



The Crucifix Killer

Chris Carter

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When the body of a young woman is discovered in a derelict cottage in the middle of Los Angeles National Forest, Homicide Detective Robert Hunter finds himself entering a horrific and recurring nightmare. Naked, strung from two wooden posts, the victim was sadistically tortured before meeting an excruciatingly painful death. All the skin has been ripped from her face - while she was still alive. On the nape of her neck has been carved a strange double-cross: the signature of a psychopath known as the Crucifix Killer.

But that's impossible. Because two years ago, the Crucifix Killer was caught and executed. Could this therefore be a copycat killer? Or could the unthinkable be true? Is the real killer still out there, ready to embark once again on a vicious and violent killing spree, selecting his victims seemingly at random, taunting Robert Hunter with his inability to catch him?

Hunter and his rookie partner are about to enter a nightmare beyond imagining.

The Crucifix Killer Details

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Author : Chris Carter

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From Reader Review The Crucifix Killer for online ebook

Janet says

I don't really know where to start with this one. I had seen Chris Carter's name bandied about and came across a couple of books in a Kindle sale which sounded really intriguing so promptly went off and downloaded book one. A few chapters in and it became clear that this is a debut novel. Many a time I stopped and shook my head in wonder because I couldn't believe what I was reading. A combination of Carter's profile and reading this book highlights that Carter knows profiling, but OMG!! The dialogue! More often than not it felt like I was in a lecture hall and being given a lesson on all things profiling, (hold up there FBI, I'm on my way!!), as page after page was filled with what can only be described as lecture notes! The dialogue between characters felt clunky, many elements of the book was cliched and cringe making, and well didn't sit comfortably.

There were some aspects that were good and there was potential for a real good story here but it got lost in what turned out to be a formulaic and fairly poor execution. The murders themselves were gruesome bordering on shocking at times but unfortunately got lost in the step by step guide to 'how to spot a serial killer by fast tracked because I have a super brain, but I like to play it down cop/protagonist.' I guessed the murderer about halfway through the book, don't think I was meant to, it just kind of glaringly jumped out at me. I didn't know the whys so a couple of little surprises were presented at the end. I did race through the book, it is pacy and exciting at times, just was let down by informative dialogue that didn't feel like storytelling.

In short, I don't think I'll be rushing to read book two but I can see the ideas are there, just the execution was a little lacking in this one.

Brenda says

This book could have been better.

1. I don't think someone killing for revenge would perform such gruesome, torturous, and sadistic acts on their victims.
2. I don't think it was necessary to include the killing theme involving the gangster.
3. I don't understand the reason why a bet had to be placed on a dog race for victim #2.
4. The beginning of Chapter 3 indicates we're going back 5 weeks prior. I would have liked additional reminders of the passage of time along the way.
5. Hunter was initially written as a prodigy, a gifted child, a genius. But he wasn't portrayed as a very smart detective.
6. There are basic language problems in this book. Padding someone on the back, instead of patting. Hire a house. Bread dispenser. Someone resides in a street instead of on. Inappropriate use of gotta, wanna, gonna, ain't. In Los Angeles, security camera would have been a better term than CCTV, which I see as a mostly British term.

Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says

As many of my friends know I am a massive fan of Chris Carter and have kind of read the Robert Hunter series all a bit back to front, which in this case really highlighted for me that this was his first debut novel, it shows. Chris Carter has obviously grown massively as a writer as the books further down this series are a lot stronger and better written than this one. Despite that, this is still a very entertaining read with the usual grotesque killing style of a serial killer that Chris is known for.

When the body of a young woman is discovered in a derelict cottage in the middle of Los Angeles National Forest, Homicide Detective Robert Hunter finds himself entering a horrific and recurring nightmare. Naked, strung from two parallel wooden posts, the victim was sadistically tortured before meeting an excruciatingly painful death.

All the skin has been ripped from her face - while she was still alive. On the nape of her neck has been carved a strange double-cross: the signature of a psychopath known as the Crucifix Killer. But that's impossible. Because two years ago, the Crucifix Killer was caught and executed. Could this therefore be a copycat killer? Or could the unthinkable be true?

