

Manson: The Life and Times of Charles Manson

By Jeff Guinn

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The *New York Times* bestselling, authoritative account of the life of Charles Manson, filled with surprising new information and previously unpublished photographs: “A riveting, almost Dickensian narrative…four stars” (*People*).

More than forty years ago Charles Manson and his mostly female commune killed nine people, among them the pregnant actress Sharon Tate. It was the culmination of a criminal career that author Jeff Guinn traces back to Manson’s childhood. Guinn interviewed Manson’s sister and cousin, neither of whom had ever previously cooperated with an author. Childhood friends, cellmates, and even some members of the Manson family have provided new information about Manson’s life. Guinn has made discoveries about the night of the Tate murders, answering unresolved questions, such as why one person near the scene of the crime was spared.

Manson puts the killer in the context of the turbulent late sixties, an era of race riots and street protests when authority in all its forms was under siege. Guinn shows us how Manson created and refined his message to fit the times, persuading confused young women (and a few men) that he had the solutions to their problems. At the same time he used them to pursue his long-standing musical ambitions. His frustrated ambitions, combined with his bizarre race-war obsession, would have lethal consequences.

Guinn’s book is a “tour de force of a biography…*Manson* stands as a definitive work: important for students of criminology, human behavior, popular culture, music, psychopathology, and sociopathology…and compulsively readable” (Ann Rule, *The New York Times Book Review*).

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
An Amazon Best Book of the Month, August 2013: For more than 40 years, Charles Manson has cast an awful shadow over the Age of Aquarius: an unrepentant murderer synonymous with *psychopath* in the American lexicon, impossible to ignore or forget. Accordingly, there's no measuring the volume of ink and celluloid committed to the man, his "family," and their deeds. So what's left to be said about Charles Manson? Quite a bit, it turns out. With *Manson*, Jeff Guinn delves deep into Manson's "origin story" to reconstruct the wicked combination of events and circumstance that helped make the monster. In prose that's both economical and compelling--almost hard-boiled--Guinn recounts a troubled upbringing of neglectful, criminal parents and juvenile delinquency, compelling the narrative into the increasingly bizarre landscapes of late-1960s Southern California--a context that turned out to be the perfect accelerant to Manson's narcissistic delusions. By the time of Helter Skelter and the infamous Manson Family killings, Guinn has aligned the tumblers of Manson's story and opened a vault of secrets regarding one of the most violent and strange episodes of modern American history. --*Jon Foro*

From Booklist
The one gesture Guinn makes toward anything like an interpretive biography of permanent-celebrity criminal Charles Manson consists of regular citation of all the other front-page mayhem—riots, assassinations, bombings, Vietnam War atrocities—going on while the ex-con put together "the Family" and eventually directed the nine gruesome murders for which he and a half-dozen minions drew death sentences (all commuted when California's supreme court abolished the death penalty). Guinn indulges in no psychological or sociological analysis but makes like Sergeant Joe Friday, relaying just the facts, though those include, besides the firmly established ones, many that are just most likely. In Guinn's hands, the story of a lifelong loser who yet succeeded in gaining what he may have wanted most—fame—because he was also a world-class user of others retains both all its creepy fascination and a full measure of mystery. Well, Guinn asserts at one point, Charlie had charisma, if anyone ever did. Evidently. A fine, plain historical true-crime book. --Ray Olson

Review
"*Manson* is not simply a biography of a killer and a cultist. It's a history of American culture from the Great Depression to the close of the 20th century. It's the dirty boogie in four-four time, a fascinating study of greed, mind control, celebriphilia, sex, narcotics, racism, and the misuse of power. I lived in South Los Angeles when many of the events in this book took place. No one has told the story as accurately as Jeff Guinn. It's the story of Nixon and Johnson, Martin Luther King, Vietnam, the SDS, the Black Panthers, the acid culture, and a nation coming apart at the seams. From the first page to the last, I could hardly put it down. Hang on, reader. This is a rip-roaring ride you won't forget." (James Lee Burke)

"[A] brawny, deep-digging biography that's much more riveting than might be expected. . . . Mr. Guinn is fascinating in his use of hindsight, and it allows him a more probing view of his subject than earlier biographers had. . . . Steadily surprising." (Janet Maslin *The New York Times*)

"Brilliant. Written with deep insight and in seamless, fluid prose, Guinn's *Manson* expands the story of the cult leader into something far beyond the shocking story we're used to. The best book about Manson that I've read . . . and I think I've read them all." (Jeffrey Deaver)

"[A] riveting, almost Dickensian narrative. . . . four stars." (Judith Newman *People*)

“[A] tour-de-force of a biography. . . . Vincent Bugliosi’s book *Helter Skelter* led me to believe there was nothing more to learn. . . . I was wrong. . . . [*Manson*] stands as a definitive work: important for students of criminology, human behavior, popular culture, music, psychopathology and sociopathology, and compulsively readable.” (Ann Rule *The New York Times Book Review*)

"Guinn has managed against all odds to offer a fresh take and a worthy complement to the first-hand immediacy of [Vincent] Bugliosi's *Helter Skelter*. . . . Offers new insight to those who lived through that turbulent era, and provides essential context to those who didn't. What emerges is a grim but highly compelling portrait of a 'lifelong social predator' who was 'always the wrong man in the right place at the right time.'" (Daniel Stashower *The Washington Post*)

"[Guinn] is now proving himself to be one of the pre-eminent true crime writers in the country. . . . Even though you know how the story turns out, you’re surprised on almost every page." (Jim Witt *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*)

“Jeff Guinn takes the reader on a fascinating, chilling visit to a dark and decadent time in American history, all the while maintaining a laser focus on the era’s most recognizable face of evil. A gifted writer and master researcher, Guinn explores the depths of Charles Manson’s twisted psyche in a brilliant effort that dramatically raises the bar on the true crime genre.” (Carlton Stowers, two-time Edgar winner for Best Fact Crime)

"Splendid, comprehensively researched. . . . [Guinn] has given us an American nightmare from which we have not yet fully awoken." (Ariel Gonzalez *The Miami Herald*)

"*Manson* is a book impossible to put down, the details so palpable that the sense of being a part of each scene is almost overwhelming. . . . Guinn manages something much more than a true-crime book. Filled with the trampled hopes and broken dreams of those who gave their lives to a sociopath, *Manson* is an American tragedy." (Michael E. Young *Dallas Morning News*)

"Sometimes a book is so good that the reviewer does not know where to begin. It doesn't happen often, but this is one of those times. . . . Jeff Guinn has produced not only the best biography of Charles Manson, but the best study of American true crime since Victoria Lincoln's *A Private Disgrace: Lizzie Borden by Daylight.* . . . [A] consistently superb book. . . . Flawless." (Florence King *National Review*)

“Manson by Jeff Guinn knocked me down. . . . Mr. Guinn has become a truly great writer of nonfiction Americana.” (Daniel Woodrell *The Wall Street Journal*)

Users Review

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Jorge Hinkley:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? E-book is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or maybe goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time and energy to read a book. They may be reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Think about the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, man or woman feel need book whenever they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you will require this Manson: The Life and Times of Charles Manson.

Manuel Rodriguez:

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