



Tower Sniper: The Terror of America's First Active Shooter on Campus

Monte Akers, Nathan Akers, Roger Friedman

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On August 1, 1966, University of Texas engineering student Charles Whitman went to the top of the 307-foot campus tower. Over the next 96 minutes he shot and killed 15 people and wounded 31. *Tower Sniper: The Terror of America's First Campus Active Shooter*, by Monte Akers, Nathan Akers, and Dr. Roger Friedman, explores the history and personal experience of this seminal tragedy, enriches public memory, and advances our understanding of mass shootings that continue to haunt America.

The authors vigilantly examine the details leading up to the event, the shootings, and their half-century legacy in stark detail. In doing so the authors correct various myths that have been part of the public narrative for decades, such as a brain tumor having motivated Whitman's actions, that he intentionally targeted certain victims, and that he attempted to make it appear that multiple snipers were active. Witness interviews, examination of primary sources, and handwriting analysis reveal information overlooked until now, including the factors that actually contributed to Whitman's predatory behavior and how his death and autopsy were mishandled.

Employing the expertise of a clinical psychologist who was best friend to one of the shooter's young victims, the book contrasts current understandings of trauma with the approach taken at the time, documents the long-term traumatic legacy of mass shootings, and describes how individuals and communities can successfully cope with traumatic memories. The release of this book coincides with the unveiling of the newly expanded memorial for the victims of this tragedy on the University of Texas campus, August 1, 2016, the 50th Anniversary of the shooting.

Tower Sniper: The Terror of America's First Active Shooter on Campus Details

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From Reader Review Tower Sniper: The Terror of America's First Active Shooter on Campus for online ebook

Jan Pelosi says

This book brought back a lot of memories. I was only 12 in 1966 and having lunch at the old El Chico Restaurant in Hancock Shopping Center in Austin. My oldest brother was a graduate student at UT and I knew he was on campus that day. I still live in Austin so I loved reliving this story by having the facts (and even some alternative facts) at my fingertips. I found it very interesting to see just how much has changed in terms of crime scene investigation, news reporting, even HIPAA restrictions. It was as if in 1966, there were no rules about anything, and police, news reporters, doctors were just winging it with no rules. I think I prefer today's rules and systems.

I did enjoy this book but wouldn't put it in the 5-star category as others have. My first pet peeve is finding typos in a published book. That is likely not the fault of the authors, but rather the editors. Still . . . they shouldn't be there, and I found five (5).

The book was a little hard for this old woman to read in that the font size was very small. There is so much information packed into these 350+ pages that I was impressed with the amount of research and compiling of the facts and data. That said, I wish the footnotes could have been published at the bottom of each page rather than at the end of each chapter. I'm one of those people who wants to read them and found it a bit frustrated to have to flip back and forth and then search for a tiny number in a page of text--especially while reading in bed late at night.

Anyway . . . if you are an Austinite then or now, it is a must read to bring up issues and memories.

KI2246 says

Monte Akers book, "Tower Sniper: The Terror of America's First Active Shooter on Campus," is a fantastic read. I had a hard time putting the book down! A detailed event of the sniper Charles Whitman is weaved throughout the book. The book also describes what it was like fifty years ago in Texas and how they were not prepared for the horrific event. Living in Houston all my life and having friends that attended the University of Texas, I feel it is important to know Texas history, particularly about the events that took place that day. It was an unfortunate event that changed the lives of so many and still affects people to this day. Much could be learned on what not to do from this book to help prevent this type of horror happening today. I was not disappointed in reading this book and walked away learning much more than expected. A five rating for "Tower Sniper!"

Jennifer says

Received a free copy for honest review.

This is a detailed and extremely well researched account of the Charles Whitman tower shootings that occurred in Austin in 1966. We learn about his life leading up to the shootings but ultimately this is not his story. I have read a lot of true crime books but this one was one of my favorites. It tells the story of what happened without sensationalizing it. I also liked the fact that it was a tribute to all the brave men and women who lived this horrible ordeal. I was not really familiar with the details of this crime, it happened before I was born but I had heard mention of it and I was surprised that there were a lot of details that I had heard were wrong or incomplete. One of the things that I found most surprising was the way that this crime was dealt with by both law enforcement as well as the university. I am glad that society as a whole has learned from the mistakes that were made in this case and now deal very differently when a tragedy like this one occurs. I really recommend this book to all true crime book lovers as well as anyone who wants to read about events that shape us and promote change.

Dino Price says

Riveted to my chair the entire time!

Krista-Lise says

It took some time to read this book because it is well detailed. I actually had to re-read some parts because I didn't want to miss any of the details.
