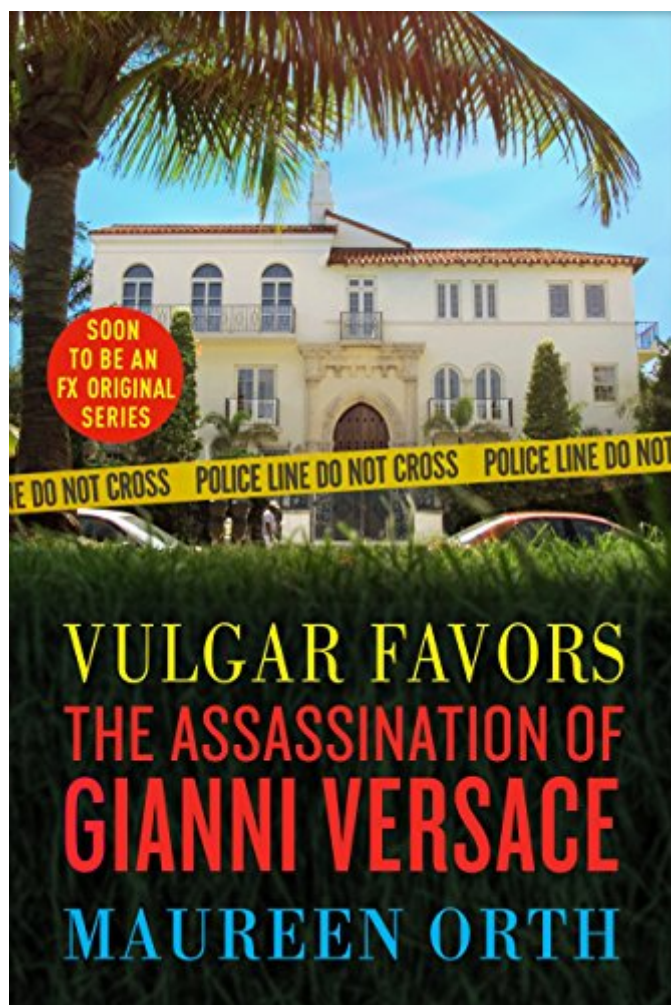


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Vulgar Favors: The Assassination Of Gianni Versace



Synopsis

The inspiration for *The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story*, the second season of FX's Emmy-winning FX series. Two months before Gianni Versace was murdered on the steps of his Miami Beach mansion by Andrew Cunanan, award-winning journalist Maureen Orth was investigating a major story on the serial killer for *Vanity Fair*. Culled from interviews with more than four hundred people and insights from thousands of pages of police reports, Orth tells the complete story of Cunanan, his unwitting victims, and the moneyed, hedonistic world in which they lived . . . and died. In fascinating detail, she reveals how Cunanan met his superstar victim, why police and the FBI repeatedly failed to catch Cunanan, and why other victims' families stonewalled the investigation, as well as the controversial findings of the Versace autopsy report. Here is a gripping odyssey that races across America from California's wealthy gay underworld to modest Midwestern homes of families mourning the loss of their sons to South Beach and its unapologetic decadence. *Vulgar Favors* is at once a masterwork of investigative journalism and a riveting account of a sociopath, his crimes, and the mysteries he left along the way.

Praise for *Vulgar Favors*

- [An] exhaustive deconstruction of Andrew Cunanan's five murders . . . The breadth and thoroughness of Orth's research are often staggering.
- The New York Times "Fascinating . . . ripe with chilling detail . . . paints a disturbing picture."
- Entertainment Weekly "A fascinatingly detailed account."
- USA Today "It will hook you from the first page and never let you go."
- San Francisco Chronicle "Vulgar Favors by Maureen Orth might be called the complete Cunanan. . . . She [has] an indefatigable hunger to know everything."
- Chicago Tribune "A detailed page-turner."
- St. Paul Pioneer Press "An exceptionally good account of suspected serial killer Andrew Cunanan's spree in 1997 . . . Orth tells this twisted story with grace and courage."
- Fort Worth Star-Telegram "Orth has an inviting, readable style."
- Oakland Tribune "The definitive book on the July 15, 1997 murder of Versace."
- Sun-Sentinel "An exhilarating journalistic chronicle of Cunanan's crime and flight . . . The book is charged with adrenaline and the pages just seem to turn themselves."
- Lesbian and Gay New York

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Customer Reviews

Extremely detailed and thoroughly researched account of Andrew Cunanan's tumultuous life leading up to his cross country killing spree which culminated in the murder of Gianni Versace...and ultimately; his own suicide. Not for the faint of heart; but for those interested in true crime stories, this is a fascinating account. This is the book that the upcoming "American Crime Story: The Assassination of Gianni Versace" is based on.

