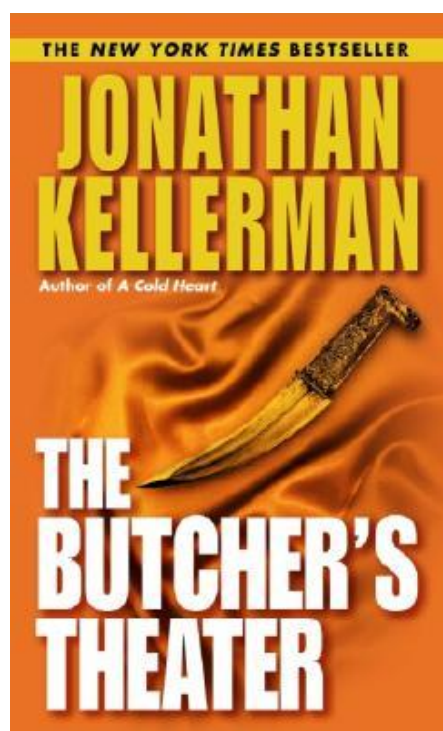




The Butcher's Theater

Jonathan Kellerman , Linda Morrow (Editor)

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They call the ancient hills of Jerusalem the butcher's theater. Here, upon this bloodstained stage, a faceless killer performs his violent specialty: The first to die brutally is a fifteen-year-old girl. She is drained of blood, then carefully bathed and shrouded in white. Precisely one week later, a second victim is found. From the sacred Wailing Wall to the monasteries where dark secrets are cloistered, from black-clad bedouin enclaves to labyrinthine midnight alleys, veteran police inspector Daniel Sharavi and his crack team plunge deep into a city simmering with religious and political passions to hunt for a murderer whos insatiable taste for young women could destroy the delicate balance on which Jerusalem's very survival depends.

A brilliant novel by a master of the genre, a vivid look at the tortured complexities of a psychopath's mind, a rich evocation of a city steeped in history -- this, and more, is *The Butcher's Theater*.

The Butcher's Theater Details

Date : Published April 1st 2003 by Ballantine Books (first published January 1st 1988)

ISBN : 9780345460677

Author : Jonathan Kellerman , Linda Morrow (Editor)

Format : Paperback 640 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Crime, Thriller, Suspense

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From Reader Review The Butcher's Theater for online ebook

Jennifer says

Those attempting to read this work are advised to keep a copy of a map of Jerusalem nearby. This book assumes a level of knowledge of both the city of Jerusalem and the structure of Israeli society and politics that I lack, and is moderately preachy on the PLO/Israeli conflict. Speaking personally, there simply wasn't enough crime-solving to wade through the Israeli politics.

Margitte says

Jerusalem, Israel.

"The Butcher's Theater they called the hills of Jerusalem. Terrain full of nasty surprises. It carved up soldiers and turned them into vulture fodder." (P.216)

This is the story of contemporary Israel: its people, cultures, religions, politics. Throughout the 882 pages, a potpourri of everything is mixed in with the work of Chief Inspector Daniel Shalom Sharavi, a Yemenite Jew, and his team who needs to solve a serial murder case. The victims were scrubbed and drained, like the Los Angeles case of '49, called *The Black Dahlia*. And as with the Dahlia mystery, it looks as though this perpetrator is getting away with it as well.

Gruesome in detail - all aspects of the book. No dilly-dallying in political correctness. It is the God honest truth: *And no shortage of flavor on this one: Ancient city, Thousand Nights' ambiance, ethnic tensions, a friend with a knife...*

The story was so well constructed that I cannot but rate it five stars, although I was annoyed at times with the long drawn-out tale. But really, it is a terrific read. What I most appreciated of the book was the bitchcraft in it: you know p.s..ng people off by telling them the truth. Sometimes I just wanted to puke. The gory details of the sex crimes got to me, and it is spread all over the tale. But the story is about a sex offender, so I need to allow some leeway. Then my chain also got jerked with the perfect man - our protagonist. The perfect lover, father, husband. But that's okay too. It is a macho book after all. It does however, provide the warmth, compassion and balance that is needed.