A big aspect of Chris's books that I like is he is not scared to get a bit gory and graphic with his torture and kill scenes, you also can't go wrong with Robert Hunter, kind of a psychological profiler genius come tough cop that is a highly likeable character all around. I have absolutely loved him through this series. The weaknesses in this book I believe just come from lack of experience and I would not let it put you off at all, but promise me you will keep reading the rest of the series to grow with the characters and the writing.

Actual rating is 3.5 stars. The beginning point of the journey of Robert Hunter and his never-ending quest to capture the most heinous of killers ever.

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Γι?ργος Δ?μτσιος says

«Ο δολοφ?νος με το σημ?δι του σταυρο?» ε?ναι το πρ?το βιβλ?ο του, ιταλικ?ς καταγωγ?ς και γεννημ?νου στη Βραζιλ?α, συγγραφ?α, Κρις Κ?ρτερ. Ε?ναι επ?σης και το πρ?το βιβλ?ο με πρωταγωνιστ? τον Ρ?μπερτ Χ?ντερ, ο οπο?ος ε?ναι ντεντ?κτιβ του τμ?ματος ανθρωποκτονι?ν του Λος ?ντζελες.

Πρ?κειται προφαν?ς για αστυνομικ? μυθιστ?ρημα, και η αλ?θεια ε?ναι ?τι με τη λιτ? προαναφερθε?σα περιγραφ? του Χ?ντερ κ?ποιος θα μπορο?σε ?νετα να πει ?τι το ?λο πακ?το ακο?γεται σαν χιλιοπαιγμ?νη ταιν?α ? πολυδιαβασμ?νο σεν?ριο.

Μπορ? να σας διαβεβαι?σω ?τι δεν ε?ναι και υπ?ρχουν ?να σωρ? λ?γοι γι' αυτ?...

Η γλ?σσα που χρησιμοποιε? ο συγγραφ?ας ε?ναι τ?σο απλ? μα συν?μα τ?σο ουσιαστικ? και απ?ριττη που προσωπικ? απ?λαυσα κ?θε λ?ξη σε κ?θε παρ?γραφο, σε αυτ? το πρ?το βιβλ?ο της σειρ?ς. Οι περιγραφ?ς του ?ταν σ?ντομες αλλ? ουσιαστικ?ς και εξυπηρετο?σαν πλ?ρως στο να δημιουργ?σω εικ?νες Οι δι?λογοι π?λι, τα?ριαζαν επακριβ?ς στους χαρακτ?ρες που μιλο?σαν. Ο ?νθρωπος του δρ?μου θ?μιζε ?νθρωπο του δρ?μου, εν?, ο πολυδιαβασμ?νος Χ?ντερ ?κανε τις αναλ?σεις του ?πως ακριβ?ς θα ?πρεπε β?σει του μορφωτικ? επιπ?δου.

Οι χαρακτ?ρες του βιβλ?ου ?ταν ?λοι τους εξαιρετικ? και εντελ?ς αληθινο?. Εν?οτε υπ?ρχε και μια δ?ση υπερβολ?ς στη συμπεριφορ? τους, αλλ? ?ταν «τ?σο ?σο», ?σα δηλαδ? για να τους δ?σει ο συγγραφ?ας ακ?μα πιο ε?κολα ταυτ?τητα και χαρακτηριστικ? γνωρ?σματα, χωρ?ς να χρειαστε? να πλατει?ζει σε σημε?α που υπ?ρχε μπ?λικη δρ?ση.

Και εν? το βιβλ?ο αν?κει στην αστυνομικ? λογοτεχν?α, η πρωτοτυπ?α ?ταν δι?χυτη –π?ντοτε στα λογικ? πλα?σια του ε?δους. Γενικ? διακατεχ?ταν σταθερ? απ? μια πολ? ευχ?ριστη φρεσκ?δα, αν μου επιτρ?πεται ο ?ρος. Υπ?ρχαν μικρ? μικρ? πραγματ?κια που, εν? χω διαβ?σει ?ναν στρατ? αστυνομικ?ν βιβλ?ων, δεν τα ε?χα συναντ?σει ξαν? κατ? αυτ?ν τον τρ?πο.

