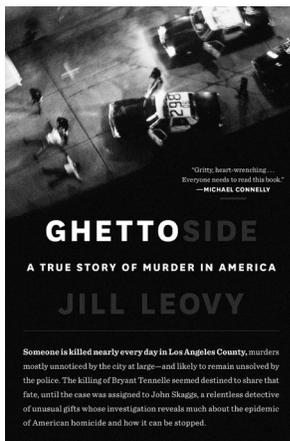


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Book Review

Ghettoside: A True Story of Murder in America

Jill Leovy



Review by William Garfinkel August 2015

Jill Leovy's *Ghettoside: A True Story of Murder in America* is both a gripping tale of a real murder investigation and a study of what a LAPD detective called "The Monster," the plague of homicide, which has ravaged America's inner cities. It is Leovy's premise that "where the criminal justice system fails to respond vigorously to violent injury and death, homicide becomes endemic." She makes her case both through the stories she tells so well and the attention she pays to the historical background. Leovy, who writes for the *Los Angeles Times*, has devoted much of her career to reporting on the murders of young black men. She notes that while black men account for six percent of the country's population, they account for almost 40 percent of our murder victims; and most of them have been killed by other black men and boys who have never been apprehended. Leovy's analysis puts the overall clearance rate for homicide in Los Angeles and other urban areas at less than fifty percent, with cases involving Black and Hispanic victims least likely to be solved. *Ghettoside* is a book I have been waiting for as a judge and long time student and observer of the justice system. Black men have long been the country's "number one crime victims," and impunity for their murders reflects the value our society has placed on their lives. Leovy ably shows that for all its harshness, the criminal justice system is also, in the face of "The Monster," inadequate.

About the Reviewer

William Garfinkel has served as a United States Magistrate Judge in Bridgeport since 1996. Judge Garfinkel has taught courses at Yale College on criminal justice, children and the law, and education law. He was born and raised in Charleston, South Carolina. William contributed this title and more to the Grace Farms Library collection.