This is the kind of book I love to read. Suspense, drama, history, culture - a holistic portrayal of a society I do not know much about and I walk away with a much better idea of a region that has always fascinated me. The insider's view of a racially-torn society, away from the media imprint, was great. Perfect, in fact.

Yes, I really loved this rich and detailed experience. Very much so. It deserves the title of an international no. 1 bestseller.

Vanessa says

As far as storyline, suspense and character development go, an excellent read. But rather shocked at the number of syntax and obvious repetitions. Where were the proofreaders?

Rebecca Huston says

Probably my favourite book by Jonathan Kellerman. Mystery set in modern day Jerusalem, and chilling to read. A serial killer is targeting young Arab women, and it's up to Daniel Sharavi and his team to find the murderer. Lots of psychological drama, details on Israeli daily life and a very vivid, very alive look at Jerusalem. This one I have read about a half-dozen times, and have enjoyed very much. Not at all like the Alex Delaware novels.

BoekenTrol says

<http://www.bookcrossing.com/journal/7...>

Dit was mijn eerste thriller van Kellerman. En het was meteen vuurwerk. Allemensen wat een boek. Af en toe gingen me de haren recht overeind staan, zelf bij meerdere malen lezen nog. Normaliter heb ik dan zoiets van 'o, ja, zo ging het'. Dat is er nu ook wel, maar omdat het verhaal, de verschillende verhaallijnen en de personages zo intrigerend zijn, kan me dat helemaal niets schelen en sla ik bij de tigste keer herlezen nog steeds geen bladzijde over. Een geweldig boek, ik wilde dat hij meer van dit soort schreef.

Buckeye_reader says

This book was not for me....way too long and slow developing. Too many non-English words used that did not make sense. Only my third book of his - the other two were co-written with his wife. I hope the Alex Delaware series is better.

Gardenia says

I thought this book would never end.

Carol Storm says

Absolute crap -- the "evil" killer is the son of a Jewish doctor and a gentile woman. Apparently half-breeds are cursed by God? Call me Ishmael! Kellerman is absolutely hysterical on the subject of Jews mixing with the lesser races. In fact, Dr. Terrific is much like the poor man's Joe Christmas, though I doubt Kellerman is literate enough to have read *LIGHT IN AUGUST* by William Faulkner. In any case, reading Kellerman on the Palestinians is like reading Faulkner on Jim Crow.

But not as good.

Mitch Holsten says

I enjoyed this book a lot, some very unexpected turns, yet some expected turns. The backdrop is instrumental, late 70's Jerusalem, with all it's political distrust weighing heavily on the plot. I would have liked to know why the antagonist became the person he did. He was only described as weird by his father in the story. I also did not like the Nazi stuff. It gets old, but I get it. It would have been too easy to have an Arab or Palestinian as the bad guy. The story kept me attentive, especially closer to the end.

Sandra Rae says

The Butchers Theatre

It was a refreshing change to have a different detective and location. The story was excellent and well written although there was too much filthy language for my liking.

Lainy says

Time taken to read - 4 days

Pages - 628

Publisher - Bantam

Blurb from Goodreads

They call the ancient hills of Jerusalem the butcher's theater. Here, upon this bloodstained stage, a faceless killer performs his violent specialty: The first to die brutally is a fifteen-year-old girl. She is drained of blood, then carefully bathed and shrouded in white. Precisely one week later, a second victim is found. From the sacred Wailing Wall to the monasteries where dark secrets are cloistered, from black-clad bedouin enclaves to labyrinthine midnight alleys, veteran police inspector Daniel Sharavi and his crack team plunge deep into a city simmering with religious and political passions to hunt for a murderer whose insatiable taste for young women could destroy the delicate balance on which Jerusalem's very survival depends.

My Review

1985, they find the first mutilated body of a young unidentified female in the slopes of Mount Scopus, Jerusalem. Inspector Sharavi is on the case with his team and before too long another body appears. The team know they have a serial killer on their hands and a tough job investigating in a city where political agendas are explosive, the U.N do not appreciate any questioning and the detectives keep hitting walls of silence. With a dangerous psychopath on the loose, racism and poverty aiding the killer the police have to put their wits and possibly their lives on the line to bring the killer down, before they strike again.

