



Murder In The Family

Burl Barer

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In 1987, Kirby Anthoney, a 23 year old drifter, sexually assaulted and murdered his aunt and killed his young cousins in Anchorage, Alaska. Burl Barer tells the story of what the local police called the worst homicide in Alaskan history.

Murder In The Family Details

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Author : Burl Barer

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From Reader Review Murder In The Family for online ebook

The Romance Book Disciple (Samantha) says

Overall, I thought this was a balanced take on the story. While it makes a strong case that Anthoney was a horrible criminal, it does provide some balanced legal info that purported the other evidence. The narrator was good and did a good job of changing intonation when reading monologues from various players (lawyers, Anthoney, the judge, etc).

Barbara says

This is a true crime story about a horrific multiple murder that occurred in Alaska.

On March 15, 1987 the bodies of Nancy Newman and her two daughters - Angie (3 years old) and Melissa (8 years old) were found in their Anchorage, Alaska apartment. The three females had been brutally murdered, and Nancy and Melissa had also been raped in a very disgusting fashion. Suspicion soon fell on Nancy's nephew - 23-year-old Kirby Anthoney - a rough customer who had a history of violent behavior.

Nancy Newman with her daughters Angie and Melissa

Anthoney was a drifter who was often down on his luck. At one point, being broke, Anthoney was taken in by John and Nancy Newman - his uncle and aunt. Even after moving out, Anthoney kept a key and felt free to drop by the Newman apartment to shower, eat, hang out, etc. The cops suspected that Anthoney - after being rejected by his girlfriend - vented on Nancy and her daughters.

Kirbey Anthoney

This book tells the story of Anthoney's arrest and trial. Most of the narrative is composed of interrogation and trial transcripts, interspersed with comments from the author. As the tale unfolds it becomes clear that Anthoney is a psychopath and pathological liar who easily called up fake emotions (crying, grief); twisted the facts; and fashioned 'alibi' stories.

Anthoney's excuses came to naught, however, because of the physical evidence connecting him to the crimes. Anthoney's trial was a long, difficult affair, with much wrangling between the capable prosecutor and excellent defense attorney - who worked hard on behalf of his client. There were competing experts, contradictory testimony, and much confusion - especially because DNA science was in its early stages at that time.

During the trial Anthoney didn't really help himself. He interrupted during other people's testimony and even took the stand - opening himself to rigorous cross-examination. On top of that, Anthoney gave his own closing argument - a rambling, three-hour-long diatribe. Anthoney seemed convinced that, using his 'gift of gab', he could explain away all the condemning evidence.

It's not clear why Anthoney would commit such monstrous acts, but being abused and neglected as a child might have been contributory factors. An in-depth analysis of Anthoney's criminal mind would make an interesting book, but would probably be impossible to write. Anthoney seems incapable of admitting to any wrongdoing or taking any responsibility for his actions, and wouldn't be likely to cooperate with a psychiatrist or author.

I'd recommend the book to fans of true crime as well as budding attorneys who plan to prosecute or defend homicide cases. They might get some good tips.

You can follow my reviews at <http://reviewsbybarbsaffer.blogspot.com/>

Ronnie Cramer says

An okay book about an interesting (but very unpleasant) crime that took place in Anchorage, Alaska. More than 200 of its' pages come AFTER the suspect is arrested, so if you enjoy reading about courtroom maneuvering, this is the book for you. I was ready to wrap it up long before the end.

Everydayreader1 says

The bodies of Nancy Newman (wife and mother), Melissa Newman (eight-years-old), and Angie Newman (three-years-old) were found brutally murdered in their home on March, 15, 1987. It was one of the most horrific crimes ever seen in Anchorage, Alaska, to date. 'Murder in the Family' is a detailed account of the investigation of the crime, apprehension of the suspect and the subsequent trial, conviction and sentencing of the perpetrator.

What makes this true crime book especially interesting is that the case marks the first time testimony was allowed by an FBI profiler and allotyping evidence was introduced in support of demonstrable proof of guilt- Both of which were very controversial at the time.

Burl Barer explains much of the early DNA science as it is used in this case as well as the procedural aspects involved, so if you're looking for a white-knuckle suspenseful read, this is likely not it. However, 'Murder in the Family' engaged me in a different way. There is much here about the psychology of the criminal mind and the police officers who worked relentlessly to solve the case up to and post conviction.

Bettye McKee says

Highly recommended for true crime fans.

This outstanding story is not for weaklings. It is an account of the almost incomprehensible acts of a young psychopath who savagely raped and murdered his aunt and two young cousins.

The battle for justice in the courtroom was ferocious on both sides. The defense attorneys never ceased asking for concessions for their client. I did not believe the defendant deserved concessions after what he had

done, for which he had shown no remorse.

The book is well-researched and the story seems complete with no dangling threads. The editing left much to be desired as there were about 80 errors, such as calling Mr. Salemi Mr. Salami.

Jerry says

Family members???

This book shows that some people don't have true family love. Was this terrible event a result of a young boy who was abused and beaten by his father? Or was he born without the ability to love and have empathy for others not just in his family but those he came in contact with through the years. To kill his aunt and her two daughters , after having been given shelter and support by them, is disgusting, not to mention the rapes . I would recommend this book to anyone who likes true crime.

SouthWestZippy says

On March 15th, 1987 in Anchorage, Alaska a violent, hideous act was committed by a 23-year-old sociopath. His victims were his own Aunt and two very young nieces.

This is a trial book. It does not go word for word of the trial but very close. Very little background of the victims, the victims Husband/Father or of the sicko who committed the crime. What background was given, painted a picture of a family trying help and deal with a troubled sociopath. Little did they know taking him in would end the lives of three people.