Πηγα?νοντας τ?ρα στην πλοκ?, ?χω να πω ?τι ?ταν πολ? ενδιαφ?ρουσα και εξαιρετικ? πλεγμ?νη. Πολλ? και δι?σπαρτα γεγον?τα που ?λαβαν χ?ρα κατ? τη δι?ρκεια του βιβλ?ου συν?θεσαν ?ξυπνα ?να πολ? δυνατ? σ?νολο πληροφορι?ν εν? προοικον?μησαν ?ψογα και το τ?λος.

Αν ?μως κ?τι με εντυπωσ?ασε περισσ?τερο ?ταν η αφηγηματικ? ρο?. Γυρνο?σα τις σελ?δες σαν μανιακ?ς και ?θελα συνεχ?ς να μ?θω τι θα γ?νει παρακ?τω. ?σο για τις προβλ?ψεις μου για τον δολοφ?νο; ?ταν ατυχε?ς... προφαν?ς!

Τ?λος, οι σπουδ?ς και η τριβ? του Κ?ρτερ γ?ρω απ? την Εγκληματολογικ? Ψυχολογ?α του ε?ναι πασιφανε?ς μ?σα στο κε?μενο και φυσικ? τον βοηθο?ν στο να δημιουργ?σει ?ναν εξαιρετικ? ενδιαφ?ροντα σ?ριαλ κ?λερ. Η σκιαγρ?φησ? του ε?ναι εκπληκτικ?. Βασικ?, ο Κ?ρτερ κατ?χει τ?σο καλ? το ?γκλημα που οι σ?ριαλ κ?λερς αν? τον κ?σμο θα πρ?πει να αισθ?νονται ?βολα ?ταν τον διαβ?ζουν...

Μ?λις ανακ?λυψα τη ν?α εμμαν? μου!

Petra says

3.5 stars. Chris Carter's debut novel first published in 2009 introducing LA homicide detective Robert Hunter who is chasing a brutal serial killer. I liked the characters, in particular Hunter and his rookie partner Garcia. Some issues with pacing and authenticity but quite entertaining and considering this was a debut, not bad. Audiobook released February 2017 with excellent narration by Thomas Judd (not available in the US).

Monnie says

As I've mentioned before, I'm always on the lookout for a good series; these books make great fill-ins when I want a break from tackling my ever-growing list of free-for-review books and standalones from favorite

authors that I read just because, well, they're from my favorite authors. Besides that, I'm hoping to find a series that will appeal to my husband, who loves to read the same types of books I do but, for better or worse, is much harder to please.

When a Goodreads friend made me aware of this series, then, I didn't waste much time grabbing this, the first one. Without question, I enjoyed it. And while the gory serial killer aspect probably won't entice my hubby to try it, I'm sure he'd like the main man, homicide Detective Robert Hunter (as did I, especially since he was a child prodigy who earned a degree in psychology at age 19 and a Ph.D. in criminal behavior analysis and biopsychology four years later). On top of that, any guy who loves single-malt Scotch can't be all bad.

This story begins with the discovery of a young woman's body; she's been gruesomely tortured, mutilated (all the skin was ripped off her face while she was alive, for instance, which gives you a good idea of the tenor of the book) and has a double cross design cut into the back of her neck. The latter is a huge cause for concern for Hunter; it marks the signature of a serial killer he helped capture two years earlier - a man who was executed for his grisly crimes. Hunter had a few misgivings back then, but now he's afraid the wrong person was convicted and the real psychopath is back plying his gruesome trade.

This time around, Hunter - who is dealing with issues of his own including doubts about his former partner's supposedly accidental death - is working with a newbie partner Garcia. The first chapter sets out what Hunter is up against, and from that point on, the action never stops. People are biting the dust right and left and Hunter and his partner are sure something "connects" them all; but how long will it take (and how many more murders) before can they find out what that is and correctly identify the killer this time around?

To be honest, I had a few issues with the book, such as the occasional grammatical error and terms that are more British than American (the author lives in the U.K. but the story is set in Los Angeles, so there shouldn't be any language crossover). Another niggle is that all the characters are exceptionally well spoken, so every time the word "ain't" popped out of their mouths - which was quite often - it elicited a discord reminiscent of fingernails running down a chalkboard. But I also figure some of that goes with the territory for a series debut - and I'm confident the books will get even better as they go along (as of this writing, there are seven in all, I believe). Now, I just have to find time to read them!

