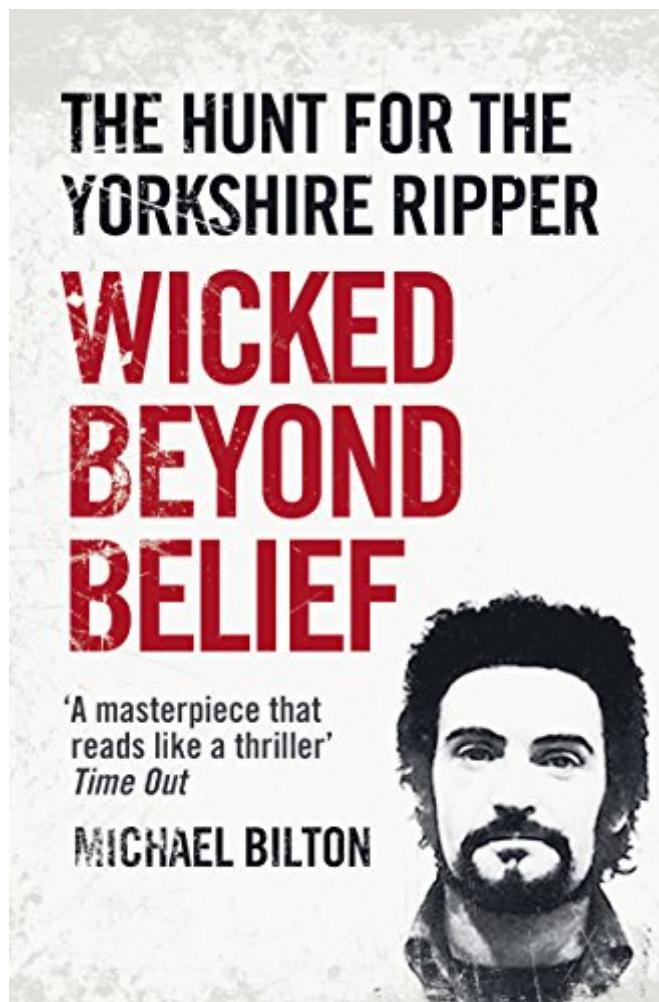


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Wicked Beyond Belief: The Hunt For The Yorkshire Ripper (Text Only)



Synopsis

Revelatory investigation into the police handling of the Yorkshire Ripper Case which spanned over 14 years. Newly updated to include Sutcliffe's bid for freedom in 2008, and the verdict from court in 2010. For over twenty years, the dark secrets of the biggest criminal manhunt in British history have remained a closed book. Detectives refused all requests to tell the inside story of the Yorkshire Ripper investigation that logged over two million manhours of police work. The victims who survived maintained a wall of silence. And the detailed forensic evidence, witness statements and autopsy reports have remained locked away. Until now. Award-winning writer Michael Bilton has persuaded the key people to talk. After years of exhaustive research he can finally reveal the extraordinary truth behind the murder enquiry that left Peter Sutcliffe free to kill again and again. With exclusive access to the detectives involved, to pathologist's archives and confidential police reports, the story of the hunt reads as tensely as any thriller. Its measured analysis of the calamitous investigation is also a shocking and important indictment of the most notorious murder hunt of the twentieth century. Note that it has not been possible to include the same picture content that appeared in the original print version.

Book Information

File Size: 1662 KB

Print Length: 771 pages

Publisher: HarperPress (November 29, 2012)

Publication Date: November 29, 2012

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B009YBU862

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,003,845 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #112 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Hunting & Fishing #617 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Lawyers & Criminals #1100 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Biographies & Memoirs > True Crime > Serial Killers

Customer Reviews

Given the number of books that have been published about the Yorkshire Ripper, Bilton's book 'Wicked Beyond Belief' is a welcome breath of fresh air as it does not dwell on the horror and gruesome details of the Ripper murders, or the motivations of Peter Sutcliffe, but rather it looks for the first time at the bungled police investigation and why West Yorkshire Police couldn't catch the Yorkshire Ripper for 5 dark years. Bilton is well positioned to write a book such as this as he was a local reporter when the Yorkshire Ripper's murderous campaign was taking place and knew many of the detectives involved at the time, some of whom were on the verge of nervous breakdowns due to their inability to catch the elusive Ripper. One of the great strengths of the book is that it draws attention to the gross incompetence of West Yorkshire Police in conducting the Ripper investigation without sounding wise after the event or self-righteous. At times whilst reading the book, I found the incompetence of the investigation to be literally jaw-dropping. This wouldn't be so bad except with each missed lead, failure to follow-up a clue or police pursuit of a red herring, more innocent women were being gruesomely murdered. Some facts that stand out from the book are:-Peter Sutcliffe was interviewed 9 times by the police and let go to kill again.-There were 3 different files for Peter Sutcliffe in the police investigation, each with a slightly different spelling of the name and therefore each assuming him to be a different man.-Sometimes, when police were questioning Sutcliffe, the officers interviewing thought they were questioning him for the first time, unaware that he had been questioned by police several times before.

Investigative journalist Michael Bilton, over the course of many years of intense study & exploration, has done a superb job in investigating, collating and then detailing the facts behind one of the worst serial killers of modern history, the Yorkshire Ripper, Peter Sutcliffe. Sutcliffe terrorized Northern England for a period of approximately five years between 1974 and 1979 brutally killing thirteen young women, and assaulting many others before finally being caught and sentenced to multiple life sentences. Bilton has conducted probing interviews with many of the key detectives, medical examiners & legal practitioners involved in the investigation. Additionally, Bilton clearly details how the investigation became hopelessly bogged down by the sheer volume of information flooding into the police, the lack of proper cross referencing of the intelligence, and how clashes of ego's and pride between senior police officers in various jurisdictions further hampered the investigation. His book also clearly outlines the impact of computer technology and DNA related forensic science on 21st century criminal detection, and how these tools could have greatly benefited the Ripper investigation if they'd been available in the mid-1970's. Bilton's book does get laborious and slow in

some places, however the slow nature of the pace is often a reflection of the frustrations and plunging morale of the officers pursuing a faceless monster for many years. The book not only chronicles the damage inflicted by the Ripper onto his victims and their grieving families, but how the investigation took a crippling toll on the personal lives of the police officers involved.

Wicked Beyond Belief by Michael Bolton is an exposé of The Yorkshire Ripper through the eyes of the police and investigators who worked on this biggest manhunt in British History. Anyone aspiring to become a police officer or an investigator should read this book. It is crammed pack with investigative methods and forensic procedures. Not only was The Yorkshire Ripper one of the world's most chilling mass murderers, but he got away with murdering and attacking women over a period that lasted ten years because of bad policing. The case of The Yorkshire Ripper is a three act story. It is about a serial killer who brought the middle of England to a stand still at night, the citizens gripped in fear for years on end and afraid to go out alone. It is also equally, if not more so, about the establishment of a single Yorkshire police body that combined the talents of different police squads from the towns where the Ripper was at work. It is also about the mistakes that were made during the Ripper's legal hearing which led to his convicted and "diminished responsibility" on the grounds of insanity. The Yorkshire Ripper terrorized Leeds, Manchester, Bradford, Halifax and Huddersfield. He may have murdered more than thirteen women and attacked scores of others. The total number of murders and assaults will never be known. The Yorkshire Ripper picked up prostitutes, hit them with a hammer over the head and left them to die, or as in most cases - he mutilated their bodies using special killing instruments that he shaped from screwdrivers which he always drove around with. He did not take any souvenirs but he did mutilate the woman in a sexual way.

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