This is not for everyone, it is very graphic at times with details of the crime scenes.

Robin says

A well written, if slightly dull, book covering the topic of a murder in Alaska that resulted in the introduction of profiling and dna evidence to the American courts for the first time. Highly detailed, sometimes to its own detriment, Murder in the Family is a peek behind the scenes of Alaskan justice and what goes into collecting, analysing and using evidence in a murder trial. A decent true crime book but I felt the author spent too much time quoting in detail the legal arguments in the case too much which took some of the "oomph" out of the impact of the story.

ARC/Netgally reviewed copy.

Denise Wallace says

Listen to a psychopath defend his own murders in the courtroom.

Newbee (JoAnn) Brown says

The author did a great job with this book. Very well written.

They gave detailed accounts of not only how the murderer was captured, but the whole process including how the authorities have changed and improved up to the crime.

The story was written in a way that was very interesting and tho it could have been very confusing.. They simplified it for the reader to understand.

This was a horrendous crime and hard to fathom how an other person could do this, not only to one being but three! Two of which were very young children.

I enjoyed this book and recommend it to those of you who are true crime buffs!

Thank you for the opportunity to read a great book!

Katherine Addison says

I believe this case has been an episode both of *Forensic Files* ("Trail of Truth" 5.7) and *The New Detectives*, which only makes sense given that it's a landmark case in the use of forensic evidence like hairs and fibers in convicting a murderer.

Also, the vileness of this particular murderer is exemplified by the fact that one of the most damning pieces of evidence against him was pubic hairs he left on his eight-year-old victim with pubic lice egg cases attached.

Really, that's Kirby Anthoney in a nutshell. He raped and murdered his aunt, raped and murdered his eight-year-old cousin and murdered his three-year-old cousin, very likely masturbating over her corpse. Then he cleaned up in their bathroom (leaving another pubic hair with pubic lice egg cases in a washcloth in the sink), stole his uncle's expensive camera and rolled coins from his aunt's waitressing tips and amscrazed. This is *after* being convicted back in Idaho of robbing an old lady in a wheelchair, including macing her unnecessarily, and raping and beating an eleven year old so severely that she was left blind in one eye, deaf in one ear, and unable to remember anything about the attack. (After which he fled to Alaska before he could be arrested; his mother neglected to mention this to her brother.) He also murdered a transvestite Native Alaskan, for reasons that may or may not have been sexual, and the Anchorage police believed he was also the murderer of a Native Alaskan girl. And he beat, stalked, and terrified at least three girlfriends, including one who testified for the prosecution for the trial.

Barer writes a compelling story. The legal wrangles at Anthoney's trial get a little tangled occasionally, but that's forgivable. And I like Barer for at least *trying* to talk about what creates people like Kirby Anthoney, whether we call them mass murderers, serial killers, sociopaths, psychopaths, people with antisocial personality disorder, or whatever the DSM has decided is in this year (yes, I know these aren't all synonyms; that's part of my point). Abusive childhoods don't *help*, but he points out that many psychopaths come from stable, loving homes and psychopaths' siblings, whether they share in a nurturing environment or an abusive one, do not *also* become psychopaths. "Violence in the media" or "video games" or "Dungeons & Dragons"

or whatever your hobby horse is, isn't an explanation or even a theory. It's a cop-out, because it doesn't explain why some people can create and maintain a moral/ethical center despite these factors, while others can't or don't. And that's the question that I think matters most, even though I don't have an answer for it.

Chris Hunt says

A difficult subject but an excellent read. I am very interested in true crime, criminology and the procedures and evidence-gathering that brings people like this to justice. The unbelievable BS that the accused comes out with to explain the damning evidence against him is staggering.

I found the book worthy of five stars. I did not know the story so this made it even more interesting. I have no hesitation in recommending this book but beware that you will be shocked and outraged at this person's acts and his deluded belief that he is above the law and able to escape the consequences of his extreme behaviour.

Rachel Aranda says

A pal told me that she couldn't finish this book because she got very uncomfortable and upset about how someone our age could do this to his family. They still wanted to know about it so they asked me to read and tell them about it since reading true crime novels is my guilty pleasure. This book was very hard to read because of how three people were killed. They all deserved longer lives. I found this book to have several typos and feel an editor should have caught them. Another thing was that there were quite a few times the technical terms and sentences were very off-putting and confusing. Don't get me wrong I like having science and law definitions explained, especially since they have changed over the years and depend on each State, but this was too much. Other than these issues the story was gripping and well written. My pal was right about this book not being an easy book to stomach; I'll definitely need to read something more cheerful after this book.

Sharyn Hutchens says

Chilling tale of a true nightmare

I don't read a lot of true crime because the knowledge that people actually do the things we read about in fiction is sometimes more than I can handle. But I read one a couple of times a year because I am truly curious about what causes a seemingly normal person to do the unthinkable. This book provides a more than adequate description of the killer and goes through the trial in perhaps a little more detail than we want. I suppose, though, it gives us a realistic picture of what the jury and legal teams had to tolerate. The book is well written, heartbreakingly, and hard to put down or forget. I guess those are the hallmarks of a good true crime book. But I won't be reading another one any time soon. And I hope the killer of this family dies in prison. I only wish Alaska had the death penalty.

J.H. Moncrieff says

This was a decent true crime book about a horrific series of murder-rapes, so my two-star rating is based on a personal preference. I don't enjoy the courtroom "drama" portion of most true crime books, and this one is almost entirely about the trial.

I skimmed a lot of the detailed play-by-play, supplied by courtroom transcripts. I would have preferred more insight/background into the victims and the killer. Even though the killer was related to the husband and father of his victims, there is very little about their relationship or why the husband came to fear him even before he killed his family.
