I'm not a robot

No easy answers

You get work however you get work. People keep working, in a freelance world, and more and more of today's world is freelance, because their work is good, and because they are easy to get along with, and because they deliver the work on time. And you don't even need all three. Two out of three is fine. People will tolerate how unpleasant you are if your work is good and you deliver it on time. They'll forgive the lateness of the work if it's good, and if they like you. And you don't have to be as good as the others if you're on time and it's always a pleasure to hear from you. Neil Gaiman's Commencement Address at The University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, www.uarts.edu. May 17, 2012. Page 1 of 9← Prev123456789Next → Want to thank TFD for its existence? Tell a friend about us, add a link to this page, or visit the webmaster's page for free fun content. Link to this page: no easy answers “On it was written the address for a Web site.“I think you should take a look at this tonight,” Dylan said.I shrugged. “Okay. Anything special?” I figured at the time that it was the address for some new program Dylan had uncovered.“It's Eric's Web site,” he said. “You need to see it. And you can't tell Eric I gave it to you.“I nodded. “All right.”That night I logged on for the first time. Sure enough, it was Eric's page; I recognized the more familiar features, like the “Jo Momma” joke sec...tion; all of us would sit around and tell those. “Jo Momma” jokes are a takeoff of the traditional momma joke, only they're made to be deliberately bad. The humor came from seeing just how lame you could make them. We'd say things like, “Jo Momma is so poor she lives in a two-story Dorito bag.” “Jo Momma is so fat she uses a Greyhound bus for roller blades.” “Jo Momma is so dumb that she has seven extra fingers and two extra toes and she still can't count to 29.”MoreLessRead More Read Less If the gentleman has ability, he is magnanimous, generous, tolerant, and straightforward, through which he opens the way to instruct others. Xunzi, John Knoblock (1988). “Xunzi: A Translation and Study of the Complete Works”, p.174, Stanford University Press Page 1 of 2← Prev12Next → God pity us indeed, for we are human, And do not always see, The vision when it comes, the shining change, Or, if we see it, do not follow it, Because it is too hard, too strange, too new, Too unbelievable, too difficult, Warring too much with common, easy ways, And now I know this, standing in this light, Who have been half alive these many years, Brooding on my own sorrow, my own pain, Saying "I am a barren bough. Expect, Nor fruit nor blossom from a barren bough." Lives of great men all remind us, Greatness takes no easy way, All the heroes of tomorrow, Are the heretics of today. Socrates and Galileo, John Brown, Thoreau, Christ, and Debs, Heard the night cry "Down with traitors!" And the dawn shout "Up the rebs!" Page 1 of 7← Prev1234567Next → From Longman Dictionary of Contemporary Englishthere are no easy answersthere are no easy answersused when saying that it is difficult to find a good way of dealing with a problem → easyExamples from the Corpusthere are no easy answers• So there are no easy answers.• As usual, there are no easy answers to explain human behavior.• But suddenly we find ourselves acknowledging that there are no easy answers to the dilemmas Christians face.• There are no easy answers to this problem. Jump to ratings and reviewsOn April 20, 1999, Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, two seniors at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, walked into their school and shot to death twelve students and one teacher, and wounded many others. It was the worst single act of murder at a school in U.S. history. Few people knew Dylan Klebold or Eric Harris better than Brooks Brown. Brown and Klebold were best friends in grade school, and years later, at Columbine, Brown was privy to some of Harris and Klebolds darkest fantasies and most troubling revelations After the shootings, Brown was even accused by the police of having been in on the massacre simply because he had been friends with the killers.Now, for the first time, Brown, with journalist Rob Merritt, gets to tell his full version of the story. He describes the warning signs that were missed or ignored, and the evidence that was kept hidden from the public after the murders. He takes on those who say that rock music or video games caused Klebold and Harris to kill their classmates and explores what it might have been that pushed these two young men, from supposedly stable families, to harbor such violent and apocalyptic dreams.Shocking as well as inspirational and insightful, No Easy Answers is an authentic wake-up call for all the psychologists, authorities, parents, and law enforcement personnel who have attempted to understand the murders at Columbine High School. As the title suggests, the book