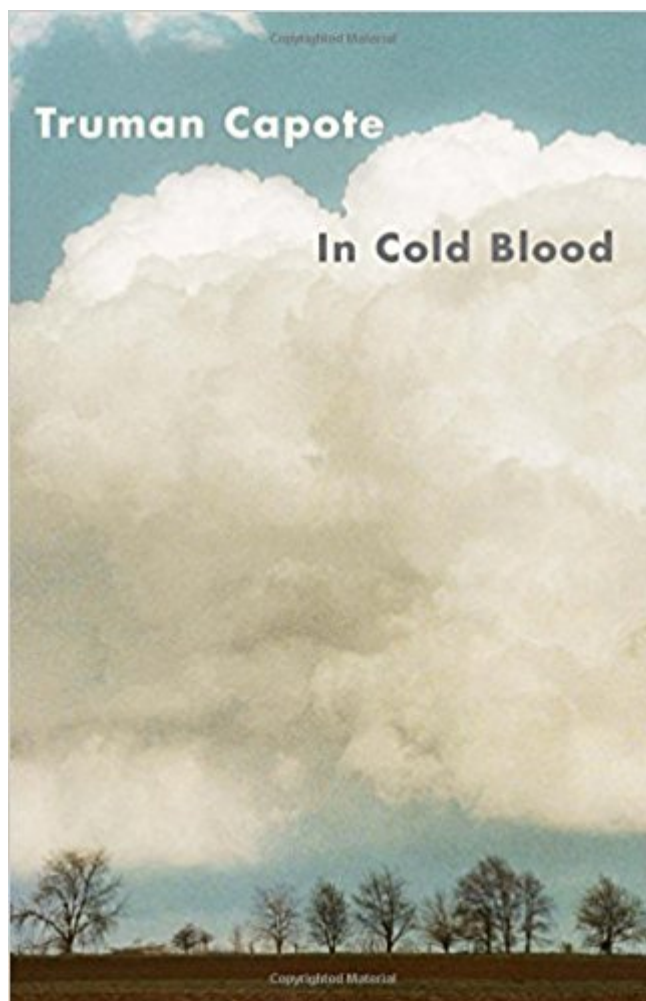


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In Cold Blood



Synopsis

National Bestseller— On November 15, 1959, in the small town of Holcomb, Kansas, four members of the Clutter family were savagely murdered by blasts from a shotgun held a few inches from their faces. There was no apparent motive for the crime, and there were almost no clues. As Truman Capote reconstructs the murder and the investigation that led to the capture, trial, and execution of the killers, he generates both mesmerizing suspense and astonishing empathy. In *Cold Blood* is a work that transcends its moment, yielding poignant insights into the nature of American violence.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 1,786 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #295 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #5 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Criminology #5 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > True Crime > Murder & Mayhem #8 in Books > History > Americas > United States > State & Local

Customer Reviews

"Until one morning in mid-November of 1959, few Americans--in fact, few Kansans--had ever heard of Holcomb. Like the waters of the river, like the motorists on the highway, and like the yellow trains streaking down the Santa Fe tracks, drama, in the shape of exceptional happenings, had never stopped there." If all Truman Capote did was invent a new genre--journalism written with the language and structure of literature--this "nonfiction novel" about the brutal slaying of the Clutter family by two would-be robbers would be remembered as a trail-blazing experiment that has influenced countless writers. But Capote achieved more than that. He wrote a true masterpiece of creative nonfiction. The images of this tale continue to resonate in our minds: 16-year-old Nancy Clutter teaching a friend how to bake a cherry pie, Dick Hickock's black '49 Chevrolet sedan, Perry Smith's Gibson guitar and his dreams of gold in a tropical paradise--the blood on the walls and the final "thud-snap" of the rope-broken necks.

Starred Review. In the wake of the award-winning film *Capote*, interest in the author's 1965 true crime masterpiece has spiked. Capote's spellbinding narrative plumbs the psychological and emotional depths of a senseless quadruple murder in America's heartland. In the audio version, narrator Brick keeps up with the master storyteller every step of the way. In fact, Brick's surefooted performance is nothing short of stunning. He settles comfortably into every character on this huge stage—male and female, lawman and murderer, teen and spinster—and moves fluidly between them, generating the feel of a full-cast production. He assigns varying degrees of drawl to the citizens of Finney County, Kans., where the crimes take place, and supplements with an arsenal of tension-building cadences, hard and soft tones, regional and foreign accents, and subtle inflections, even embedding a quiver of grief in the voice of one character. This facile audio actor delivers an award-worthy performance, well-suited for a tale of such power that moves not only around the country but around the territory of the human psyche and heart. Available as a Vintage paperback. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

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More like 3 1/2 stars. I really enjoyed *In Cold Blood*. I was immediately drawn in. The writing style was incredibly descriptive, but it never got boring. The first half of the book, where you follow two separate stories as they come together, was incredibly compelling. The second half was less so, and dragged a little at times, but was still good and interesting. Capote's opinion of the characters in the 2nd half was clear and seemed a little less objective, almost directive, but still a lot of research and well-presented. The book's portrayal of the characters' relationships and dynamics was also insightful. I found the first half provocative, entertaining, well-researched and well-written, and the second half a little slow and biased. I would nevertheless recommend.

