



Cain's Blood

Geoffrey Girard

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Ted Bundy. The Son of Sam. The Boston Strangler. Albert Fish. Henry Lee Lucas.

The DNA of the world's most notorious serial killers has been cloned by the U.S. Department of Defense to develop a new breed of bioweapon. Now in Phase Three, the program includes dozens of young men who have no clue as to their evil heritage. Playing a twisted game of nature vs. nurture, scientists raise some of the clones with loving families and others in abusive circumstances. But everything changes when the most dangerous boys are set free by their creator. A man with demons of his own, former black ops soldier Shawn Castillo is hot on their trail. But Castillo didn't count on the quiet young man he finds hiding in an abandoned house—a boy who has just learned he is the clone of Jeffrey Dahmer. As Jeffrey and Castillo race across the country on the trail of the rampaging teens, Castillo must protect the boy who is the embodiment of his biggest fears—and who may also be his last hope. Melding all-too-plausible science and ripped from-the-headlines horror, Cain's Blood is a stunning debut about the potential for good and evil in us all.

Cain's Blood Details

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Author : Geoffrey Girard

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From Reader Review Cain's Blood for online ebook

Patrick Nichol says

Cain's Blood, the twisted new novel by Geoffrey Girard, is the literary equivalent of an Eli Roth torture-porn bloodbath.

Shawn Castillo, an ex-Special Forces Captain turned mercenary, is investigating a horrific mass-murder at a secret laboratory/ private school.

The victims were sodomized, raped and gutted - apparently by students of the school. The offices and classrooms are awash in blood as Castillo is briefed on his mission.

He's been hired to track down dozens of boys who are clones of history's most heinous serial killers.

Geneticists at this facility have replicated Jeffrey Dahmer, Albert Fish, Ted Bundy and John Wayne Gacy, among others.

Apparently, the US Government wanted to develop new weapons using these boys. Castillo, battling PTSD after Afghanistan, is horrified but takes the mission.

Girard has crafted a masterpiece of violence, intrigue and moral ambiguity packaged in a staccato prose style. Readers even learn about the history of genetics, discovered by the Augustinian friar Gregor Mendel in the 1800s.

Castillo is also teamed up with a young man named Jeff, a Jeffrey Dahmer clone, who may have clues to the other killers.

Their partnership is the strongest key to the plot. Without young Jeff, Castillo has no reason to care about anything.

Of course the violence is graphic.

But the book is bloody good.

Jenniferxoxo says

Dieses Buch war sowas von unglaublich gut!! Absolut Leseempfehlung. Die Thematik ist einfach so komplex und so absurd, die Spannung hält von Beginn an bis zum Schluss. Man fühlt einfach so mit. Ich hatte so oft Gänsehaut und mir ist es kalt den Rücken runter gelaufen weil das was passiert ist einfach nur unvorstellbar war. Und dann das Ende bzw das letzte 1/4 da haut er nochmal richtig rein. Einfach ein tolles Buch!!

Jaclyn Hogan says

I was so ready to hate this book. As I've said before, it has one of the stupidest premises ever. The Department of Defense creates clones of infamous serial killers. Because that is a fool proof plan that won't backfire in any way. Ok, sure, they try to justify it by saying things about all the cures for brain diseases that they got from kids with crazy brain chemistry. I dunno, it never really feels like a viable reason? Like it's an excuse to hold the book together. Really, there are a lot of things that seem off to me, like they haven't been fully thought out, but are necessary for the plot.

Here's a few:

The clones are grown in a lab, in artificial wombs. Some of them have had their aging accelerated. Ok, so I'll

buy human cloning, but from what I can tell this book is set in the present or near future. One of those huge advances in bio-technology is reasonable enough that I can suspend my disbelief. I just couldn't overlook all of this, plus the clones slowly coming down with horrible cancers that the biologists can suppress. It's just too much on top of the crazy premise.