offers no easy answers, but instead presents the unvarnished facts about growing up as an alienated teenager in America today.Brooks Brown graduated from Columbine High School in 1999; this is his first book. Most recently, Brooks worked and consulted on Michael Moores latest documentary called Bowling for Columbine. He lives in Littleton, Colorado. Rob Merritt graduated from the University of Iowa School of Journalism in 1998 and currently works as a newspaper writer in Marshalltown, Iowa. 183 people are currently reading6,351 people want to readDisplaying 1 - 30 of 351 reviewsApril 18, 2013First of all, I would like to say that "Columbine" by Dave Cullen, is absolute shit. He wrote the book on assumptions, he himself, had made. It's not an informative book, it's a fictional book on his assumptions and thoughts.If you want to know about what really happened at Columbine, and get in insight in why they did what they did; this is the book you should read. Who knows more about the topic, than the guy who actually knew the boys, and were there that day?This book focuses on how the boys (Eric and Dylan)were before the massacre, and what may have caused such a dramatic change in their behaviour. There is, of course, "no easy answers", and if you want an easy answer, or simply someone to blame, you should just forget about it. This book will give you somewhat of a comprehention of the incident, although, none of us will ever truly understand what was going on the boys' minds. It's a true mystery.November 12, 2011This was a hard book to read. It wasn't boring or poorly written, but the subject matter was rather tough to read. Brooks Brown grew up with Dylan Klebold. He was also friends with Eric Harris. Their actions on April 20, 1999 affected Brooks' life. He was outside Columbine High School when Eric Harris pulled up. Eric told him to go home. As Brooks was walking he heard the gunfire.Brooks tells what happened starting with his lone time friendship with Dylan. He discusses the bullying that went on and how the teachers and administration looked away. He writes about the warning signs that took place during their junior year including the threats made against him by Eric Harris on his website. The Browns reported ti to the police however nothing really happened. Brooks also describes how the police treated him as a suspect after the shootings because of his friendship with the perpetrators regardless of the forgotten police report from the year prior. He finally describes going on with his life wondering why his friends did what they did.A very powerful book!January 18, 2015If I had read this when it was released, I might have given it three stars, but the material here has recently been covered in Dave Cullen's Columbine, which was better written and covered the tragedy more in depth. However, I can see the necessity of such a book to help clear Brown's name, which the sheriff department tarnished. This book might be more accessible to teenagers who might relate to the angst of being an outcast. Personally, because of mixed reports, I still wonder exactly how bad the bullying was at Columbine High; I cannot entirely discount the possibility that Brown uses the tragedy for his own anti-bullying agenda, just as some used it as an opportunity to convert teenagers. Some of the incidents cited made me roll my eyes, and think "grow the fuck up and get over it." In primary school, Brooks and Dylan accidentally got mud on another student's coat and were forced to clean it with a toothbrush. Oh, the cruelty! They were taunted for being the "smart kids" in the academic program during middle school. I, too, was tested for and placed in a program for the "academically gifted" in middle school. As a result I was segregated from the rest of the school for my core curriculum. This did cause some small amount of teasing. I got over it fairly easily. I was teased on the bus rather aggressively because of my name and because there were cows in my yard. (Yeah, I know, it even sounds ridiculous without going into further detail.) In high school, I made few friends, talked to few people, spent my lunch period isolated and reading. People later told me that they were kind of worried I was going to shoot up the school one day. I joked and said there weren't enough bullets. Brooks mentions how the jocks would pour oil on the floors so that the outcasts would slip; they would call this bowling. This triggered a memory I had completely forgotten: on my way to class during my junior year, walking with the mistake I dated at the time, I slipped in baby oil that had been poured on the floor. I was irritated, slightly embarrassed, and even more irritated that my then-boyfriend laughed before asking if I was alright, but the people who did it were just typical dumb teenagers, not "bullies" in any way that I could see. If this type of behavior drives someone to build bombs and buy guns, then there's something inherently wrong with that person. I suppose anti-bullying is as good a cause as any, but when I can't accept that as the cause of the Columbine shooting. Listing a few incidents of bullying hardly delves into the psychological mindframe of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. Finishing this book, I felt no closer to understanding them; instead, I just felt depressed by the inept way in which the police responded. (I was also left wondering how the author could be a fan of literature such as 1984 and Atlas Shrugged, yet still listen to Insane Clown Posse, but I guess there are some things beyond human understanding.)