Maureen Orth was involved in following Andrew Cunanan's blood trail early on when writing for Vanity Fair. The limitation on her at the time was that Vanity Fair is a monthly publication and much took place in between issues. Here in *Vulgar Favors*, Orth embarks on a careful research journey, to find out, and report as accurately as possible, what took place. Her research is extremely extensive. The book is highly readable and interesting. There are limitations to Orth's work however. To some extent because of their selfish demands for money for information, Orth did not speak to those who knew Andrew quite well who would only speak for money. The closed closet doors of a number of gay men who knew Andrew also placed a handicap on Orth. Orth does a very fine job of reporting on the lives of the victims yet, her ability to capture what drove Andrew is neglected. I believe Orth could have made much more extensive use of psychologists and crime profilers to provide some

better insight into what broke down in Andrew's life to drive him in the direction he ultimately went. Orth's praise for the Minneapolis Police Department, particularly one officer, is highly questionable. While the officer may now have gone out of his way to be helpful to the author, he didn't do a very good job of being responsive to clear and accurate investigation of the crime at the time it took place and his approach to the sensitivity of the families of the victims, with one exception, has been described as almost savage-like. He might have served this case better during the investigation than the historical recounting where his own self interests in cooperation might, perhaps in his mind, mitigate his poor performance at the time of the investigation. I believe Orth was blinded by his cooperativeness and didn't objectively examine his motivations toward helpfulness at this point. Orth's reporting clearly points out a need for the criminal justice system to gear up for crimes that take place in various locales. The possessiveness and territoriality of police departments in the withholding of information and even material evidence is a sad statement on those departments. Their actions dramatically slowed a speedier investigation than took place. If the FBI is charged with all interstate crime, they need to become much more assertive with respect to their authority and must establish some protocol that all police jurisdictions must follow in order to assist them. The FBI didn't seem particularly interested in this case until Versace was murdered. An interesting statement in itself. The question is why? The FBI might do its own post-mortem on how it handled this case so that a similar performance does not reoccur. Another major issue we see repeating itself which Orth accurately reports is the media problem. Clearly, in today's world, anything that has a drama about it seems to bring out the worst in print journalists and in television reporters. Reporting is often less interested in the facts that why plays best as hype. Orth appropriately points out the problems that a highly competitive 24 hour a day news business has created. Journalism needs to take a hard look at itself and decide what is ethical and appropriate behavior. Their treatment of this story over the three months it took place was a competition for headline grabbing and the implication that one reporter knew more than others. Much of what they ultimately reported was simply gossip and speculation. This is a continuing problem as has been demonstrated in the news industry's treatment of the Menendez trials, the Simpson trial, Princess Diana's death and most recently in the Ken Starr, Monica Lewinsky and Bill Clinton debacle. There is an urgency for the news industry to bring about change within itself. Americans are tired of the hype and the continuous partial and often inaccurate coverage of important events going on in our country. Editors need to be a little more sparing with what they leave out in the interest of creating that hype! It's often what's cut that is integral to not drawing the wrong conclusions and in allowing the public to get a truly accurate picture of what is known and what is speculative as it takes place.

Sound bites and headlines are not the stuff of good news industry coverage. Overall, Orth does a very fine job. She clearly became personally engaged by the events of this American tragedy. She is a well-researched writer who is quite honest about the limitations of what she was able to uncover. She also indicates what she is left not knowing. I think this is the very best and most honest approach the author could have taken in fairly representing the sad events of the late Spring and Summer of 1997. A fine read -- given the quickly closed case and what may have been left out by those unwilling to speak to the author.

Living in San Diego during that time, I found this book so interesting and accurate. I like how the author did not go on rants in the book in pointing out the numerous screw ups. She explained them very kindly if you ask me. Great book.

Worth reading, but doesn't tell one more than one already knew from the reporting. Also some of the assertions were tenuous.

20 years later this is still such a compelling case, and this meticulously researched book makes it even more so. A dishy and substantive beach read. Go for it!

I bought this book because I was interested in the back story of Andrew Cunanan and hopefully getting some insight on what set him off to go on a multi-state killing spree. This book certainly provided a lot of angles, and author Maureen Orth's exhaustive research (including innumerable interviews with those who knew Cunanan -- as well as countless people involved in the search for him and friends and family of those he killed) provides a thoroughly interesting read from beginning to end. Nobody will ever know exactly what set this man on the path to destruction, but this book is as close as you can get to the facts to try and determine that for yourself, and it's one of the most interesting true crime books I have ever read.

A fascinating look at a celebrity obsessed sociopath. One of the other reviewers thought that Ms. Orth included too many details and digressions. I thought she used just enough to really give you a feel for Cunanan, his victims, and their environment. I enjoy reading Ms. Orth's pieces in Vanity Fair (so did, interestingly, Andrew Cunanan) and wondered whether she would be as talented in writing longer works. This book proves that she is. P.S. I should also note that this book does not obsess about the gory details of Cunanan's crimes. I don't enjoy reading those types of books.

This book gives great detail on a horrible crime.....it is well researched and documented. I highly recommend this book to all readers that love intrigue and details.

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