



Hunting the Devil: The Pursuit, Capture and Confession of the Most Savage Serial Killer in History

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Twelve years of unimaginable depravity. Ten days to obtain suspect Andrei Chikatilo's confession or he goes free. Certain to join the classic accounts of true crime, Hunting the Devil is the story of how a master detective, an expert in the psychology of serial killers, ensnares a cunning, seemingly bland, but terrifying psychopath. Fifty-three frenzied murders of women and children, involving mutilation and sexual cannibalism. Not a single witness. Not a shred of evidence. A terrified populace. An incompetent local investigation. This is the challenge facing Chief Inspector Issa Kostoev, head of Russia's Department of Crimes of Special Importance, when he is assigned to the case. Five years later, in 1990, after extraordinary efforts, his hunt comes to a taut climax when he locks eyes with his prisoner. Interrogation - the most intricate game of all - is about to begin, played by two, alone for ten days in a bare room, the stakes freedom or death. Richard Lourie has had the exclusive cooperation of Chief Inspector Kostoev in the writing of this book and unrivaled access to most of the other personalities involved in the case. His own deep knowledge of Russia and its people has informed his account, a relentlessly paced story of crime and punishment in a collapsing society. Hunting the Devil is a remarkable book: an absorbing story of the brilliant detective work that finally chained a ravenous, unspeakable evil.

Hunting the Devil: The Pursuit, Capture and Confession of the Most Savage Serial Killer in History Details

Date : Published May 1st 1993 by HarperCollins Publishers (first published 1993)

ISBN : 9780060177171

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Format : Hardcover 263 pages

Genre : Crime, True Crime, Nonfiction, Mystery, History



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From Reader Review Hunting the Devil: The Pursuit, Capture and Confession of the Most Savage Serial Killer in History for online ebook

Holden says

4.5/5

Meaghan says

This is a fascinating detective story that happens to be true. It would be hard to write a dull book about Andrei Chikatilo, but the way the author drew his characters really gripped me -- as did his horrific examples of the corruption and incompetence within the Soviet criminal justice system, which among other things lead an innocent man to be convicted of one of Chikatilo's murders and executed.

A word of warning: the book is as much about Inspector Kostoev (who was in charge of the task force to find Chikatilo and who eventually wrung a confession out of him) as it is about Chikatilo and his crimes. It goes into great detail about Kostoev's background, childhood, etc. I found it all very interesting but others may just want to read about the murders. Most of the Kostoev biography can be skipped if you really don't want to read it.

Michael says

It's scary to know people like this exist. I wouldn't say its a gruesome read, but the few murders he describes in detail are brutally horrid. It's your usual good true crime book. Well written and interesting. A little slow at the beginning. Gives a little more info on the detective and his past than I cared to know. But once it got to the main story it started rolling. Plus it had good balance. Didn't spend to much time on one particular event. One of my biggest problems is when a author spends to much time on the trial. I don't care about every little detail in court. This book flowed well from the history, to the men involved, the events, the interrogation and trial. Good true crime book, if you can handle the brutal nature of the crimes.

Fishface says

Creditable version of the hunt for, and capture of, Andrei Chikatilo. Focuses more on the twisted poetry of the events than "The Killer Dept," which leans more towards looking at the bureaucratic hassles involved in solving a serial-murder case in Soviet Russia.

Katy Dahlstrom says

Well written accounts of an absolute mad man. I will say that after watching Richard Lourie talk about Andrei Chikatilo in a documentary I was sparked to buy his book. His oddly laid back demeanor and sense of familiarity was mesmerizing. Many authors tend to miss the line between admiration and fact telling but Richard Lourie is a perfect balance. Commonly laughing off the sometimes unbelievable facts while pulling you further into the horrors of this man's history.

Lee says

Chikatilo was one messed up cat, 50+ murders and he didn't appear to do much to remain evade the police, in fact he was arrested and questioned right at the start of the case, he didn't go out of his way to ensure the bodies wouldn't be found and sometimes covered them with nothing more than newspaper, I suppose his method was to hide in plain sight.

As is often the case with these types of books the police come across pretty poorly and it seems that they could have bought Chikatilo to justice a lot sooner than they did, a lot of this appears to be down to the politics in Russia at the time (something which I won't profess to being overly clued up on)

I think one of the most disturbing things about this book (Chikatilo aside) was just how many other pedophiles, murderers and rapists there seemed to be in Russia who the police seemed to stumble upon accidentally and at times haphazardly.

The book is wrote almost as a story, it isn't bogged down with fact after fact and is fast paced, I have to admit that I would have almost preferred it if it was just more of a case study on Chikatilo as the story telling kind of makes him feel like a fictional character, he's like a much less charming version of Hanibal Lector.

I would definitely recommend this if you are into your gruesome serial killers and are looking for something a quick fix.

Martyna says

It was definitely good - hard-core nonfiction fans may disagree, but I did like that most of the time it read like a novel. Some of it felt rushed though, many of the murders were merely glossed over or not even mentioned (I realise it would have been hard to talk about each and every one in detail, but it just felt like parts of the book were missing, especially the period between 1984 and Chikatilo's capture). I like that Kostoev was clearly the book's protagonist and we learnt so much about him - I just wish we had learnt even more about Chikatilo. Also, the communist state's role in suppressing information and their general reluctance to admit that they had a serial killer on their hands was barely even mentioned. Still a great read though, the three stars above are actually a solid 3.5 stars.