The lead doctor who sets the clones free on their killing spree believes he's the descendant of Jack the Ripper. He's had dreams of the Mary Kelly murder scene his whole life, and he digs up the body of Francis Tumblety, one of the Ripper suspects, to confirm their relation. So, yeah. This happens to some of the clones too, they see ghosts of their original's victims. Nope, sorry. Cloning, ancestry does not work that way. Also, at one point one of the clones remarks that the Jack the Ripper case is pretty much closed, that the Ripper was definitely Walter Sickert. He's got to be getting this from Patricia Cornwell's book, Jack the Ripper: Case Closed. I'm fairly sure that no reputable Ripperologist takes this book seriously, but that's another story. The author's point is that nurture is more important than nature, and the geneticist is making a choice to be a crazy serial killer. Sigh. Why he even has such a confusing, poorly thought out sub-plot to make this point is beyond me.

The super composite serial killers and the serial killer neurotoxin. WHY? It's too much. And part of it never goes anywhere. Don't have plot threads that go nowhere! Oh, also at one point the protagonist gets stabbed and actually thinks he has only hours left to live, and then... nothing. He gets no medical care that we see or are told about and then survives exposure to the serial killer nerve toxin without killing anyone or getting killed by apparently quoting the Odyssey to himself. Yeah, sure, whatever.

Despite all these gripes, and there are many, I did not hate Cain's Blood. It is genuinely creepy in parts, and makes an honest effort to grapple with questions of good and evil, where evil comes from, the problems of asking soldiers to be killers then come home and be normal, and the government's history of human experimentation. I just would really have loved for those questions to be addressed in a smarter book. Read this if you really love stories about serial killers, gruesome horror, multiple points of view, and don't mind implausible science and weak-sauce endings. Better luck next time, Mr. Girard.

Betty says

Girard opens his book telling us about Mendel (the father of genetics), moving on to the more recent science of genetics, study of DNAs and cloning. I would have liked biology better if Girard had been my professor.

Girard makes three chilling statements even before his story begins:

Scientists isolated DNA factors. *"Once isolated, analyzed each factor to understand how it really worked. Once understood, explored how to **modify**."*

The scientist who led the team that cloned Dolly the Sheep, said in reference to cloning humans, *"It would be naive to think it possible to prevent."*

Cloning humans, by the way, is still completely legal in the United States. Everyone just assumes it's not.

What a super background for such a suspenseful novel. Fiction: the U.S. Department of Defense cloned serial killers to develop a new bio-weapon. Yes, fiction ... but it could happen. What if serial killers were cloned in order to study nature vs. nurture? What if some of these teenage clones left the compound on a rampage? A former special ops soldier is asked to track them.

S H U D D E R

That is what I did when I read Cain's Blood. You will too. To be honest, parts of this book held too much

horror and gore for me, even though I enjoy reading novels about serial killers.

Books A-Brewin' says

I received an e-copy of this book from the publishers on Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review.

When I received this book, I was so anxious to dive right into it. As I read I just became more and more enamored with the story and the overall general story line. I started discussing it with various family members and describing as much as possible without giving away EVERYTHING (we don't take kindly to spoilers in this household), and actually got quite a few people interested. Sadly, I had no way of loaning them my copy since it was an e-copy. Low and behold, I actually found a physical copy of the Cain's Blood/Project Cain ARC in one of my local used bookstores. Now I have a copy to loan out!

This book is a thriller the likes of which you have never imagined. Cloning, after the success over a cloned sheep named Dolly, has become a full-blown obsession for the U.S. government. The government and a biotechnological company called DSTI takes cloning a bit further and starts cloning children out of serial killer DNA in order to isolate the "anger gene" in a macabre experiment of nature vs. nurture. Taking some of the child subjects and placing them into loving homes as well as abusive homes they study the roll of a pre-dispositioned serial killer in their different environments.

The creator of the program is unsatisfied with how the overall project is going decides to free some of his creations on the world. The clones of Albert Fish, Ted Bundy, David Berkowitz, Jeffrey Dahmer, Henry Lee Lucas, and Dennis Rader are allowed to give into their murderous desires and run a muck. In comes the problem solver, black ops soldier, Shawn Castillo. He is set to capture and/or kill the teenagers as soon as humanly possibly. Despite being trained to do as he is told, Castillo buckles under the idea of having to kill teenagers, even if they are criminally insane teenagers.