^I wrote this before having read Atlas Shrugged. What a piece of shit. Oh, you like Atlas Shrugged AND ICP? No conflict of interests. You just like shitty things.May 13, 2009This book is AMAZING. Wish there were 2 more stars to add to the 5 star count. Just simply couldn't put this book down- I read it in one sitting. I'm not too crazy about memoirs, but this one has a REAL message for anyone who works with kids. I'm going to share the beginning of Chapter 22 with my students and start a discussion about what it means to lose hope and how to regain it. Maybe, with that, I can prevent anything like that from happening at my school. September 10, 2012I don’t think you know that most of the facts that Dave Cullen Columbine wrote have been proven false. One fact that Cullen used that Eric suddenly became a Casanova. Not true Eric would maybe go one or two dates .There was no girlfriend Brenda she made it all up. She was a serial killer groupie. More than one person has told how badly Dylan and Eric were bullied. After reading Brooke Brown’s Book No Easy Answer. Then checking for myself other student’s interview on how these two were treated. I get it. Eric and Dylan were not just bullied they were the target of the bullies. It was a mob mentality because people always follow the popular group. They were fair game for anyone to pick on. They did have a list of people they wanted dead. They wounded one and killed the other. Dylan and Eric planned it. It was something they did together. This is by far a better book and well written. I do wish that it had interviews of people and children that knew Eric Harris before he moved to Columbine. I know he kept in touch with them and even when he talked about them in one of the basement tapes he started to cry and turn off the camera. I don’t take stock in the journals for the physiatrist to analyze since these are journal’s that Eric and Dylan wanted you to see them as. I do think Eric had anger issues but he was given a drug that was like dynamite to someone that had anger issues. Luvox was taken off the market after the shootings and warning labels were put on any anti depressive medication. August 20, 2011I read this right after Dave Cullen's Columbine. I loved it. Brooks reminds me of myself in high school, for one thing. For another, he really helped me to understand a little better the psychology of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, and as a result, perhaps a bit about the psychology of Seung Cho. It was also interesting to hear the perspective of a kid who was targeted by incompetent politicians looking to deflect anger away from themselves.The book was also interesting in light of Cullen's book. Brooks talks a lot about bullying, which has been widely blamed for the shooting; he seems to agree with that diagnosis. But Cullen offers a convincing argument that the bullying explanation was actually produced by a sort of feedback loop between the media and Columbine students; and if Cullen is correct, this book offers an insightful look at the psychology. Either way, Brooks' narrative helps me to understand how we, as Virginia Tech students, reacted to and reinforced the media narrative surrounding our own tragedy.This book also offers an interesting perspective of gun control, albeit briefly. In one chapter, Brooks says he doesn't support gun control, because it disarms law-abiding citizens. In the next chapter, he tells of his trip to DC to lobby to close the gun show loophole; clearly he doesn't consider working to close this loophole to be gun control. Yet most people who work in politics believe the opposite. Brooks is no idiot, either; on the contrary, he's quite bright. But his perception of the term "gun control" casts a new light on polls which examine this important issue.September 20, 2008on Friday, July 11, 2008 I wrote about this book:Finished this 2 days ago. On July 9.When I started reading this book it felt like I was under a spell or something. Since then I have looked up all kind of info about the shooting, the shooters and the victims.Downloaded the Columbine Report (11.000) pages.Very interesting book 10 out of 10May 21, 2016So I don't know if this book suffered unnecessarily because I read it right after Dave Cullen's or if I would have disliked it either way, but regardless I did. Dislike it I