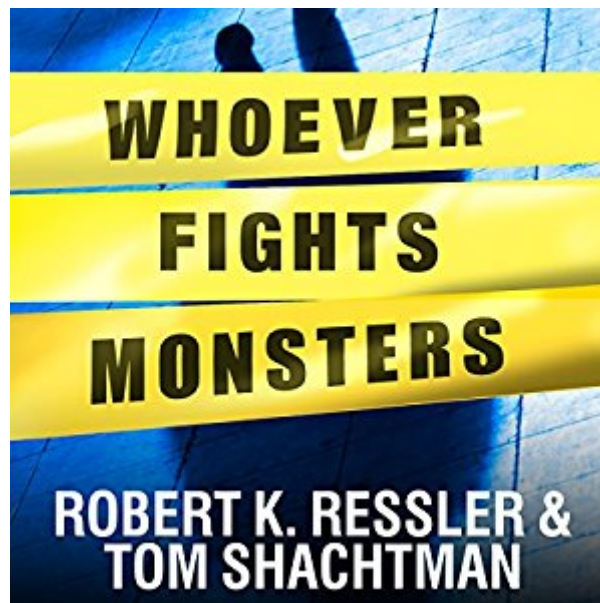




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# Whoever Fights Monsters: My Twenty Years Tracking Serial Killers For The FBI



## Synopsis

Face-to-face with some of America's most terrifying killers, FBI veteran and ex-Army CID colonel Robert Ressler learned from them how to identify the unknown monsters who walk among us - and put them behind bars. Now the man who coined the phrase "serial killer" and advised Thomas Harris on *The Silence of the Lambs* shows how he has tracked down some of the nation's most brutal murderers. Just as it happened in *The Silence of the Lambs*, Ressler uses the evidence at a crime scene to put together a psychological profile of the killers. From the victims they choose, to the way they kill, to the often grotesque souvenirs they take with them, Ressler unlocks the identities of these vicious killers for the police to capture. Join Ressler as he takes you on the hunt for America's most dangerous psychopaths. It is a terrifying journey you will not forget.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I loved this book. Ressler takes you step by step through his interviews, why he asks the questions he does, why he responds to the killers the way he does when he gets a certain kind of answer, and it is readable by a layperson. I saw Ressler speak at my college many years ago and was completely engaged by his lecture. When I by chance came across this book, I jumped at the opportunity to read it. If you are fascinated by serial killers and/or the idea of profiling, you will like this book.

Ressler's the man. He sat in the seat many law enforcement officials envied. Hearing the intricate

details from killers who revealed very few or nothing about their personal lives to others. He tells the stories of his experiences with no fear of the person he sat with. Everyone is oddly interested when murder comes to town. But before Ressler, not enough people paid attention to what makes a killer tick, what is a killer and how can we prevent these people from hurting others? Amazing read, couldn't put it down. Worth the money to own this book.

An excellent account of tracking criminals by FBI pioneer profiler, Robert Ressler. It helps those of us with normal psyches to better understand those among us whose psychopathology leads them to commit unthinkable crimes. A real eye opener!A.A.

I LOVED this book! I've always been a true crime buff. Each book I read about particular cases about killers leaves me wanting....why? How can someone take the life of another with no more remorse or thought than tossing a used tissue in the trash? How can these monsters walk among us, date our daughters or suckle at our breasts without our knowledge? This book helped me to glimpse into the mind of a few killers thanks to Ressler. Thanks to him I didn't have to view these cold soulless eyes or get my hands dirty. We owe much to Ressler's amazing mind, his initiative and I dare say his amazing wife and children. He's dedicated his life to do this dirty work so that we don't have to. I'm sure there are many who are still alive and safe due to his work. I'm certainly going to thank God that he's around! I am grateful to have been able to understand a little better the kind of monsters who live among us and why they do what they do. Robert Ressler is a true American hero. Anyone who reads true crime MUST read this book! It will give an insight and a better understanding of the whys we so earnestly search for in these horrific cases. Thanks Ressler you are appreciated!