While on the trail of the escaped subjects he comes across a cowering boy in an abandoned house and finds out he is yet another clone of Jeffrey Dahmer. Having no idea what else to do and hoping Jeffrey may have some insight he wouldn't normally have he takes the boy along on his journey, always weary of the fact that the innocent boy sitting beside him in the car could flip a switch at any moment and become one of the most notorious serial killers of all time.

I have been reading a lot of paranormal books recently and was glad to take a break from all that and get into something a little more realistic. This was a scary read. Not scary like, crazy zombie monsters, but scary in the fact that it is entirely possible for this to truly happen. Genetic testing and experimentation are alive and very much well in the United States. It is not a stretch for the government to use it to understand some of the most fearsome killers of all time. This book was so, so, so good! The adult version Cain's Blood opposed to Project Cain is very graphic and has some material that I would definitely not recommend for a younger audience. For the younger ones, stick to Project Cain.

Cain's Blood is a realistic read that sheds light on the human condition. It explores the ever debatable question of nature vs. nurture and gives it teeth. Why are we the way we are? Is it where we grew up or how we are designed genetically? Is a clone of Jeffrey Dahmer destined to be the nightmare his genetic host was, or is there a chance that good or bad, violent killer or innocent victim, that it all comes down to conscious

choice?

Explore Cain's Blood's work of literary horror and thrills, that will have you flinching in shock but begging for more.

Review Posted on:

<http://www.ladybugliterature.blogspot...>

Jennifer McGowan says

Finally read the full version of this book in its KILLER flip-ARC format. As a companion novel to PROJECT CAIN it sets the stage in a traditional thriller format that is both fast-paced and really, really (really) dark. Probably the best summary of the book was already shared by someone well-versed with thrillers:

"I'm betting the name Michael Crichton will come up quite a bit as people talk about Geoffrey Girard's deeply-twisted debut, CAIN'S BLOOD. And with good reason: Girard appears to have some of Crichton's DNA in his system--along with the always-advantageous 'Thomas Harris mutation' thrown in for good measure. Girard knows how to tell a story; he knows how to bring in the necessary science; and he knows how to spill some blood. It all adds up to an awful lot of (very dark) fun for the reader."

— Scott Smith, author of THE RUINS

Couldn't have said it better. This one is dark, though, and definitely not for young readers: be warned.

Alejandra says

Holy cow is this book intense or what?! It had been a while since a book got me scared the way Cain's Blood did. Needless to say I loved it! It's a mix between Michael Crichton and John Ajvide Lindqvist. In Cain's Blood, a bunch of scientists working for government development and research come across a way of cloning the worst serial killers the world has seen. Now, several of them have been successfully cloned; like Jeffrey Dahmer, Ted Bundy, Albert Fish and David Berkowitz among others. When things get out of hand and the lead scientist goes bonkers and releases the worst of the batch, Shawn Castillo -ex Special Ops- is called in to clean up the mess. Teamed up with one of Jeffrey Dahmer's clones, Castillo goes out in the most gruesome man hunt ever. In a race to catch and stop these sick, demented clones, Jeff and Castillo find themselves in serious danger and fearing for their own lives. This is a hell of a read: dark, gory, scary and frighteningly real. It kept me up more than one night.

Scott Payne says

"I'm one of the few people you'll meet who's written more books than they've read." -Garth Marengi

This quote is almost certainly true of Geoffrey Girard

Paige Horst says

Couldn't get past the first chapter's lavish attention to gruesome torture-murder scenes. It didn't help that I apparently mistook this book for the companion YA novel Project Cain. It's been a long time since I noped out of a book so fast. It wasn't the violence, necessarily, it was the author's lovingly detailed descriptions of the dead victims and the crime scenes that made me close the book. I kind of wish I had a physical copy so I could burn the thing. I generally have a high tolerance in thrillers for murder and mayhem, but this went far beyond most thrillers' depictions, recounting the crimes of well known serial killers with a gleeful, reverent tone. Yick.

Melissa Landers says

Geoffrey is a local author acquaintance of mine, and I bought CAIN'S BLOOD at his launch party, figuring it would be a nice change of pace from the romance and YA titles I usually pick up.

Oh, man. It was certainly that.

