



## House of Horrors: The Shocking True Story of Anthony Sowell, The Cleveland Strangler

*Robert Sberna*

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11 Vulnerable Women...One Charming Predator

To his neighbors, Anthony Sowell was a friendly and helpful former Marine who played chess and hosted summer barbeques. But they didn't know about his dark side -- or the gruesome secret inside his house.

Sowell's secret life was exposed to the nation on Oct. 29, 2009 when a Cleveland Police SWAT team entered his house to arrest him for an alleged rape. They didn't find Sowell, but they encountered a nightmarish scene -- two decomposed bodies in his third-floor living room. Eight more bodies were hidden throughout the house and buried in the back yard. In the basement, they discovered a human skull. All of the bodies were female and all appeared to have been bound and strangled.

On Oct. 31, 2009, police captured Sowell, a sexual sadist who had served a 15-year prison sentence for kidnapping, raping and torturing a 21-year-old pregnant woman.

House of Horrors reveals the shocking details of Sowell's depraved crimes and his twisted psyche. He preyed on neighborhood women, luring them to his home with alcohol and drugs. Sowell then murdered the women and lived among their corpses.

At least five other women were attacked by Sowell, but managed to escape. After a dramatic trial in the summer of 2011, he was convicted and sentenced to death.

In House of Horrors, readers are given a rare glimpse inside the mind of a serial killer -- through interviews with Sowell's neighbors and relatives, his surviving victims, and exclusive interviews with Sowell himself.

\* Includes 16 pages of photos and copies of Sowell's death row letters

## **House of Horrors: The Shocking True Story of Anthony Sowell, The Cleveland Strangler Details**

Date : Published October 29th 2012 by Kent State University Press (first published January 1st 2012)

ISBN : 9781606351864

Author : Robert Sberna

Format : Paperback 216 pages

Genre : Crime, True Crime, Nonfiction, Mystery, Audiobook



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## **From Reader Review House of Horrors: The Shocking True Story of Anthony Sowell, The Cleveland Strangler for online ebook**

### **Ted says**

"\*\*\* I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads \*\*\*

\*\* The Giveaway was Listed By Robert \*\*

\* I received my copy on Wed Jan 16, 2013 \*

THANK YOU GOODREADS FIRST READS AND Robert! "

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### **Mary Thoms says**

A great read for true crime fans. For me, the author did an amazing job of maintaining objectivity and restraint in depicting the gruesome crimes of Anthony Sowell. We learn about the lives of Sowell's 11 victims, and the factors that led to their interactions with him, and their tragic fates, but the book doesn't rely on sensationalism. What I liked most was the weaving of the victims' lives with the life of Sowell. While we can never understand what drives a serial killer, this book sheds some light on the underlying causes.

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### **Chuck Thomas says**

Robert Sberna provides a well researched and very detailed book about Anthony Sowell and the rapes and murders he committed at his home at 12205 Imperial Avenue, in Cleveland's Mount Pleasant neighborhood. If you enjoy reading true crime books, you will enjoy this one. But be warned, often times the book goes into graphic detail about the sexual assaults that occurred. If you can stomach those details, you'll be fine. In my opinion, I think Sberna had to include those details because it gives the reader a full understanding of the unmistakably distorted mind of Sowell.

The author covers all the bases in the book: Sowell's childhood where he witnessed his Mother and Grandmother beat the children in their house, Sowell's time in the Marine Corps which included his deviant sexual acts committed in Japan, his prior rape in 1989 and subsequent 15 year prison term, his relationship with a woman he loved, and finally the rapes and murders of 11 women he committed between 2007 and 2009 and his arrest, trial, conviction and death sentence in 2011.

The book really excels when Sberna dives into the histories of Sowell's 11 murder victims, along with the 3 women he assaulted but didn't kill. As an intelligence analyst who has worked on homicide investigations before, I thought this "victimology" was well done. Anthony Sowell was a textbook serial killer in the sense that he sought out victims who lived a certain lifestyle: black female, criminal history, addicted to drugs (specifically cocaine), and had little or no family support structure to depend on. Just because these women lived this particular way doesn't mean they deserved to die. I commend Sberna for telling the stories of the women who were victims and the children and family members they left behind. In the future, it will be imperative for law enforcement, social services organizations and the community to develop plans to help women who are "at risk" of being targeted for these types of crimes.