Marie says

This was an amazing book! I hadn't read this author before and I was pleasantly surprised as I have now found another author to add to my list. The book gripped me from the first page and kept up the tempo all the way to the end. The story revolves around Detective Hunter and his partner trying to track down a serial killer that is not suppose living as the killer was suppose to have been executed years ago. But victims are stacking up with a carved crucifix on their neck and the detective with the help of his partner is on the streets trying to capture the killer before anyone else becomes a victim.

This book was fast paced, throwing suspense, tension, and nail biting atmosphere into the mix along with some twists and turns at the end which caught me completely off guard. Giving it four stars for keeping me entertained!

Erika says

Robert Hunter works for the Robbery & Homicide Department in Los Angeles, California and remembers well the serial murders that started two years ago. The kills seemed random, but gruesome; victims were tortured and left to die with only one clue to tie them all to the same killer: an odd double crucifix symbol carved in the back of their necks. With clean crime scenes and no other identifying trademarks, the media and police nicknamed the murderer “The Crucifix Killer.” Thinking RHD had caught the right man, a trial was set and a man was found guilty and killed. But Hunter and his partner knew better. Unable to prove their misgivings despite a confession, the two were forced to move forward with their guilt. Hunter suffered nightmares, his partner and wife were soon after killed in a boating accident.

With his partner’s death and the crucifix killings still fresh, Hunter receives a new partner and together they investigate a new murder scene with familiar repercussions. On the victim’s neck is the double crucifix mark he remembers well from a couple of years earlier, but is it the same killer or a copycat? A phone call and familiar voice bring back chilling memories and confirm Hunter’s suspicions: the Crucifix Killer is back.

Chris Carter’s *The Crucifix Killer* opens to a disturbing scene as Hunter receives a phone tip from what we can only then assume is the killer. He rushes to a revealed location and finds his partner, Garcia, tied and hung onto poles and we wonder, will Hunter be able to save him in time? The rest of the book fills in the five weeks prior to this moment, but unfortunately do little else.

Carter’s writing is far from poetic. His narrative is more instructive and devoid of emotion and character development, as if the entire book was an exercise in showing off Carter’s knowledge of criminal psychology. He does a lot of the dreaded “show, don’t tell” with numerous character portraits that give away information that’s less than crucial to our understanding of them as tools in the story. With so much condensed back story for each character, I felt Carter was pushing too hard for the reader to gain any actual insight into their psyche (as if we’ve all graduated with degrees in criminal psychology and like Hunter can pull pertinent information from someone’s hair and eye color, occupation, or childhood). Instead their histories were awkward, placed as if Carter couldn’t imagine leaving this useless information out of the book however misplaced it looked.

The bad dialogue only added to the disappointing caricatures of a cast of characters derived from Hollywood-inspired stereotypes. One character touts the correctness of using the term “Black” over anything else, but in this weak effort to promote some type of politically correct agenda, Carter’s characters nevertheless fall victim to his own preconceived notions of what it means to be “Black” or Puerto Rican. Since I read a proof copy, I’m refraining from using actual quotes, but am particularly confused about the way he portrayed people of color. In one scene Hunter and Garcia dismiss the possibility that Cubans or Puerto Ricans could ever listen to anything other than salsa or meringue music. He also gives a Puerto Rican free use of the very Mexican slang term “ese.” Blacks (Carter’s term) in this book also frequently use the word “nigga”—as if it’s a cultural requirement or makes one appear tougher and so must be used by someone expected to appear so.

None of the characters or relationships have any depth to them. After going on a couple of dates with Isabella, an awkward construction of sexuality and girlish giggling, Hunter quickly loses interest with her as fast as I lost interest in both him and the plot. The writing is choppy and blundering, the men drunkards and the women either prostitutes or wives, and the twist ending was a cliché. While the cover image was disturbing and the premise intriguing, the overuse of quick and easy dialogue, gestures, and scenarios cheapened what could have been a phenomenally scary read (what I was expecting). To make matters worse,

the most vital pieces of information aren't revealed to the reader in any way throughout the narrative and are instead contrived into the final pages of the book as Hunter works within his and Carter's head to piece together clues the reader would never be able to figure out on their own. The presumed insult to the reader, robbing them of not just the satisfaction of figuring it all out on their own, but the ability to do so, is a huge let down.