This is a huge read, a lot of it peters out and around the characters, going back to their personal history or

past or musings which detracts from the main story line. We also get an insight into the killers past and to present day. There is a lot of jumping around, many characters which took a bit of getting used to and I needed to go back a few times to keep my characters right.

The setting of the books location was very well suited, I have never been to Jerusalem however the landscape, caves, slopes and poverty stricken areas enabled the killer to camouflage himself and carry out his "work". The book is riddled with racism, hate, lack of respect for human life, abuse, torture, murder and most definitely not for the faint hearted. If you like reading about killers with expansive details on location and local behaviors this will be the book for you. 3/5 for me this time, I found the animal torture, sexual deviancy and side stories just a bit much however Kellerman does have a way with words.

Nancy says

This book, written in Jonathan Kellerman's early career, was by far his best. I enjoyed Kellerman's Alex Delaware books for many years, but this book does what that series doesn't- it gets personal and has history, religion and politics entwined with the narrative.

The book takes place in modern day Israel (1988 era) and introduces us to Detective Sharavi, a devout Jewish man who needs to solve a gruesome murder. He works alongside many others who have different religious and political leanings, and Kellerman paints a vivid picture of the strengths and weaknesses of Jerusalem and it's people. Sharavi is respectful of the different faiths in his homeland, and this thriller is a book that is distinctive and memorable.

Mark says

Jerusalem 1988 a body gets found in the hills and she is clearly being killed in a most sadistic way, remembering of a previous killer called "the Grey man" who never got caught , the department of Major Crimes Unit gets put on the case and the leader of this investigation is Pakad (chief inspector) Daniel Shalom Sharavi of Yemenite origin. There is immediately a lot of pressure on him and his investigators who are as diverse in ancestry as they come. This group of investigators show the face of Israel and the diversity of Jews that exist, far more than I ever knew about and you find out the characters and their fates during this very big read.

This book is on one side a detective story about a serial killer who strikes in Israel and on the other side it shows life in Israel in 1988. The story shows the face of Israel from the Jewish point of view and is not always unbiased, but is shown through the lives of the people in this books and they give an anchor to this look upon Israeli society that is surprising and sometimes annoying, but it feels like the opinion of real people with real lives.

It also shows the difficulty in policing a state like Israel when politics are just around the corner and have a large influence in policing too. It almost looks like that Israel had a head start in politicizing any possible police case with some higher sensitivity.

The writer also give us a view from the killer, you do not find out who he is until the end and you are faced with a banality of this killer who from his viewpoint does important work . he is no Hannibal Lecter but a scary and sad person at the same time.

This whole early book by Jonathan Kellerman is a standalone novel without any sequels, but a tour-de-force

nonetheless about live in the middle east especially Israel, he shows the diversity and people of this state and their place in society and the importance of family life.

I read this book before and the second time it grabbed me like the first time, it is a long book but a very satisfying novel that is full of life as I not knew before. Well worth your time.

Bill Bunn says

Nope. Not his best work. It starts uncharacteristically slow. I'd say Kellerman was infatuated with his setting. That's how it reads. Any excuse to cut to a descriptive moment, in the first third/half of the book, and Kellerman takes it. Characters are likeable, but it takes so darn long to get to know them. I enjoyed the unusual dynamics as the characters struggle with religious lines and a trickier political atmosphere. Though the real-world politics helped me narrow down the killer, earlier on. Not a winner. Not a chicken dinner.

Heidi says

As much as I love mysteries, they don't usually earn 5 stars... but this one, which takes place in Isreal, is as much about the culture and clashes of peoples, as it is about the victims and murderer.

Kellerman's Jewish police detective is a fully developed character who deserved his own series... as good as any long-running detective series, but I think he's only featured in one other (a Delaware mystery) Kellerman novel.

