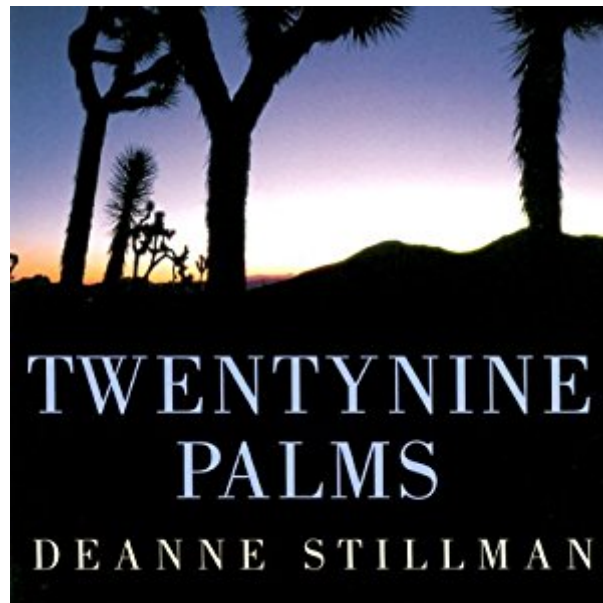




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Twentynine Palms: A True Story Of Murder, Marines, And The Mojave



Synopsis

August 2, 1991, Twentynine Palms, California: a troubled Marine who has recently returned from the Gulf War savagely murders two young girls. One was about to turn 16, the other 21. Exquisitely and inexorably, Deanne Stillman uses this tragedy as a prism through which she examines a rootless culture of fatherless families, shattered dreams, and relentless violence. She also traces the family histories of each murder victim back for generations, in one case to the Donner Party and the other to a shack in the Philippines. In haunting, vivid prose, she creates a far-reaching story of America itself, carrying us into the empty white heart of the Mojave, as we meet and come to know the modern nomads who turn to the West for salvation, only to be devoured by its false promise.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I am from the area these events took place. I lived there then and still live in the area now. I also was the same age the girls in the story were at the time. It always amazes me how different outsiders view our area and how inaccurate their judgement seem to be. It is different than a big city, but not the different the author describes. It is a beautiful different. Beyond that, the book is one you can sit and read without realizing the time that has past. It is harder to put down and you get sucked into the events and her description of the events are accurate and tastefully told. It is one of the best true crimes I have read and it is written more like a story than a documentary.

Although I don't live in Twentynine Palms, I do live in San Bernadino County and was a little

amused by the statistics that Ms. Stillman cites about "us" because we aren't really like that. I am familiar with the desert and many of the desert towns and their histories, though, and I agree that they do have a sort of mystique that transcends the urban, the suburban, and the midwest. Some of the reviews and reviewers here have taken offense to the way that their town is characterized and that's understandable. I realize that most people in 29 Palms can't possibly be that dysfunctional or problematic or the place wouldn't even run. However, I think that Ms. Stillman did a masterful job of portraying a certain portion of a desert town, a certain circle of people in a particular way that helps one be able to see them as real individuals with real problems that they have dragged through generations to end up in a place like 29 Palms and endure more uncertainty and more tragedy. And that, to me, is what makes the book worthwhile--it's intimacy. I, like another reviewer, would have liked to have heard more of what Ms. Stillman has to say to substantiate her claim that the Marines have continued their "war on American" woman, but despite that flaw, this book is on my true crime classics shelf.

If you love true crime, written in a style that comes alive and takes you into the hearts and minds of the characters - this is your gripping read. I picked up this book in a library on a cruise two years ago and could NOT put it down. I found myself anxious to wait long enough for the story to fade, so that I could have the experience of reliving it with the characters AGAIN. Why hasn't this been created into a movie - I am sure it will be. Thanks to the vivid writing of this incredible author who has taken us from our world into an all too real world of the lives of others in a place and into an experience we might never otherwise know.

Excellent depiction of an out of the way military town that is transient. Having visited the town on a desert tour I had no opportunity to see the side of life depicted in the book. It will hold your attention to the last word.

I have been to Twentynine Palms and found it a desolate, isolated place. However, the girls made risky choices and lived promiscuous lives. This does not justify their murders, but it put them into harm's way. The author was a bit long-winded and I was bored with repeating details. Everybody in this case shares responsibility for this tragedy. The book is well worth reading.

I have bought this book three times. Each time I read it I find something new. My children get the copies that I have read. I have enjoyed every book written by Deanne Stillman.

Deanne Stillman must have been having a boring day the day she decided to write this book. I was born and raised in southern California, I joined the Marines in 1971 and was stationed at "29 stumps" from 1972 to 1975, I do not recall the people who lived there as being strange or bizarre. In my humble opinion Ms. Stillman's book is full of fallacy's, and I do get the impression that she is a misandrist and a feminazi. First of all, there is no such thing as an "ex-Marine", once a Marine...always a Marine. Ms. Stillman refers to Marines as "corpsmen", a "corpsman" is a Navy medic, NOT a Marine. On page 63 Ms. Stillman writes that the Vietnam war was ending several days after Jason was born, she needs to review history, the Vietnam war ended at the end of April 1975. Ms. Stillman also goes out of her way to point out one's skin color, who cares if a Marine has black skin or white skin, or if someone is a Mexican? One also gets the impression while reading this book that women never perpetrate domestic violence, men only are abusers, what a crock, society knows better! On page 110 Ms. Stillman says that the longest undeclared war in American history is the military war on female civilians, again, what a crock, Ms. Stillman needs to grow up. My bottom line opinion regarding this book....deadbeat moms who make wrong choices

I still have not finished this book, I am trying, but the authur seems to be writing about everything but the murder, I am getting a history lesson on everything, seems as if authur had a lot pages to fill to make a complete book, maybe sooner or later I will get to the story that the Title says the book is about, If I don't tear the book up first, in flustration. I have lived in Twentynine Palms, and I just don't know where the authur got the idea what people are like there, not the same kind of people I knew.

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