Douglas pieces together motives behind violent sociopathic behavior. He not only takes us into the darkest recesses of the minds of arsonists, hijackers, bombers, poisoners, assassins, serial killers, and mass murderers, but also the seemingly ordinary people who suddenly kill their families or go on a rampage in the workplace. Douglas identifies the antisocial personality, showing surprising similarities and differences among various types of deadly offenders. He also tracks the progressive escalation of those criminals' sociopathic behavior. His analysis of such diverse killers as Lee Harvey Oswald, Theodore Kaczynski, and Timothy McVeigh is gripping, but more importantly, helps us learn how to anticipate potential violent behavior before it's too late.

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Customer Reviews

Douglas has trod this ground before, but never so well as this book. It's my favorite of his writings. Some critics claim that Douglas is unbearably arrogant about his work, but with his track record, who can blame him? Criminal profiling has got to be one of the most fascinating subjects; a science combining intuition, detective work, and common sense. Douglas gives overviews of different types of killers: serial, mass, spree, and tells how they differ from each other. Those profiled include Andrew Cunanan and the Tylenol poisoner. Douglas also profiles two of the most intriguing killers,

in my opinion, John List and Charles Whitman. Two more different people could not exist, and yet they both resorted (chose, in Douglas' opinion) to murder. Douglas main refrain is that these people, through a combination of physiological and psychological factors, environmental conditions, and situation stressors, choose to take the course they do. That is, lots of people may have a brutal upbringing and negative life situations, but do not kill people. So, it is a choice, and not a compulsion they cannot avoid (as Douglas puts it, none of these killers would murder while a uniformed policeman stood nearby). At the end of the book, Douglas gives us four scenarios and gives us an opportunity to figure out whodunit. If you've been reading carefully, he says, you should be able to tell. I got three out of the four, so I guess I'm headed for the FBI academy! If you like Douglas' work and writing, you will enjoy this book.

Some people believe that John Douglas comes off as a bit arrogant in his writing, and I could not agree more. However, once the reader is able to get past the author's arrogance, the author compiles a very interesting read. Douglas takes into account all of the types of killers including arsonists, assassins, poisoners, bombers, serial, killers, mass murders, and spree killers. He goes into detail to explain who is likely to commit the specific crime and what makes them snap to go on their murderous rampage. Once the author gets into a specific story it is hard to put this book down. The final chapter allows the reader to try some profiling of his/her own on some specific case. For this reason, the last chapter is called "you make the call." Overall, I enjoyed this book and would suggest it to all true crime fans. Just for the record, I do intend to read some of Douglas's other books in the future, based on my enjoyment of this book and the other book I have read and reviewed by him.

This is the third book I've read of John Douglas. Mindhunter and Journey into Darkness are the other two. If you're anything like me, you are absolutely repulsed by the crimes these creatures commit...but you're curious about it, too. I mean, HOW can any human being do things that Mr. Douglas describes in his books to another human being. As much as I am repulsed by this behavior, I am strangely fascinated by it. What makes them tick? John Douglas helps answer this question. Straight-forward description of events, explanations behind the crimes. He describes what happens underneath the surface of these crimes and how this will help point to motive. And ultimately, that's what's important: WHY? Because when you find out HOW, you can figure out WHY, and this will help lead to WHO, as John Douglas explains in his book. This book will interest anyone that reads suspense, thriller, or horror genres. Authors like Tom Clancy, Stephen King,

Jeffery Deaver, Thomas Harris, Patricia Cornwell, and the likes: If you read any of these authors, read John Douglas's books, especially *The Anatomy of Motive*. What it may lack in suspense (he writes these books not so much to keep you guessing "what next," or anything like that), it more than makes up for in the fact that EVERYTHING HE TELLS YOU, ACTUALLY HAPPENED! And not that the "lack of suspense" makes this book boring. This couldn't be further from the truth. Case in point: John Douglas will not just describe a crime and an investigation into the Whodunnit, he's going to take you inside the mind of serial killers, mass killers, spree killers, assassins, arsonists, poisoners, kidnappings, and more. That's what's so terrifying: You're inside the mind of a killer, and for once you're not asking "How can a freak like this do such a thing to another human?" because it suddenly makes sense. SPOOKY!

Douglas doesn't claim that anyone is born bad. He's delved into what turns human beings into monsters, often an abusive upbringing, and in fact has often stated that programs like Head Start are the best way to prevent serial killers and rapists, and crime in general. He merely states that by the time he or other law enforcement officers get involved it is far too late to fix anything. Someone like John Wayne Gacy could have been helped while he was a child, but by the time the FBI is involved he's already learned that he enjoys killing. Douglas' job isn't to try and undo decades of mental development, it is to render a very sick person incapable of doing further harm. As for calling these men cowards, I don't know what else to call a man who preys on the weak to bolster his self esteem. Douglas and Olshaker make a great writing team. Anyone who has an interest in investigation, psychology, or criminal justice should read all of their collaborative efforts.

John Douglas has provided the insight to the criminal mind like none other has ever done. As a Law Enforcement officer I can say his experience as detailed in this book has made it exciting and fun to read. Those of you who are looking for the inner eye of a serial killer's mind this is the book for you. Two thumbs way up.

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