Marlaine Kirton says

I can usually count on a Jonathan Kellerman novel to be a good read, but this one got very tedious. I thought the insight into the region and people was interesting at first, but it, too, turned tedious. The killer's hate-filled monologues also became just too much. All in all, I suppose it is to Mr. Kellerman's credit that I finished the book.

aPriL does feral sometimes says

This was authentic, dramatic, intense, well-written, exciting and absolutely the best book Kellerman has written. I couldn't put it down.

No Petra. No Alex. Instead, a completely different character, practicing Israeli Jew Daniel Sharavi, living at a crossroad of history, politics, culture and crime - and yet all are as old as mankind. He is a family man, a police detective, and he has learned to be politic while not being political. His friends are multicultural and multidimensional, his family is as adorable as a box of kittens, and bringing justice for crime victims is his satisfaction. He is not a man who wears blinders - he sees his bosses, his country, his peers and his religion with clarity, but he has decided after several tragedies that what he needs to carry on happily with his life is his family, religion and his job.

This book is a marvel in describing the vibrant Israel of 1987, which is as complex as a New York Times crossword puzzle. Christian Arabs against Muslim Arabs, dozens of competing Jewish sects, political power and money, the constant skirmishes and occasional wars between Israel and the Palestinians, and not the least of it is the uncomprehending support of friendly countries such as the United States mixing into the confusion, the tourists being the most visible element leading to awkward and often comical surprises. However, Sharavi's job is solving crime mysteries, and his most pressing case is a horrific murder of a prostitute, butchered by a madman. In time, he and his team discover enough evidence that shows they are dealing with a serial killer, but the killer is a master of hiding behind false identities. The murdered women are all dark-skinned and vulnerable because of religious customs, primarily Muslim. Where the press is free to speculate on motives behind stories and many religions compete for power, police cannot simply kick down doors. Add in the powder keg issues of racial hatred and gunrunning, and police work, which is about justice, becomes secondary to social order and survival of the State, particularly in a front-line country such as Israel.

I thought it was a fantastic thriller mystery to read, with amazing characters that I know I'll be thinking about for many days, and Kellerman had realistic insight into the creation of a type of serial killer familiar to Americans, I regret to say.

Amanda Patterson says

Excellent.Out of his comfort zone

The Brain in the Jar says

Stop it. I can't take it. I won't let you do this. No, you've done it again. I can't believe it. How long? How much more? Until when? When will this end?

I can't take another page of characters speculating. I can't take another page full of a character's thoughts of what may or may not happen. I want action. I want events. This book is written in third person. That means I am watching the characters. Pulling me in and out of their heads just makes me seasick and confused whether this is an out-of-body experience, or an inside-the-body experience.

Actually, this is just a really terrible book.

This was the last piece that convinced me that minimalism is the best form of writing. *The Butcher's Theater* is filled with details, pages and pages of descriptions and thoughts, while the events themselves suffocate between these two and are rendered uninteresting. About halfway through the book you start to see things from the killer's point of view. By 'point of view', I'm talking about this half-assed method of writing in third-person while still telling us what the characters think. At best, it just makes the book painfully slow. At worse, it makes the author look like he's talking to himself and is completely unaware of that.

I never thought I'd find a book worse than *The World According to Garp*, and that I'd find it so soon, but here it is. I sometimes had to stop reading to ponder whether I actually read such horrid writing. Did I really just read a whole page of random ramblings from a character's mind, instead about what is actually happening? Yes, I just did.

It's possible that Hemingway is the most important figure in literature. I miss that minimalism so much. I

miss authors who actually tell a story instead of talking to themselves.

Authors need to learn that third person means being completely outside of the character's head. It's either I'm inside the head or I'm outside. There is no in between.

Boremomsn.Com says

2 stars is a gift for a grade only because it was well written. Other than that, the characters weren't interesting, the bad guy was a crazy loon and did his part well. This book (the hardback 1st edition) is a 627 page tome that seems to be teaching what it's like to live in Israel, and oh, let's throw in a backdrop of a serial murder mystery. It took three weeks to read because it was boring, and a struggle to get through. The pace was far too slow. One has to wonder if it wasn't the author's first book, but he needed the success of the Alex Deveraeux books to get enough clout to talk the publisher into printing this loser of a story.
