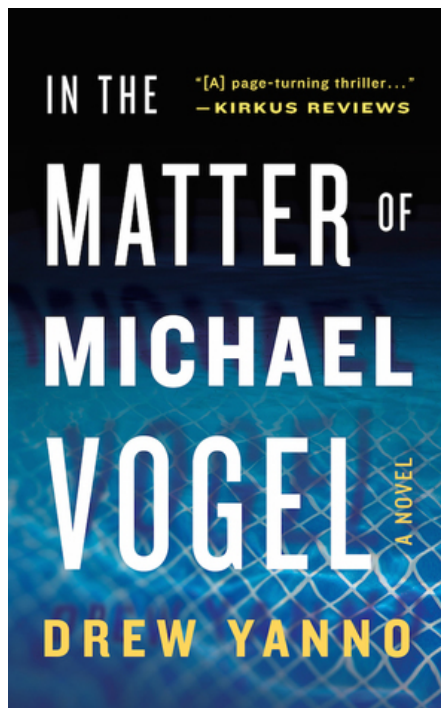




In the Matter of Michael Vogel

Drew Yanno

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It's late summer 1966 in a small town in upstate New York when the body of eight year old Michael Vogel is found at the bottom of the deep end of the municipal swimming pool four hours after closing. At first, the townspeople accept the initial ruling of an accidental drowning, despite the fact that the boy's body wasn't discovered when the lifeguards searched the pool earlier in the day after his sister reported him missing. However, when an autopsy reveals an unanticipated result, it sets in motion a search for a killer, in a town unaccustomed to murder. The story is told from the perspective of three members of the community: a twelve year old boy with a future he hopes to avoid; a sheriff with a past he longs to forget; and a forty year old bachelor with a secret he wants desperately to protect. Their stories all come together in a stunning and heart-stopping conclusion that helps to provide each of them a measure of redemption.

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From Reader Review In the Matter of Michael Vogel for online ebook

christine galkin says

Fun fast read

Fast paced with authentic characters. Still not sure why they had to kill the poor kid but otherwise a good story, well told.

Trawets says

It's 1966 in small-town America and an eight year old is found dead in the local swimming pool, however this is not a tragic accident. Drew Yanno tells this page turner from the viewpoint of the main characters giving us an insight into their conflicting emotions and motives. Not a who-dunnit but still a real page turner.

Martin Waight says

This is a really good read. Clever story. Well written. Nice pace and interesting characters. I would like to read more from this author. The book was provided for review by NetGalley and I am grateful to them and the author.

Carol - Reading Writing and Riesling says

My View:

A solidly written and intriguing murder/mystery novel set in a small town upstate New York. Yanno writes a chilling story of conspiracy, murder, secrets and childhood. This book has the voice of innocence, of burgeoning adolescent dreams, of discoveries of self and of life. I loved this voyage into 60's small town America – a time of innocence, a town where murder is not the norm, where families know their neighbours; kids ride bikes and swim at the local pool, play football, watch fireworks displays. Kids have adventures and everyone knows everyone – or do they?

This story is told from 3 perspectives and the voices tell the story well, give different point of views and provide useful background material. This is a story about murder but it is not about the detail of death, it is not about gore and blood splatter and forensic examination – it is a story about murder and people and the frailty of life. It is not a story that will keep you awake at night in fear of the unknown, of what maybe be lurking; it is a thought provoking, considered journey into complex lives. It is playfully teasing; Yanno slowly revealing one layer after another of this complex plot in a flawless strip tease that ultimately reveals the truth about the murder of Michael Vogel.

This is a book about secrets and lies. It about masks – about the different faces we show the world; one for our friends and intimate companions, one for the community, one for our family... Which mask are you wearing now?

This was a pleasure to read.

Jool says

This turned into an amazing mystery. Suspenseful and intriguing - and the way the book is written, with each chapter from a different character's viewpoint, was engaging and made the characters pop off the pages. I highly recommend this book.

Michelleandderek Nakagawa says

It's not often that a book keeps me guessing. This one is an exception. I was at least 3/4 of the way through the story when it was finally revealed what had actually taken place and who was involved. I remember gasping and proclaiming to my husband how impressed I was at the author's storytelling and his ability to keep me in suspense.

Told by 3 different people living in a small town in the 1960's, this murder mystery is a thrilling, intense ride. I loved every page of it!

tara says

Don't let the long title and plain-looking book cover dissuade you from digging into this book. I was blown away with all the twists and turns throughout. I was on the edge of my seat the entire time and couldn't put this sucker down. I wish there were more books available from this author, as he can write one heck of a gripping story. Yep...Loved it!!! :)

(Note: The only edition that appears here on GR is the paperback. However, it is available in the Kindle edition. I downloaded the sample of it from the Amazon website onto my tablet--with the Kindle app--and then after reading the sample and deciding to dig into the entire thing, paid a ridiculously low price for the book--scoring on a great purchase.)

Janet Kuntz says

Very different composition

First book I have read that is set up as told by the several main characters. A bit slow to start, but it builds momentum to a frantic then sad ending. A quick read with a simple story line.

David Liscio says

In the Matter of Michael Vogel is nearly impossible to put down once you start reading it. The writing is clear and concise, and Yanno is obviously a master storyteller. He keeps up the suspense throughout and,

best of all, ties everything together in a way that will leave you musing over the outcome.