While reading, I can't count the number of times I cringed and thought, "Damn, Geoffrey. This is some seriously twisted, sick-ass sh!t," and yet I couldn't stop turning the pages. Not sure what that says about me. Anyway, I cared about the protagonists, Jeff & Castillo, and the story was quickly plotted with just enough mystery to keep me guessing and plenty of action to keep me engaged. The meticulously-detailed torture and killing was a bit much for this romance junkie, but standard fare for any Stephen King fan.

Highly recommend for lovers of horror!

Elisa says

It sounds like a joke; a retired military guy with PTSD and a clone of Jeffrey Dahmer track down a bunch of murdering clones. Somehow, from a ridiculous premise, Cain's Blood turns into an edge-of-your-seat thriller about evil and a debate about nature vs. nurture. A biotech company funded by the US Government has secretly cloned some of the most infamous serial killers in history, Ted Bundy, John Wayne Macy, Dahmer, the Son of Sam... you get the picture. When some of these clones escape, it is up to Shawn Castillo to track and stop them. Following the trail of blood, he discovers that maybe the biggest psychopaths are not necessarily the clones. The non-stop rhythm makes for a quick read, and the characters are very likable (including, incredibly, Jeff, who may or may not become what his original self was). Not that I needed this book to remind me but: clowns are creepy. Enjoyable and fun.

Matthew Baker says

I always wonder just how many breakthroughs science has experienced because of military need. Granted, most discoveries are always announced in public channels, but I would wager many of them came as a side-effect or result of military experimentation. Geoffrey Girard's latest book, CAIN'S BLOOD, roots around in

this very idealism. But unfortunately for the general population within the book, the breakthrough results of this military experiment are hazardous to the public's health.

The concept of cloning is one that many authors and moviemakers have approached, although I daresay very few have come close to creating something like this. Just the thought of trying to harness the essence of what creates a killer makes me shudder. If science can strive for that, there's no limit to what they might reach for.

CAIN'S BLOOD is an explosive combination of fact and fiction, a dangerous hybrid of science and imagination. The realism is stark and the landscape this book paints is a scary revelation of what might someday be. Girard is a masterful storyteller and his talent shines brightly with this novel.

The book is written well and has a strong voice. The story moves at a very nice pace and is never bogged down with too much exposition or flowery wording. This is particularly nice when reading a thriller, as it obviously lets you immerse yourself in the author's world. It also allows you to tear through the book at a faster pace and thus reach the resolution faster.

If I were forced to find a flaw with CAIN'S BLOOD, I simply could not do so. It is the very definition of an enjoyable read, and I highly suggest you check it out. I wouldn't classify it as horror, however there is quite a bit of carnage within, which should be no surprise since it deals with serial killers (or technically their clones). Still, if you can stomach that, give this one a look. It is well worth it.

Jason Sizemore says

I'm giving this one a 5/5 rating. While not a perfect book, it is one of the most engaging reads of the year and contains some nice moral ambiguities and a realistic, flawed protagonist.

MINOR SPOILERS

Castillo is an ex-Special Ops member who spent time in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran. He's seen and done some bad shit. Even though he's still struggling with serious PTSD, he is tasked by his ex-commander to help track down a group of vicious escaped serial killer clones and their spiritual leader, the geneticist Dr. Jacobson. Along the way, Castillo picks up a nice kid named Jeffrey Jacobson (son of the renegade geneticist). Jeff is a clone, and Castillo is torn by what Jeffrey could be and what he appears to be.

I expected the book to devolve into a preachy gore-fest, but the author balances issues of pre-destination, genetics, fatherhood, domestic abuse, clandestine government, and more with a deft hand.

If there is a weakness with Cain's Blood, is that the scope of the book is a bit broad. All the characters that are introduced play important roles in the plot, but their stories can be a bit threadbare. Perhaps Girard was restricted to 320 pages this being his first major novel (Girard is well-known in genre small press circles), but Cain's Blood would have benefited from being 400 pages, giving the author and the characters room to breathe.

If you like your military thrillers to be intelligent and at times, touching, then Cain's Blood will be a nice addition to your bookshelf.

Hal Bodner says

"Cain's Blood" is a fascinating first novel about genetic manipulation by an intriguing new author, Geoffrey Girard. In the current literary environment of "copy cat" novels, Girard manages to do something truly remarkable by creating an entirely innovative and remarkably creative twist on the old "Boys From Brazil" plot line.