In his later years, Truman Capote became a celebrity on late night talk shows due to his eccentricity and the oddball attraction he provided for curious audiences. This was the period of time when his alcoholism and alienation of many of his colleagues (due to tell all comments he made publicly), most likely dominated his career. Lost during this time, was the fact that Truman Capote was indeed a gifted writer. Having re-read "*In Cold Blood*" recently, I was happily re-acquainted with his powerful craftsmanship, in a truly riveting recounting of the murders of the Clutter family in Holcomb, Kansas in 1959. While the brutal nature of the crime cannot be overlooked, Capote delves deeply and expertly into the many people who formed an integral part of this tragic event, from the Clutters

themselves, to the investigators of the crime, the townspeople in the small community where events unfolded, and of course, the murderers themselves. One can read into this fascinating story the questions that motivated Capote's curiosity about the crime itself, the men who committed it, and the profound effect it had upon the people who lived in Holcomb. Some criticism has been leveled at the book for obvious conversations and other input in which Capote took some liberties regarding detail. It is a clever weave, however, for never does the reader feel jolted when Capote goes off script in his descriptions surrounding the event. While the crime itself was sensationalized on a national basis, Capote skillfully avoids the sensational nature of the horror itself, and study how and possibly why, this happened. A wonderful read. It is interesting to note that this was the last novel that Capote finished prior to his death. The story of Capote's life during this time is as interesting as the fine investigative effort and excellent novel he labored to produce.

Everyone knows this book. It was the first of a genre and according to many made Truman Capote a household name but also destroyed him. I cannot comment on either of those issues since I never knew Mr Capote personally and while I was around when the book was written and published I was too young to know about his celebrity at the time. But the book is well written and opens a door into a time period very different from the one we live in today. The book conveys the time period to us and the character of these men and to a certain extent their victims. It shows the essential humanity of criminals involved here. One can only wonder if perhaps things had been slightly different in terms of their lives, they might have never embarked on their lives of criminality. Not to mention one can ponder the context of the crime and had the quirks in these two men's characters had been slightly different the horrendous events which occurred that night may well not have occurred. The enormous waste of the life both of the victims but also two men who could have been quite different than the cold blooded criminals they became. I have always been opposed to the death penalty for the simple reason I believe it is immoral but I can see how the participants here were condemned by the jury and how no one felt the slightest unease in hanging them. Having been an attorney for over 30 years I am also horrified by the depictions of the trial and the actions taken by the judge, district attorney and defense attorneys here in the conduct of the trial. While there is little doubt as to their guilt, they did not receive a fair trial which our Constitution provides to all even the most heinous of criminals. That justice as well was a victim of this crime is horrendous. This book is not dated and well worth the read.

In Cold Blood conquered my ADHD and I read it cover to cover during a long flight. A couple things I

keep thinking about: 55 years ago, when Kansas was even less populated, the glamorous Truman Capote and Harper Lee spend a considerable amount of time there researching this book. Is there presence remembered? It's a book about the impact of a horrendous crime on a small community. It's about Kansas as much as crime. I try to imagine the impact of a literary celebrity mingling with Kansans in the early 60s in, besides Holcomb, Leavenworth, Wyandotte Co, Johnson County, and Kansas City. There are photos of him at parties in Lawrence. How strange! Whether or not his "memory techniques" were as accurate as he claimed, he really captured the culture. Austere, narrow, but not as harsh or reactionary as outsiders often assume. It's not extreme to see alcohol or smoking as sins. The little communities have their own flavor of stoic conservatism quite distinct from the fiery, sexy, mean-spirited south. I still think Kansas is a miserable place, but a unique miserable place worth understanding.

Capote is a master at his craft. It is very easy to intend to spend 30 minutes and get lost for hours.

I'm absolutely hooked on this story from very few pages in. got it to understand the song Four Walls by Bastille, and I'm understanding why there was a whole song written about it. can't wait to finish, sure it will be a lifelong favorite.

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