

Interview with Todd A. Hemming



College Predator Missing College Students

Todd A. Hemming

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Reader Views is happy to be talking with Todd A. Hemming, author of “College Predator: Missing College Students.” Todd is being interviewed by Juanita Watson, Assistant Editor for Reader Views.

Juanita: Thanks for talking with us today Todd. Please tell your readers about the storyline of your new book, “College Predator: Missing College Students.”

Todd: Juanita first of all I want to say thanks for the interview. I would say my storyline in simple terms is how three friends with all special gifts form a plan to catch a very intelligent serial killer. It also involves a serial killer that is very different from the typical mainstream predator.

Juanita: What inspired you to write “College Predator”?

Todd: I returned to college to get my graduate certificate in Geographic Information Systems. During this time college kids were being abducted and disappearing. They usually were last seen leaving a bar or a college party by their friends. Most of the cases were never solved and I felt very bad for these kids that got abducted during their fun years or youth. They should have not been concerned about being abducted or serial killers.

Juanita: Who are the main characters and what do they have to teach your readers?

Todd: The three main characters are Mark a man with mental illness that gets blessed with a new gift of seeing the crimes take place or medium capabilities. William a rural sheriff's deputy that puts the whole plan of action together to apprehend the serial killer. Matt is the FBI profiler that lends his expertise and training to apprehend the serial killer.

The serial killer's name is Steve and he is a vice president of a mapping software company, but when he isn't working he preys on young college students.

Juanita: What brings these particular characters together to catch the serial killer?

Todd: Mark, the man with mental illness, has been keeping in touch with the Sheriff's deputy William since high school. Once Mark started having the visions of the predator, he knew his best friend William would be the only person that believed in him. After William decided to have Mark move to Arizona, he called his old airborne buddy Matt who currently is a profiler for serial killers with the FBI. After discussing the situation Matt realized William and Mark would need his help apprehending the dangerous predator. So he took a long overdue vacation from the FBI and relocated to Arizona to join the team.

Juanita: How real, do you feel, are the dangers surrounding colleges these days? Why?

Todd: I believe the danger to college students are as real today as they were back in 2001. If you read the latest headlines, college students are still being abducted in various cities through out the nation. You can even use the Aruba disappearance for an example.

Juanita: How have the drinking habits changed for college students?

Todd: I went to a few parties when I was getting my graduate certificate. And the drinking on campus has definitely changed from social drinking or partying to all out binge drinking.

Juanita: Do you have any stats on the amounts of real life missing college students?

Todd: I currently do not have any stats on the missing college students. But during the span from 2001 to 2003 there were at least 5 missing college student in two states up north. I also believe that one missing college student is too much. It causes too much pain for the relatives, friends, and family that are left behind.

Juanita: What happens to the atmosphere around a college when a student goes missing?

Todd: Everyone in the community gets apprehensive and worried. The police and law enforcement are on high alert to catch the predator. The news media brings it up on the news everyday and the citizens of the community get worried. Mothers and fathers start rethinking schedules for their children and the purchase of personal firearms skyrockets.

Juanita: What statement are you making to your readers casting your serial killer as a successful, well educated member of the community?

Todd: I believe that the cases that haven't been solved have a different type of predator. He most likely has some law enforcement training and is involved with the education system or has graduated from a college. He is no drifter or loser. I believe he is very intelligent and meticulous in his planning, and he knows where college kids hang out after they have had a few drinks.

Juanita: Tell us a little about how the community and law enforcement react to reports of missing students and how this is portrayed in your book.

Todd: The community pours their whole heart into finding the missing college student. They search endlessly through woods, swamps, lakes or whatever remote areas the community has. A lot of these people have kids the same age of the missing student. So they do everything in their power to find the missing college student.

Law enforcement coordinates all of the activity. They call the FBI, they put a helicopter in the air, and they coordinate search teams. They go door to door looking for the missing person.

Juanita: What makes college students so vulnerable?

Todd: I am a little older now but I was young once. I believe when you are young you believe you are invincible. That nothing bad can happen to me. I can handle anything that comes my way. But alcohol gives you a false sense of security. It also affects your judgment and I believe some of these college students were just at the wrong place at the wrong time.

Juanita: Todd, who should read your book?

Todd: I believe anyone who is concerned about past and future abductions of college students. I believe the age group should be at least 18 years old and up. It is not as graphic as today's horror movies but there is some violent content in my book. But I wanted more of a storyline than blood and gore. I guess the readers will have to read the book and make their own mind up.

Juanita: Reading your book will undoubtedly bring insights for readers regarding protecting themselves. Can you give your readers a few tips on how to minimize the potential of becoming the victim of a predator?

Todd: I guess this brings up memories of me and my shipmates in the navy visiting foreign ports. My chief always said use the buddy system and never be alone. Also never drink too much alcohol where you lose all of your reasoning and judgment. Always tell someone when you are going to come home or where you are going. At least if something happens, they will have a starting point to look for you. Lastly, carry a cell phone. Though you may not have time to use it, if you see someone else being abducted, you can call 911 immediately.

Juanita: What type of research did you do to prepare for "College Predator"?

Todd: I read a lot of newspapers on missing college students from the past and the current abductions. I talked to a lot of people when I was in school regarding their thoughts about the missing college students. I went to a few college parties myself and saw how drunk some of these students got. I researched and read some articles about some of the notorious serial killers that have been in America. I also listened to some interviews on CNN from the missing college student's parents - they broke my heart.

Juanita: With all your research, did you get any type of understanding into the mind of a serial predator – what motivates this behavior?

Todd: Juanita I am no expert, but I believe once these predators kill their first victim, the only thing that will stop them is being killed or being locked up in some maximum security prison. I believe they don't have a normal conscious like most human beings. Predators are only happy when they

are planning and then killing their next victim. Most of them even keep small trinkets from the victim so they can relive the abduction and murder.

Juanita: There seems to be a growing amount of information exposing predators in our society today. Why do you think this is?

Todd: I believe the American public is sick and tired of these scavengers on society. People on the whole are good, honest, hard working individuals. They are trying to raise their family and enjoy life because we are here for a very short time. Then some predator takes or murders their loved one and it turns their whole life upside down.

People want to have freedom and security to walk the streets at night and not worry about some madman killing or hurting them.

Juanita: How can readers find out more about you and your endeavors?

Todd: I have a website <http://www.toddhemmingbooks.com/>. The website gives a bio of me and it also tells about my first book "What I have learned since 1976." It also gives a synopsis of "College Predator: Missing College Students." I have a guestbook on my website that visitors can sign. Also they can e-mail me at hemm64@hotmail.com.

I will try and write everyone that e-mails me.

Juanita: Well Todd, we really appreciate you talking with us today. Are there any last thoughts you'd like to share with your readers?

Todd: Juanita, I want to say thanks again for the interview and I hope the readers really enjoy my book. If my book makes the difference in one life I will be satisfied. I believe there have been enough killings and abductions for now and forever. I hope and pray no more abductions take place. In closing, I would just like to remind everyone be safe and have a long and happy life.