Carter uses a lot of odd phrasing to encompass facial expressions and tones of voice that clearly make sense only to him. I'm also left confused as to the type of In & Out restaurant Carter refers to when he mentions waitresses and a dessert menu. I'm from California, I have an In & Out in my city and it's a fast food joint. The only thing available for dessert are smoothies; employees do not come out from behind the counter to ask how your meal is going, they clean the tables, seats, floors, and bathrooms. They may even bring your bagged or trayed food to your table. That is it. Maybe someone in LA can let me know if these vastly different chains of In & Out actually exist there, leaving the rest of us sorely deprived?

Before this book, I already knew I wasn't a fan of crime fiction, and I don't recommend this to people who are unless they want a quick clichéd read filled with cheap thrills and cardboard characters. If you don't mind being preempted in the thought process and having everything laid out before you, this might be the book for you. I was disappointed.

Christine says

I have read Chris Carter's books in the wrong order. This is something I would really rather not do. However Chris Carter is a genius, in terms of the horror he creates and the way he builds up humanity with the poor murder victims. I had no choice. I started with *An Evil Mind* and *I am Death*. I am now back to beginning to the very first story, *The Crucifix Killer*.

This is very much a debut novel. We are introduced to the great Robert Hunter and his methods. Hunter is an expert in psychology, who is working within the police and tackling the really horrific crimes on his patch. He was a child genius. You know the sort; a real clever clogs, with letters to his name. He is a nice chap though. He is joined by a new sidekick, Garcia. A man has been executed via the death penalty and it looks like they got the wrong culprit. Identical macabre crimes are being committed once again. The Crucifix Killer has returned. Will Hunter get to the truth this time?

Although I guessed the identity of the killer fairly easily, I loved it. I do read A LOT of crime, which makes me a Miss Marple in the making. I am very easily suspicious of characters who behave in 'certain' ways. I am being deliberately cryptic here. I don't want to give the game away. The gore level is high, brutal and sickening. At one point, my stomach was in my mouth. Chris Carter does that so well. I could picture it all. Sometimes my imagination needs to be less graphic.

This is great, really GREAT! Well worth a read, if you haven't encountered Chris Carter yet.

nikolaos says

Αν και τ?ρα τελευτα?α τα βιβλ?α με σιριαλ κ?λερ δεν με ενθουσι?ζουν και τα βλ?πω αρκετ? επιφυλακτικ? , θεωρ? ?τι το βιβλ?ο τραβ?ει τον αναγν?στη. ?χει πολ? καλ? βαθμολογ?α. Και ?χι

μ?νο αυτ?, αλλ? και ?λα τα βιβλ?α του συγγραφ?α. Δεδομ?νο ?τι μιλ?με και για φθην? βιβλ?ο (δεν γ?νεται να δ?νουμε και συν?χεια 15?ρια+) δεν ?ργησα να αποφασ?σω να το αγορ?σω.

Και η αλ?θεια ε?ναι ?τι ?μεινα πολ? ευχαριστημ?νος. Καλ? και δυνατ? βιβλ?ο. Πολ? καλ? ρο?. Διαβ?ζεται ε?κολα. Ως πρ?το βιβλ?ο με τον ?διο πρωταγωνιστ?, β?ζει πολ? γερ?ς β?σεις για την συν?χεια.

Θεωρ? πολ? καλ? την κ?νηση των εκδ?σεων BELL να εντ?ξουν στο δυναμικ? τους τον συγκεκριμ?νο συγγραφ?α. Δε?χνει πολλ? υποσχ?μενος. ?τι πρ?πει για αυτ? την περ?οδο, για δι?βασμα σε παραλ?α.

Απ? αρνητικ? θα μπορο?σα να πω για μ?α εξ?λιξη στην πλοκ?, που με ξ?νισε λ?γο (?ταν β?βαια δ?θηκαν ?λες οι εξηγ?σεις στο τ?λος του βιβλ?ο). Αλλ? αυτ? δεν χ?λασε την καλ? εικ?να του βιβλ?ου.

Να σημειωθε? ?τι οι τελευτα?ες 180 σελ?δες του βιβλ?ου ?φυγαν νερ?...

