



# Mother's Day

*Dennis McDougal*

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**Mother's Day** Dennis McDougal

**The true story of Theresa Knorr, the twisted child abuser who murdered her daughters—with the help of her sons—told by a former *New York Times* reporter.**

In June 1985, Theresa Cross Knorr dumped her daughter Sheila's body in California's desolate High Sierra. She had beaten Sheila unconscious in their Sacramento apartment days earlier, then locked her in a closet to die. But this wasn't the first horrific crime she'd committed against her own children.

The previous summer, Knorr had shot Sheila's sister Suesan, then ordered her son to dig the bullet out of the girl's back with a knife to hide the evidence. The infection that resulted led to delirium—at which point Knorr and her two sons drove Suesan into the mountains, doused her with gasoline, and set her on fire.

It would be almost a decade before her youngest daughter, Terry Knorr Graves, revealed her mother's history of unfathomable violence. At first, she was met with disbelief by law enforcement and even her own therapist. But eventually, the truth about her monstrous abuse emerged—and here, an award-winning journalist details the jealousy, rage, and domineering behavior that escalated into homicide and shattered a family.

A former reporter for the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* and the author of true-crime classics including *Angel of Darkness*, about serial killer Randy Kroft, and *Blood Cold*, about Robert Blake and Bonny Lee Bakley, Dennis McDougal reveals the shocking depths of depravity behind a case that made headlines across the nation.

## Mother's Day Details

Date : Published July 1st 2015 by Open Road Media (first published June 27th 1995)

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Author : Dennis McDougal

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# From Reader Review Mother's Day for online ebook

**Mac Dubista Keso The Bibliobibuli v(=∩\_∩=) says**

I don't know how to say this..

BUT WTF?! It's so sad. No. You will feel betrayed over and over again. I can't believe that there are people like this. Can do things to ruin the life of their family for own sake?!

:(

I gave 3 stars because WTF?! ONLY 30 YRS?! DAMN! UNFAIR! T\_T

Will I recommended this?

NO. This is not for everyone to read. But if you like. Then, just be ready.

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**Terri Weitze says**

I usually like true crime stories. Part of what I like is the procedural (police and trial) part. This book pretty much excludes that. The whole book is about the horror of a woman that was the mother to 6 children and how she did her best to destroy the lives of each of these children. The system totally failed in this family. But the end of the book is just kind of slam, bam, thank you ma'am as the woman eventually plead guilty so we never get to hear much about the legal case against her. So it's okay. Well written, well researched, but the story itself is so sad.

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**Jessica says**

This book is very much like the scene of a car accident or train wreck... It's horrifying and you know that you shouldn't look, but you can't help yourself. Morbid curiosity keeps you glued to the spot. *Mother's Day* was a fascinating look at mental illness, abuse, murder, and the very worst of human nature. I read it all in one sitting. It was impossible to put down.

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**Jenny says**

This book is a really hard one to read because it involves child abuse. However, once I heard about this woman I felt compelled to go buy the book about her. Her name is Theresa Knorr and she should have been killed on the spot for what she did.

She got away with the murder of her two daughters for many years before your youngest daughter turned her in.

I'd recommed this book to anyone that is against child abuse. The things that people do never ceases to amaze me.

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### **Fishface says**

And you thought YOUR family was dysfunctional.

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### **Megan says**

Overall an interesting story. Very sad that somebody could be so mentally ill, and that these children endured all of the hell they endured.

I found that there was a lot of unnecessary detail and information.

It's also a pet peeve of mine that authors finish a book before the criminal goes on trial. I prefer to read true crimes that state the outcome.

This book lacked that, but luckily Google was able to provide me the answers I sought.

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### **♥ Marlene♥ says**

I remember the story was very weird but that the book was not well written because I only gave it a 7 out of 10.

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### **J.H. Moncrieff says**

One of the best true crime books I've read in a while, McDougal tells a compelling story about the horrific murders of Sheila and Suesan Knorr at the hands of their own mother, without ever seeming like he's capitalizing on the goriness of the crimes or sensationalizing them.

My heart goes out to Terry Knorr, who was brave enough to finally speak up and bring her mother to justice. I hope she's managed to find some peace now.

