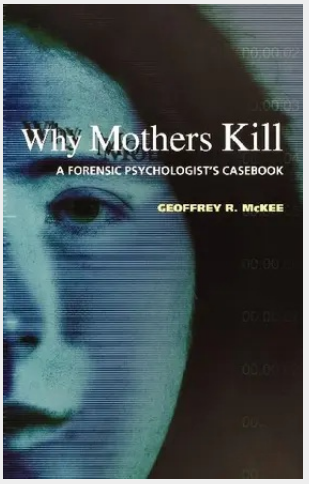
McKee

Why Mothers Kill

A Forensic Psychologist's Casebook



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Few crimes generate public reaction than those where a mother murders her child. We are repelled, yet mesmerised by the emerging details of cases such as Andrea Yates and Susan Smith. Annually, hundreds of infants and young children perish at the hands of their mothers. How could a mother destroy the first and most fundamental relationship we experience? In Why Mothers Kill: A Forensic Psychologist's Casebook, Geoffrey R. McKee, Ph.D uses more than a dozen case studies from his 29-year forensic psychological evaluation practice to help us understand, and most importantly, prevent these horrific events from occurring. He applies current research findings to analyse, explain and suggest practical interventions to alter the personal, familial and situational circumstances that may influence some mothers to kill. With an emphasis on prevention, Dr McKee sets out specific strategies that might have been employed at various "risk intervention points" occurring before the child's death. Through the use of extended narratives the author brings to life the thoughts and emotions experienced by women in each of the five categories of mothers he has identified from his years of practice. Additionally, the author presents the Maternal Filicide Risk Matrix which he developed to help mental health and medical professionals determine the risk and protective factors that lead mothers to kill their children. Students, as well as mental health and medical professionals will find this an important and unique resource.

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