Jessica Ahlros says

Jag läste den svenska översättningen som heter Massmördaren. Intressant inblick i en mördarens värld, och i hur polisarbetet gick till i Sovjetunionens Ryssland. Man får många gånger äckel känslor av denna mördare, att han kan ha kommit undan så länge på grund av inkompetens och att man bara vill ha det snabba svaret.

Juanita says

The book was UNPUTDOWNABLE. It gave just enough details of this madman to keep one involved, and just enough detail to explain why he got away with these murders for 12 years. It was almost entirely frustrating, since there were times when it seemed they'd NEVER find this dude! The judicial system in Russia seemed quite a bit more ... speedy than we have experienced: when a man is found guilty, he is immediately taken to a cell and shot. I can't deny that I was thankful for that. Awesome read and only 252 pages.

Katherine Addison says

I read this book in conjunction with *Comrade Chikatilo: The Psychopathology of Russia's Notorious Serial Killer*, and the parallax view was fascinating.

Lourie is a little too "human interest" for my taste: he's actually much more interested in the biography of the man who organized and led the search for Chikatilo than he is either in Chikatilo or his crimes. Now, I agree with him, Issa Magamedovich Kostoev, the head of Russia's Department of Crimes of Special Importance, is a much more interesting person than Chikatilo, and Lourie could actually have done more than he did with the parallels between the two men. Andrei Romanovich Chikatilo (who was executed the year after both this book and *Comrade Chikatilo* were published) was ethnic Ukrainian and, being born in 1936, lived through the years when Ukraine was being kicked around Europe like an old soccer ball. His mother told him stories of his older brother Stepan, killed and eaten by starving Ukrainians before Chikatilo was born. (The problem with this story is that, although Chikatilo's sister also remembers their mother's vivid recounting of Stepan's death, no one *else* remembers it happening, and there are no records of a Stepan Romanovich Chikatilo, eaten by cannibals or otherwise.) Chikatilo wanted to go to law school, but his father committed the terrible crime of surviving being a POW in WWII, which in Stalin's insane troll logic made him a traitor. So Chikatilo became a teacher and then a supply clerk, married, had two children, and in 1978 started raping, killing, and mutilating girls, boys, and young women.

Issa Magamedovich Kostoev is ethnic Ingush, which in Stalin's insane troll logic made him and his entire nation traitors. He lived through two "resettlements" (in which three of his siblings died), and clawed his way up, by virtue of being smart and aggressive, to the point that he could in fact go to law school; he also had the sense, unlike Chikatilo, not to try for Moscow, knowing it was pointless. (Kostoev's dream was actually to become a test pilot, but he got thrown out of the stiff competition for admission for brawling.) Kostoev became a master interrogator, solved a number of difficult cases (including indicting basically the entire legal and judicial structure of Rostov-on-Don for corruption), and became head of the Department of Crimes of Special Importance. And got handed the dreadful clusterfuck that was the investigation of the serial killer working in Rostov-on-Don.

Putting Kostoev and Chikatilo side by side makes mincemeat of most of Chikatilo's attempts at self-exculpation. Chikatilo had an awful childhood? So did Kostoev. Chikatilo was denied his heart's desire? So was Kostoev. It's that old unanswerable question of why some people are able to choose *not* to do evil. And in some cases, like Kostoev, become illuminated inside with the desire to do good.

Like I said, Lourie could have done more with that.

He *does* do a good job of following Kostoev's Herculean achievement in actually catching Chikatilo, and in putting both Chikatilo's career as a murderer and Kostoev's career as an investigator in context with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the transition from Stalinist corruption, paranoia, and mindless bureaucracy to *glasnost*--which if not a miracle panacea at least brought a new set of problems to the table. His version of the inside of Chikatilo's head is based on imagery and metaphor, but is in its own way effective. I have no idea if his version of Kostoev is an accurate portrait of the real human being, but he does make him a splendid protagonist.

Paige Turner says

Serial Killer in Russia in the 1990's

Stella says

Enjoyed is not really the word I would use. I was fascinated. I could not put this one down.

Leah says

This is a true story. It's hard to believe that evil like this truly exists, but it obviously does. I found this book at a book store bargain bin and bought it without knowing anything about it. It's a real page turner and was made into an HBO movie.

Billie-jo says

This is an interesting book on how inspector Issa Kostoev hunted and brought down the Russian Ripper Andrei Chikatilo who murdered 50+ women and children and who was hard to catch a must read if you like true crime

Razvan Zamfirescu says

Infiorator studiu...

Datorita politicii de marketing pe care americanii o fac cu proprii criminali in serie, eram ferm convins ca cei mai mari si violent ucigasi pe banda rulanta erau pe teritoriul SUA.

Ei bine, m-am inselat.

Macelarul de pe Rostov, Red Ripper, Rostov Ripper sunt cateva dintre supra numele pe care acesta si le-a atras pe buna dreptate.

Volumul ii este dedicat acestuia cat si detectivului Viktor Burakov care l-a vanat si prins, pana la urma, pe Macelar. Richard Lourie creeaza o poveste antrenanta, un fel de poveste de si cu detectivi despre un caz real.

Fascinatia americana fata de criminalii in serie este recunoscut, prin urmare, viata lui Cikatilo a avut parte de doua ecranizari, amandoua anoste: Citizen X si Evilenko.

Studiul lui Lourie este foarte bun, se citeste precum un thriller si nu-l lasi din mana, documentatia este foarte bine pusa la punct si vasta, insa nu este recomandabil oricui datorita subiectului extrem de delicat pe care-l abordeaza.
