As a forensic scientist, Dr Markman is often alone in a room with someone who has killed - sometimes without provocation or apparent motivation. After lengthy interviews and evaluations, his findings determine the degree of a murderer's responsibility at the time of the crime and thus influence his sentence in court. This is Markman's analysis of some of his toughest cases, including two of Charles Manson's followers, Marvin Gaye's shooting by his father, the infamous Vampire of Sacramento and Norma Jean Armistead, who wanted a baby so much that she was willing to kill for it. The book should appeal to everyone who has a morbid fascination about murder and wants to know more about the people who have killed.

My Personal Review:
This was by far one of the spookiest true crime forensic psychiatric books I have ever read. Markman discusses famous cases such as the Hillside Strangler, The Manson murderers and other cases in addition, to what the term of guilty but insane means in the California criminal justice system. Nevertheless, the creepiest of all was the case of Richard Chase. Richard earning the name "The Vampire Of Sacramento" because he believed and drank human blood to survive, displayed signs of being very mentally ill at a very early age but his parents did not much about it. Whether his family was in denial of his illness or there was just no hope for Richard, the crimes he committed were so atrocious in nature that it seemed impossible that the court system would even give him the benefit of an insanity plea. The book is well worth reading it is full of interesting facts and the way our society views killers and mental illness. In Richard's case, if he had gotten the insanity plea he would have been put away for a few years in a criminal mental institution then let go to a halfway house. Once there he could have easily got off his medications and committed another murder.

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