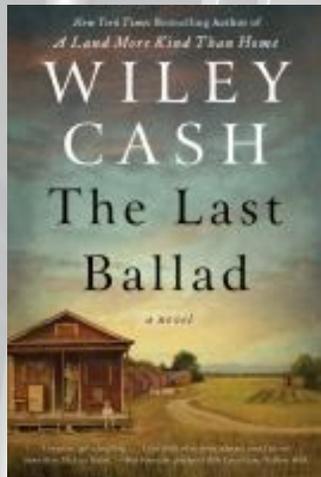
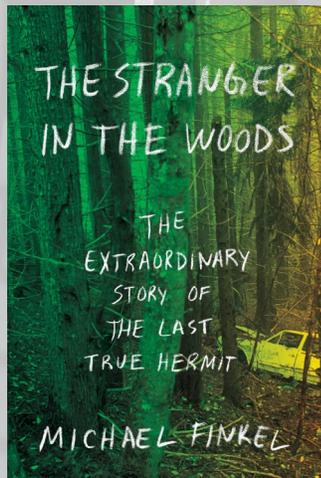


**June 8**

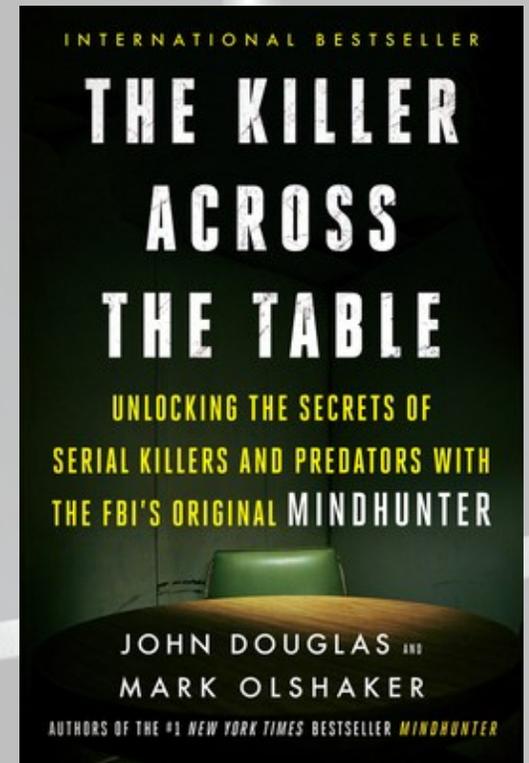


If you need assistance in signing up for our online discussion or how to use Zoom to participate, please contact our Technology Coordinator via email at [mdixon@lyon.lib.mi.us](mailto:mdixon@lyon.lib.mi.us)

**July 13**



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**Virtual Book Club -  
Join us on Zoom!**

**May 11, 2021  
@ 7:00 pm**

**Please register on  
our website to  
receive a link to  
the online  
discussion!**

**Killer Across the Table**  
**John E Douglas & Mark Olshaker**  
**2019**

**Book Talking A Killer Across the Table**  
**By Miranda McDermott, NYPL**

Joseph McGowan was a high school chemistry teacher. Joseph Kondro was a family friend. Donald Harvey was a hospital orderly. Todd Kohlhepp was a real estate broker. All these men committed vicious acts against humanity. Long after their convictions, psychologist John Douglas set out to discover why by interviewing them, as he details in this nonfiction work. His hope was to glean more information about serial offenders, to apprehend others faster and more efficiently, and prevent such acts from occurring.

In the early 1970s, when McGowan killed a seven-year-old girl delivering Girl Scout cookies to his house, it was relatively easy for Douglas to gain access to incarcerated criminals—he and his partner simply showed up unannounced to a facility and asked if their subject was willing to talk to the FBI. Whether to feed their own sense of narcissism, out of boredom, satisfying a desire to look good to parole boards, or for another reason, some felons agreed to discuss how they felt before, during, and after the commission of their crimes.

As a result of his work, Douglas can write at length about the psychological makeup and motivations of these people based on first-person interviews. Kondro murdered daughters of friends in 1985 and 1996. To him, ending the lives of people he knew was more convenient than attempting to control strangers, who would almost always fight back. Harvey utilized his position as a staff member in the hospital to have easy access to elderly, infirm patients, and any patient who angered him was in danger of suffering an untimely death.

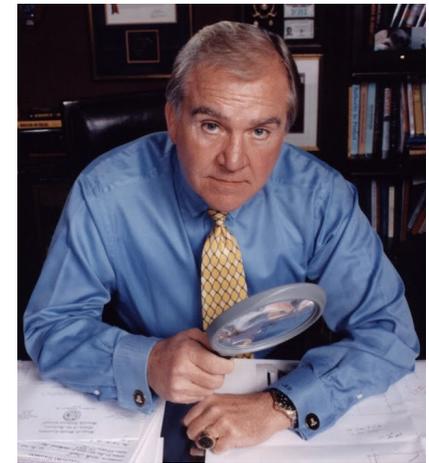
He also attacked others in his life whom he disliked, and it's estimated he caused the death of around 50 people between 1970 and 1987. He also attempted suicide several times over the years.

Kohlhepp killed his male workers impulsively, and held women captive in an isolated location. He also killed four people at a motorbike shop in 2003 because he thought that they were mocking his riding ability. Douglas found that Kohlhepp suffered an abusive childhood, but stated that no one "made" him kill. He agreed to fill out a questionnaire regarding his crimes because he was very curious about the results of Douglas' psychological assessment of him.

As with their previous work, Douglas and Olshaker team up to create a fascinating book. The way Douglas draws on his experience in so many cases, while discussing the book's four central criminals, exhibits his finesse at analysis and his decades-long career in law enforcement.

Douglas has a doctorate in education, and has spent much of his career teaching at the FBI's training facility in Quantico, VA. He has interviewed numerous killers and written many books about the psychology of violent offenders, including some fiction. This FBI special agent was one of the first psychologists to work in the FBI's psychological-profiling Behavioral Sciences Unit (later renamed Behavioral Analysis Unit to take the "BS" out of the department.)

I have been reading Douglas' work since the 1990s, when I was introduced to *Mindhunter*. The character, Buffalo Bill, in *The Silence of the Lambs* is based on the composite of three serial killers, and *Silence* author Thomas Harris consulted extensively with the FBI, including Douglas, during his research. I cannot extol this laudatory work by Douglas enough. I am always fascinated by his work, and learn much from it.



John E. Douglas (b. 1945 in Brooklyn, NY) joined the FBI in 1970 with his first assignment in Detroit. He transferred to the Behavioral Science Unit in 1977. He created and managed the Criminal Profiling Program and was later promoted to unit chief of the Investigative Support Unit.

Popular Culture: The characters of FBI profilers Jason Gideon and David Rossi on the TV show *Criminal Minds* are based on Douglas. Special Agent Holden Ford of the Netflix series *Mindhunter* is also based on Douglas. The character Jack Crawford (*Silence of the Lambs* (book & movie), *Red Dragon* (book & movie), *Hannibal* (book, movie & TV show)) is also based on Douglas.

Books by Douglas (written with M. Olshaker):

- *Mindhunter: Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit* (1995)
- *Journey into Darkness* (1997)
- *Obsession: The FBI's Legendary Profiler Probes the Psyches of Killers, Rapists and Stalkers* (1998)
- *Anatomy of Motive* (1999)
- *The Cases That Haunt us* (2000)
- *Law & Disorder* (2013)
- *Killer's Shadow: The FBI's Hunt for a White Supremacist Serial Killer* (2020)



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