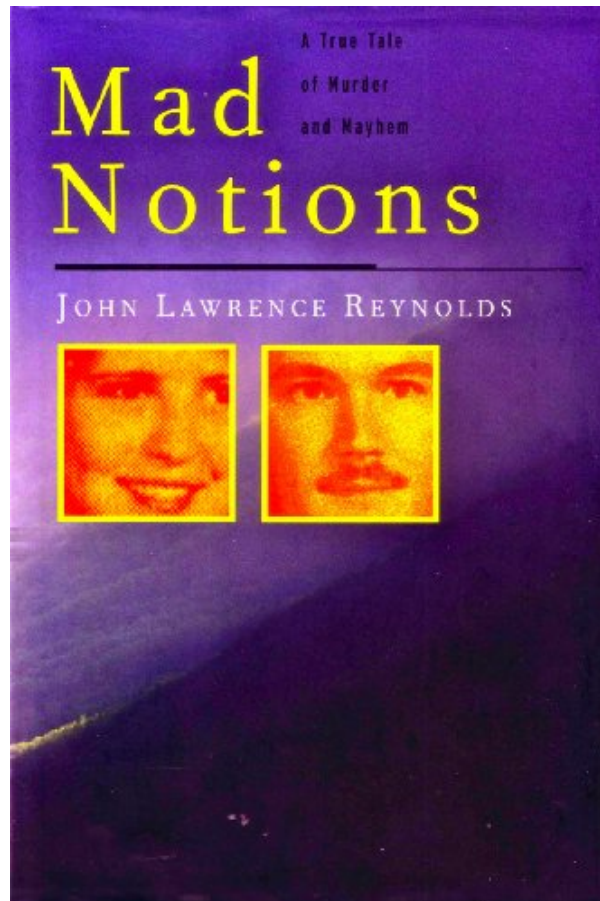


MAD NOTIONS BY JOHN LAWRENCE REYNOLDS



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Mad Notions

A True Tale
of Murder
and Mayhem

JOHN LAWRENCE REYNOLDS



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About the Author

John Lawrence Reynolds is the author of five mysteries and the winner of two prestigious Arthur Ellis Awards for Best First Novel and Best Novel. The former president of Crime Writers of Canada, he is also the author of four non-fiction books. Mr. Reynolds lives in Burlington, Ontario.

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"If you had the right connections in this town, you could kill most anybody you wanted and get away with it." - DEL SMITH

Del Smith is just one of a dozen or so unforgettable characters who appear in this much-heralded tale of murder among the spectacular beauty of Tennessee's Smokey Mountains.

It's all here - massive drug deals, orgies in a hillside mansion, prison escapes, violent death and a cast of characters worthy of a Tennessee Williams play. In the midst of it all appear a local high society beauty, and the hell-raisin' youngest son of the author's oldest friend. Together they create a crime that is still being talked about in the Great Smokies many years later.

In MAD NOTIONS, John Lawrence Reynolds strips away layers of lies, deception and hypocrisy to expose the dark side of the American dream in a story that grows ever more fascinating and bizarre on its way to a stunning conclusion.

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Most helpful customer reviews

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

Terrific telling of a horrific murder

By Craig Clarke

"Every man is wise when attacked by a mad dog; fewer when pursued by a mad woman.

Only the wisest survive when attacked by a mad notion." --Robertson Davies

It's unfortunate that, so far, the only people that seem to be reading this book are ones who either knew--or are related to--the people involved (myself included). I say this is unfortunate because John Lawrence Reynolds has written a terrific narrative that deserves to be read by anyone with interest in the true crime genre. His relative closeness to the proceedings--his friend is Brett Rae's father and Reynolds was lucky in getting some of the relatives to help him out with the facts--makes for an engrossing insider's view of one of the worst scandals in East Tennessee's history. Mad Notions could be the best first-person true crime book since Ann Rule's *The Stranger Beside Me*.

Alicia Shayne Good was adopted into a life of affluence when her mother left a volatile relationship with Shayne's father and married local banker Brent Mills from Sevier County, Tennessee. Shayne Mills was popular, intelligent, beautiful (the winner of a Junior Miss competition), and had the best of everything. Soon, however, events (starting with the suspicious death of Mills) conspired to take away Shayne's privilege, beginning her downward spiral. Poor Kelly Lovera, it seems, simply got in her way. A smart small-town boy who was making good, Kelly had just become a lecturer at the local Pellissippi College in

Knoxville when Shayne began plotting his death. But she couldn't do it alone, so she began attempting to manipulate her many lovers into assisting her. Unfortunately for Brett Rae, he was in love with Shayne and would do anything she asked.

And so November, 1994, found Kelly Lovera dead in his black Jeep on the side of an embankment. What happened exactly is unknown, due to the conflicting reports of those involved, but Reynolds paints a clear portrait of the before and after, while also showing the effects of how a brutal murder in this small town community was not that odd an occurrence, given the area's history of cover-ups. It's not hard to begin making judgments on behavior after the fact--and to sympathize with those we consider unjustly wronged--but one must remember that this is all after Reynolds has done all the work for us. 20/20 hindsight.

Reynolds uses his award-winning mystery-writing skills (he has won two Arthur Ellis Awards for his books *The Man Who Murdered God* and *Gypsy Sins*) to present the events occurring in *Mad Notions* in a logical progression that ties everything together, presenting it in an easily understandable progression that leads to great reading. He displays remarkable restraint and doesn't go for the obvious sensationalist tack that often tarnishes otherwise good writing in this genre. There is a fascinating story here that doesn't need any assistance and Reynolds lets its own fast-paced, suspenseful nature take the fore. His first-person narration makes the reading that much more immediate, and his use of language makes for vivid description of the parties involved and of the Great Smoky Mountains setting. Even upon finishing the first reading, the reader will believe that he or she has actually met these people, and the irony is not lost on Reynolds that such heinous happenings went on in such beautiful country. *Mad Notions* is destined to be one of those books that gets unreserved recommendations from stranger to stranger.

13 of 15 people found the following review helpful.

Mad Notions: A true tale of Murder & Mahem

By Barbara G. Lovera

I received the book and read it in one day. The book was well researched and accurate but for only a couple of inconsistencies that did not affect the outcome. The author described the victim very well considering he never met him. I should know, the victim is my stepson whom I love and miss dearly. I read the book with tears in my eyes as I relived the hellish account of the murder and trial we went through. I could see each character and events vividly in my mind. Now when our friends ask many questions that arise, we simply tell them to read the book for all the answers. The reality of it is shocking to our family, friends, us and especially the greatest victims of all-our grandchildren. The first murder in Sevierville, Tenn. in 33 years. Hopefully the last - anywhere!!

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

One of the best true crime stories I have read

By Admn Lynn

I live in Indiana but own a home in Gatlinburg. I have been a regular visitor for more than 40 years to Sevier County. I am an avid true crime reader and so I picked this book up at a bookstore in Sevier County while I was there last year. It was a great read. I finished the book before I left to go back to Indiana, so it was hard to put down. Kudos to the author for writing this book, telling an important story, and giving some insight to the "back-door" history of Sevier County. I learned a lot!

See all 30 customer reviews...

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