Julie Suzanne says

In real life, Little Falls, NY (summer of 1985), a 9-year-old boy was missing, and 20-something hours later his body was discovered in the deep end of the city pool. I remember. I remember that he was not in the pool, and after the pool closed, he WAS in the pool, and people acted like it was perhaps a possibility that we could all look down into chlorinated municipal pool water all afternoon and not see a body, and that later that evening it would be visible, and that he had drowned during the busy open pool hours. I think most of us thought it was obviously a murder.

My family moved away shortly after, and I don't know how the story ends, but I believe that it's one of those unsolved small town mysteries.

Enter this book. Clearly, clearly, CLEARLY Yanno lived in Little Falls at the same time I did, and he must have been inspired by those events to write this pretty captivating murder mystery novel. I enjoyed recognizing the places in the novel's setting as my childhood playgrounds (the city pool, the parks, the bandstands, the schools, etc.); they were described exactly as I remembered them then and know them now, even if this was supposed to be set in the 1960's.

The story was exciting and fast-paced, and I thoroughly enjoyed it, even though it's not the type of novel I usually read. I think my experience was enhanced by the fact that I was invited to imagine an alternative ending and story behind something real that happened and to watch it unfold in my magical childhood landscape. I recommend it as a book club pick, especially if club members have very different tastes--this will surely please most.

Patrice Hoffman says

In the Matter of Michael Vogel by Drew Yanno is a pretty interesting suspenseful mystery located in a small town in upstate New York. Michael Vogel, 8-years old, is found dead at the bottom of the community pool. Initially it's safe to assume that Mikey has drowned, but there are three people who know the truth... or at least a portion of the truth. Their own truths lead them on a path that comes together explosively.

In the Matter of Michael Vogel is told by three different voices. The first is Sam Fisher. Sam Fisher is quite possibly the last person to see Michael Vogel alive and is in fear that he may be the next on the list. What he and Mikey witnessed would absolutely shake this small town to the core. Not to mention what they witnessed would only be accepted by today's standards, not the 60s. Sam Fisher is definitely my favorite of this cast. He's young, innocent, and interesting the entire novel.

Sheriff Daryl Miggs' voice guides us through the police procedural portion and uncovers the mystery bit by bit. Yancey Hager completes the trio of narrators. Miggs is burdened by a lot of guilt and understandably so. Hager is anxious to divert any attention from the matter of Michael Vogel. He has the most to hide is afraid of the consequences of his actions. Actually, all three men harbor so much guilt, fear, and regret. Yanno uses these emotions to great affect.

Drew Yanno does a great job at character development and doesn't introduce any unnecessary characters. In

a lot of small town novels, the author usually over does it with the character after character introduction. I appreciate it tremendously that Yanno did not fall into this trap. Instead he made the primary characters interesting enough that there was no outside help needed.

What is also done well in this novel is that initially it seems we have the bad guy figured out. There are red herrings to suggest as much but then a character point of view change will suggest something else entirely. It makes the ending hard to figure out and if true hero really exists.

In the Matter of Michael Vogel the author uses a lot of foreshadowing that is sometimes a good thing, but in one instance totally took me from the story. It's clear that the story is being recounted and that pretty much ensures some of the survivors. I can accept that. What I don't accept is that during the climax one of the primary characters says that they were later told by a doctor of an injury... It seemed out of place and took away from the suspense. I only mention this one instance because it's huge and glaring. There are moments throughout the text where I was like Whoa! I wish I could have discovered that myself instead of being handed that nugget of info on a silver platter.

Overall, I enjoyed Drew Yanno's debut novel In the Matter of Michael Vogel. It's a fast-paced, easy read that should have mystery lovers on the edge of their seats. Well drawn characters and plot twists are sure to excite readers. I look forward to adding his future novels to my read shelf.

Bri LeRose says

This is a great coming of age tale/suspense novel that reminds me of some of Stephen King's more nostalgic novellas like "The Body" and "Low Men in Yellow Coats." It's beautifully plotted and the mystery unravels slowly and patiently through a well-executed revolving first person narration, focusing on three very human characters struggling with the repercussions of decisions that may have seemed right at the time, but came up very differently in the light of day. "Michael Vogel" feels pleasantly old and new at the same time, and it is most certainly a page turner! Highly recommended if you like coming of age stories and suspense.

Jackie says

Unanswered questions

Unanswered questions

A fast-paced story about a murder in a small town. The story is told from three different perspectives: the town sheriff, a boy who witnessed strange doings in the woods, and a man somehow involved in the murder. If you like your whodunits to tell you whodunit, this book is not for you. I prefer the realism of unanswered questions.

Sam says

Like any good mystery novel, "In the Matter of Michael Vogel" is well-structured. Set in a small town where not much happens, the inciting incident--the apparently accidental drowning of a young boy--sets off the

discovery of many hidden secrets.

The novel is narrated in the first person by three different characters, which means that the reader is often privy to information which hasn't yet been revealed to one or more of the key characters, a device that works well with the novel's theme of secrets. However, this doesn't mean that the reader always knows what's going on, as even the narrators keep their cards close at times. In fact, the use of multiple narrators increases the suspense in the story, as whatever note a chapter ends on will often be the last that we hear from that character for two more chapters.

Moving along, I am compelled to admit that the story's voices (the dialogue and the narration) were not among the best that I've read and that the "small town" aspect was oversold at times. Fortunately, these things did not detract from the value of the narrative. The pacing of the revelations and plot twists was very good, and overall this was an enjoyable mystery.

Debra Morris says

I thoroughly enjoyed this novel; I found all the narrative voices convincing and I liked the way the time frame worked in shaping the mystery.