Sean Peters says

In a derelict cottage in L.A, a young woman is found savagely murdered. Naked, strung from two wooden posts, the skin has been ripped from her face - while she was still alive. On the nape of her neck is carved a strange double-cross: the signature of a psychopath known as the Crucifix Killer. But that's not possible. Because, two years ago, the Crucifix Killer was caught and executed. Could this be the work of a copycat? Or is Homicide Detective Robert Hunter forced to face the unthinkable? Is the real Crucifix Killer still out there, taunting Hunter with his inability to catch him? Robert Hunter and his rookie partner are about to enter a nightmare beyond imagining ...

My first book by this author Chris Carter, have been tempted before to read his books, by recommendations reviews and book cover.

Please that my September Book Pal wanted and agreed to read this books, and I really enjoyed the book.

I enjoyed the writing style, the main leading characters, especially Robert Hunter.

A gripping, tense, fast paced, exciting thriller, with lots of great twists, red herrings, fantastic shocks, and with hints of humour between the main two characters.

Four stars for me and recommended

Xana says

Tenho tido sorte com os policiais em que peguei este ano.

Que grande estreia... adorei adorei!! Um livro fantástico, onde a ação nunca pára, que nunca me custou a ler.

Apesar de ter desconfiado a meio do livro, o assassino está bem fundamentado e gostei do final.

Adorei Robert, é um personagem que vou adorar ler mais sobre ele...

Ansiosa pelo próximo!!

Mandy says

This is the first in a series, the main character being Detective Robert Hunter. He works in Los Angeles in the Robbery and Homicide Division.

When a body is discovered Robert soon realises that this case bears similarities to a case he had worked two years before, when a serial killer took the lives of seven people before Robert and his partner caught him, and the killer was executed. Now it seems, he's back.

The killings are described quite graphically, and at times some of the scenes can be quite hard to read.

That being said, I did really enjoy this book. It was fast-paced, very much plot driven, and I read it quickly. I found that I was rooting for the detectives and wanted to keep reading in order to find out what would happen.

The writing was perfect for the book. Straightforward, no nonsense that was easy for me to digest and keep reading. Just the way I like it when I read a thriller.

I will read others in this series, and already have the second book from the library.

Tonkica says

Odmah me podsjetilo na film "Sedam", tako da bih rekla da tu nije bilo nešto ekstra novo. Radnja je brza, tempo jednoličan - na početku uzbudljiv, a onda ostaje isti. Vuklo me dozvati tko je glavni krivac, ne mogu reći da nije. Motiv i cijelo razotkrivanje je bilo dobro, tako mogu prihvati i krivca.. Ali nešto mi je falilo.. :-/ Čitati u i dalje dogodovštine detektiva Huntera.. Kažu da serijal postaje bolji.

Mark says

The first book in the Robert Hunter crime series by Chris Carter and it is a good one. With a mix of bloodthirsty crime and detective work this book keeps you guessing until the last minute. I actually did not pick the eventual killer like I am apt to do in many novels.

Robert Hunter and his new partner Carlos Garcia are assigned to a murder case in Los Angeles. A particularly horrific murder has been committed and, at first, it appears to be the work of just some new type of weird sadistic individual.

In the course of his detective work, Hunter begins to draw parallels to a previous, and world-renowned, case of his - The Crucifix Killer. But that killer was caught and executed although Hunter was not at all satisfied with the outcome and perhaps now he will pay the price. The more he and Garcia delve into this new murder and the seedy side of Los Angeles, the more his is convinced that there is a copycat murderer active. Yes, this is a well-worn script in popular crime novels yet all I will say is that Robert Hunter is wrong.

I raced through this book, such a well-written novel with a tight plot but only one area stopped it short of a five-star read. For me, the ending was a little too much like the wrapping up of a half hour TV crime show. The scene where Hunter and the killer face off - there is too much telling and boasting from the killer and it is a bit of an easy way out in terms of opening the plot up to the reader. I do not mind the final face-off, always a necessity really but would have preferred there was more explained during the detective work

rather than the egotistical killer spruiking their work at the end. However, that being said, the book was well good enough to not drop below a four -star read and I have no hesitation in recommending. Not the best for those with a weak stomach, however.