This was a great insight into how the FBI started their behavioral analysis unit. The high points are when Ressler presents a case and profiles the suspect and the interviews he does with serial killers in jails to help further strengthen the profiling methods and patterns. The low points are when Ressler repeats himself on profiling points he has already fleshed out in previous chapters. Also he got very wrapped up in telling the reader about his involvement in cases everywhere and put the focus on himself/his job too much. With editing and a little more objective focus on the killers and not himself, and this would be a 5 star book.

If you have any interest at all in Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, and/or True-Crime, this book is

a must-have. The writing is concise and frank that has the double affect of being thorough and deeply chilling (which is fitting, given the subject matter). I've recommended this book to several friends already. Provides an invaluable candid look into the uniquely disturbed personalities of societies most horrifying criminals while also demonstrating other universals of the human condition. Also a fairly quick read. Buy this book.

For those of you who are not big fans of serial killers and the people who catch them (or at least won't admit it publicly), Bob Ressler is the guy who invented the term "Serial Killer" and helped usher in a new understanding of repeat criminals and why they do what they do. The citizens of the U.S. owe a lot to Bob. So does Thomas Harris, who interviewed him extensively for *Manhunter* and *Silence of the Lambs*. Alas, truth is stranger than fiction, and the tales Ressler tells are positively awful. There's just one problem: we've heard all of this before. Where? That'd be "*Mindhunter: Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit*," by John E. Douglas, a man I can only assume was Ressler's protégé. It's a bit murky as to their relationship (the two reference each other, but not often). The parallels are unmistakable—it's interesting to read the opinions of two different people interviewing the same serial killer. For example, Douglas has a bit of a creepy admiration for Ed Kemper. Kemper had a diabolical mind that he put to good use, such that eventually he figured out why he was killing women: because he hated his mother. So Kemper did what every good serial killer would do in such a situation...he killed her too. His murders "finished," Kemper called the police and gave himself up. That little story is from Douglas' point of view. It almost makes Kemper out to be a sympathetic figure. A six-foot tall, 300 pound sympathetic figure, but sympathetic nonetheless. Ressler is not so kind. Ressler interviews Kemper alone at one point. Having finished the interview, Ressler rings for the guard...but nobody comes. Sensing his discomfort, Kemper explains how he could probably screw Ressler's head off with his bare hands and nobody would be able to do anything about it. Kemper goes on to explain how he has nothing to lose and how, by killing an FBI agent, he'd get quite a bit of "prison cred." Fortunately, Ressler keeps a cool head (and keeps his head) by playing the little mind game right back at the massive serial killer until the guards escort him out. "You know I was only kidding, right?" says Kemper, putting a hand on Ressler's shoulder. *Whoever Fights Monsters* is a lot like that. It simultaneously takes on tough subjects, summarizes them from a clinical perspective, and then reminds you—sometimes quite sternly—that these people are murderers. Where Douglas tends to talk about himself and the heavy toll that dealing with serial killers took on his own personal psyche, Ressler is much more detached and observant. Douglas advocates the death penalty, Ressler does not. Douglas embraces the glory and publicity of being a trailblazer in

his field, Ressler worries about the depersonalization of the victims and the celebrity-status of the killers themselves. Who's right? There are no right answers here. Of the two books, Douglas' is more entertaining because he chooses to be more dramatic. The two books track each other very closely, such that if you've read one, you probably don't need to read the other one. Unlike Douglas' book, Ressler admits when he makes mistakes. He also goes into more detail as to the method and process of profiling, which is why I originally bought both books. But it's simply not as exciting a read. Nevertheless, Ressler's tale is an important one: serial killers are mistakes. They're the results of terrible human failings and something to be ashamed of, not celebrated. In that respect, Ressler's story is a more socially responsible (if not as thrilling) examination of the worst humanity has to offer.

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