I used to think Terry's brothers were monsters as well for participating in the deaths of their sisters, but through McDougal's account, I see that they were also victims of Theresa Knorr's viciousness. So many lives ruined by this one woman's actions. I hope she never walks free.

Edit: Just read Terry died of a heart attack at 32. How sad. May she rest in peace.

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### **Rita says**

As always this author never disappoints and every book he writes is riveting.

Just when you thought you had read it all, someone like Theresa Cross comes along. I read this book many

years ago but found it equally as fascinating as I did the first time. A must-read for sure!

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### **Lucretia scott says**

I can't really say that the book was great. It was an emotional read and an eye opener. Dennis Donegal tells the true story of Theresa Cross Knorr. As a wife, she killed one husband and divorced two others. As a mother, she was a horrific individual who abused her daughters, and eventually killed both of them, burning one alive. Her sons had incestuous relationships with the daughters and the daughters dabbled in witchcraft and voodoo. Theresa deliberately favored her sons and forced one of her daughters into receiving SSI benefits as disabled in order to support the family (she dressed the girl in rags covered with feces and commanded her to act as if she was mute).

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### **Ginger Monastyrski says**

**Excellent read , fast and easy book that I couldn't put down.**

A very interesting look into the tragic story of these children's life's. Having come from an extremely abusive home life, it was interesting and little scary to see how similar my own childhood was and how frightening close to crossing the line my own mother had come.

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### **Jlsimon says**

This is not my first introduction to this case. I remembered a Wicked Attraction episode about this case, and an interview I saw given by Terri after the fact. It is one of the truly saddest cases I have ever reviewed. Personal feelings about the case, things I would like to point out:

1. This book is very well researched. There are plenty of primary and secondary sources to convince me of the authenticity of the account.
2. The information in this book is largely verified by law enforcement, news sources, and interviews given by Theresa Cross's children.
3. This book is not for individuals of weak constitution.
4. This book is recommended for individuals completing case studies on sociological behaviors, family dimensions, borderline personality disorder, Stockholm syndrome, or psychopathy, case studies on crime or violence being inherited by means of genetics or learned behavior.
5. I would NOT recommend this book to young readers, individuals that have suffered abuse that have not sufficiently recovered from their abusive situation to avoid a PTSD episode. This book is violent. It had to be in order to tell the truth and do justice to Theresa's children, all of those children deserve to be pitied.

This book is a very good narration of the events of the lives of this family.

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## **Shannon says**

This is the story of the woman my family hired to live with and take care of my grandmother at home. My grandmother really liked her and she took good care of her. She was arrested at my grandmother's home and we were all quite shocked when we found out what she had done to her children. Very scary and it's a totally true story. We are mentioned in the book.

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## **Melissa Derr says**

Fascinating story of mental illness, child abuse and the struggle for survival. Unfortunately, it is so poorly written that at times you are not sure who the author is speaking about and it gets a little convoluted.

It amazes me that any human being could be so cruel, especially a woman, a mother, and to her own children! Dreadfully disturbing what we humans are capable of doing. This is very, very shocking and disturbing, not everyone can handle hearing about such things.

If you are interested in this tragic story try reading *Whatever Mother Says* by W. Clarkson... I hear it was better written.

Also, this version "Mother's Day" has no photographs whatsoever of the family or investigators, etc. I would have liked to see a picture of the survivors at least. I find it to be helpful when I am reading about real people to keep track of who is who if I have a face I can turn to and keep it straight.

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## **Karen says**

I'd heard of this case and have seen a couple of documentaries on television about it, but reading this book really brought the horrors that six children went through to life. McDougal doesn't really attempt to definitively explain how Theresa Cross became the person she was. He provides a thorough overview of her childhood including her troubled family relationships and her jealousy of her sister Rosemary, and he details her various marriages. But it is the descriptions of her increasingly violent, cruel, manipulative, narcissistic, and delusional behavior that resulted in the murder of two of her three daughters and life-long damage to her other four children that send chills along my spine.

Based on recollections of two of Cross's children, others who knew the family, as well as police and court documents. Highly recommended.

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