I read this book as a possible nominee for the Bram Stoker awards in the "First Novel" category. Oddly, some of the same elements that make Girard's book highly recommendable as his freshman effort also work strongly against it in terms of reviewing it. The ideas contained in this novel show evident enthusiasm and they fly fast and furiously from the pages. There's a roller coaster effect to reading it; the thing drives you forward and you want very much to know what happens next. This is exactly the kind of first novel that stirs the blood of the reader and makes him or her start searching Amazon in the hope that the author's second book will be out soon.

Just so that I am unequivocally clear: "Cain's Blood" is certainly well worth reading and I expect some amazing things to come from the keyboard of this novice author in the future. There are, however, many glaring flaws in this book that detract from it substantially and that a more experienced novelist might have avoided.

Like most first timers, Girard often gets bogged down in the jargon, whether it be in his use of military terminology or by providing background on genetic science. I found myself skipping over a page or so at a time, simply because, within the first sentence or two, I was bored or alienated by the techno-babble. It's rough to blame the author for this and for some of the other similar lapses in craft as, by rights, an experienced editor should have caught it. Unfortunately, the ultimate responsibility needs to rest with the author himself.

In addition, Girard tries to do far too much with his characters and he simply lacks the skill. There are dozens of them and, with the possible exception of the two leads, they're interchangeable. It is inconceivable, for example, that there is no real character distinction between a teenaged version of the infamous cannibal, Albert Fish, and a teenaged Ted Bundy. Yet, Girard's characters seem all scissored from the same blank sheet of white construction paper--and that's a damned shame. He assigns them surface "traits" without developing any depth and often, as in the case of a young John Wayne Gacy walking around in a clown suit, the result is mildly clever but ultimately ridiculous and unbelievable.

In the end, we never know enough about any of these characters beneath the surface, not even the young "hero" Jeffrey Dahmer clone, to care very much about them. And insofar as the evil scientists and military folk are concerned, they are as indistinguishable from each other as are the individual personalities that comprise the nebulous pack of post-pubescent serial killers.

The ideas of the book, and the innovative plot, are it's most effective elements. But while the plot's uniqueness manages to sustain a certain excitement throughout, the novel never really rises to the level of being thrilling -- and by all rights it should be. The comparison has been made between Girard and Crichton, and it's certainly a valid one. But the success of Crichton's novels was always in the story of the PEOPLE who found themselves caught up beyond their volition in those marvelously Frankenstein-ian scientific plots; it was never about Science Gone Bad in a vacuum.

The above being said, I think there is a helluva lot of potential in Geoffrey Girard and it is perhaps unfair of me to expect him to have the seasoning of more experienced authors. But, again, the concepts this guy has chosen to work with, and the high level of creativity in the story he has chosen to tell, sort of demand an equally adept hand at the craft of authorship, which is lacking.

In short, Geoffrey Girard is one of the most promising new novelists I've read in a long time. Even though he came up a trifle short the first time around, he's certainly well worth reading. There's a ton of potential here and I heartily recommend keeping an eye out to see what Girard has to offer us in the future.

Teri says

Cain's Blood is dark, intense, and gory at times – if none of that bothers you, then you're in for a gripping and riveting read.

When I first read this book description, it completely blew me away – a deeply disturbing, but profound concept, cloning serial killers and using them as weapons. The government also experiments on numerous clones, altering their environments, and the concept of nature vs. nurture figures prominently in this story, along with genetic predisposition.

Castillo is wonderfully complex and flawed as the protagonist and throughout the book, he is torn between his instincts of protecting and helping the teenage Jeffrey, while at the same time fearing him. The dialogue and interactions between the other teenage serial killers is both horrific and compelling and it's obvious the author did extensive research for this novel. The scientific aspects fascinated me – anything involving genetic engineering grabs me.

Girard has also written a YA companion novel, Project Cain, I'm looking forward to reading. It focuses more on Jeffrey, and I found his character and circumstances to be fascinating and engaging. Cain's Blood is heavy and gritty, and some readers may need to take a break while reading it, but easily one of the best thrillers I've read in quite a while.