Finally, I appreciated Sberna's meticulous collection of facts that were used for the book. It definitely lends credibility to his story. All in all, an excellent book covering a horrific series of events in the history of Cleveland crime.

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### **Gena Koehler says**

A detailed and well researched account of the horrors of Anthony Sowell. One of the best true crime books I have read.

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### **Fishface says**

This book made me so heartsick that I had to take a break from reading it for a while before I could finish. I learned more about the victims, more about their relationships to each other, and above all more about the timeline of events, filling in gaps I didn't know existed after reading *Nobody's Women: The Crimes and Victims of Anthony Sowell, the Cleveland Serial Killer*. The author was able to get farther into the nooks and crannies of the story than I dared to hope. Both the books I've read on this case are more than worth your time, and I don't think you can have a good sense of the story without both. So many serial-murder cases involve finger-pointing at the police, saying they didn't take the victims seriously; this book shows you exactly why they felt this way. I came away even angrier at the plight of the surviving victims than I was already for the women whose problems are now over.

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### **Kimberly says**

This is a thoroughly written and informative book. This is a true crime book, so its based on facts, making the read a little intense at times. Some could learn a thing or two from reading this book. I have a degree in Psychology, and though I don't use it as those who set out in the field, I find having studied the mind caused me to stop being surprised by human behavior long ago.

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### **Charmaine Elliott says**

A documentary. Yes indeed the author spent 3 years excavating facts to report. The result is probably a faithful account. Accuracy unfortunately seems to have won over creativity, imagination and insight. Would have preferred less pedantic timelines and more commentary around the man's psyche, personality, motives etc. So many themes and incongruent events went unexplored. Cleanliness vs filth. Functional vs dysfunctional behavior. Family membership vs isolation etc. etc.

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### **Denise says**

**Very interesting...**

I remember hearing about this on the news but had no idea it was this bad until I read the whole story...It was extremely well written, the descriptions and explanations draws you in and keeps your attention until the end.

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### **Jasmin Danielle says**

The book repeated itself a lot which made this an annoying read

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### **Kon R. says**

This was a gripping tale that could have been better. The book itself falls flat in a few ways. There is a lot of repetition that reminded me having to write essays in high school to meet the minimum word requirement. I think if the author stayed with a chronological recount of the events that would have fixed that issue. The book also fails to discuss what was the possible guilty plea for the case and why was it not taken. The thing that really bothered me about this book was that towards the end the author refused to meet with the killer in person to get more details. It was obvious that Anthony Sowell wanted to meet with him and answer questions he could not over the phone. The author refused because he didn't want to pay \$300. It's as if the author just figured he has enough to go on. What really ticked me off was that he included Anthony's letters to him regarding the meet up just to rub the reader's noses in it. For this reason I will be avoiding any more books written by the author.

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### **Karen says**

This was interesting only in that I enjoy true crime stories. The story itself was disturbingly fascinating, but the book itself was lengthy and often repetitive. I actually quit reading 240 pages before the end, because the author was basically repeating facts from previous chapters and essentially recapping every conversation in the courtroom. I found it repetitive and dry with the only good points being statements from friends and families of the victims.

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### **Tyson E. Dewsnap says**

Very interesting, comprehensive story. But, it was quite redundant in several areas. I kept looking back to see if I'd read that part before.

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### **Ronnie Cramer says**

An interesting book, though it gets repetitive at times and the author mixes past and present tense throughout (often on the same page). Police in Cleveland were criticized for not investigating more aggressively (which is probably true), but there's plenty of blame to go around. Neighbors incorrectly assumed that a local sausage factory was responsible for the stench in the area (of course it was actually decomposing bodies in

the killer's house); several women were attacked but escaped, then didn't report the crimes or were otherwise uncooperative with authorities; despite obvious warning signs, the killer was able to entice victim after victim into his deadly lair by promising them crack.

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### **Wonderbread says**

Captivating horrific story well researched and well written by the author. I have read so many of these true crime books and it just boggles my mind how long killers like this can continue to apply their trade and no one puts two and two together. Why does his home smell like dead rotting carcasses? Must be the clean, well run sausage plant down the street that neighbors never complained about until he moved in. How many neighbors have to be seen visiting with this guy just before they disappear forever before someone lines up the dots??

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### **Cynthia Sillitoe says**

Not as well-organized as it could have been.

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