mean.I didn't hate it. In fact I'd go so far as to say I'd recommend it, if only for the the indepth discussion of Dylan Klebold (who was kind of typecast as the depressed loser sidekick in Cullen's book IMHO). But Brooks' (and Merrit's - did he have much to do with this?) tone was grating. At several points in the book he deliberately tells parts of the story in such self-serving ways. I mean, lying to protect Fusselier's son? Am I really supposed to believe that happened?The thing is, it's an easy read with a conversational (if annoying) style, and it's a nice counterweight to Cullen's book. The two definitely paint a portrait of a wildly incompetent police department, not surprising given the small town-ish nature of Jeffco.I find Cullen's account (a sociopath and his hanger on) a little more plausible - I simply refuse to believe that Columbine was such a terrible place so full of bullies that these two were driven to murder. The real truth probably lies in between the two.Am super curious about the principal... he was painted very generously in Cullen's book but almost villified in this one. Hard to know which is true, but I thought it was interesting nonetheless.I will probably try to read one more Columbine book for good measure. See where the majority lies.February 13, 2015No Easy Answers is a true crime book about the Columbine High School massacre in 1999, notable because it's co-written by Brooks Brown, who was a classmate and alleged friend of the shooters. It's for this reason, I suppose, that I have come across various recommendations of this book over Dave Cullen's Columbine , though the latter is by all accounts more accomplished; for whatever reason, I've had an idea fixed in my head for some time that this was the definitive Columbine book. Watching the first season of American Horror Story, in which one character's crime is very clearly and specifically based on the Columbine shootings, brought it back into my mind. (I also had this sudden compulsion to read loads of true crime which inexplicably disappeared as soon as it inexplicably arrived, lasting about a day in total.)I think this sort of thing - a famous crime or incident or whatever it might be, described from the viewpoint of someone who was close to it but not actually involved - usually reveals more about that person than it does about the crime or incident. No Easy Answers made me think of Dreams of a Life, the documentary film about Joyce Vincent, the young woman whose body lay unnoticed in her flat for two years. The object of Dreams of a Life was to unravel how such a thing could have happened, how Joyce, who was popular and appeared to lead a full, varied life, was not missed or searched for. But through its interviews with people who knew her, the film revealed much more about their personalities and attitudes than it did about Joyce; whether this was the filmmaker's intention or not, I felt it was a character study of them, not her. Similarly, No Easy Answers ends up saying a lot more about Brooks Brown than it does about the Columbine shooters. The book steers all its arguments towards two targets - the culture of bullying at Columbine (the focus here being the teachers who allowed and encouraged bullying to happen rather than the students perpetrating it) and the incompetence of police. These factors are blamed for the shooting at the expense of any other possible influences. For example, the idea that more stringent gun laws would have helped prevent the massacre is (more than once) dismissed within a couple of sentences, with Brown vaguely arguing that people determined to get hold of weapons will manage to do it no matter what the laws are. Some of the revelations about the police's lack of interest in early signs of criminal potential from the shooters are, admittedly, shocking, if not exactly surprising. The bullying accusations are more problematic - while I remain convinced that bullying was a factor, even if only a minor one, the way the issue is discussed here doesn't really do anything to put forward a coherent case, partly because it's too heavily defined by personal experience. Brown basically seems very much like someone who is still really struggling with having been bullied at school and is still very bitter and angry about it. That's understandable - it took me until adulthood to get over various experiences of bullying too, and I know some people my age who still haven't shaken that mindset off entirely, and of course it isn't surprising that if this was his own experience, he'd naturally be keen to emphasise its significance in influencing the mindsets of the shooters. But it also makes the author sound very immature and biased when discussing the reasons the attack happened. The repeated mentions of Brown's own musical tastes and how these made him 'different' are pretty cringey; he also comes off as someone who thinks he's a lot smarter than he actually is. Despite the anti-bullying agenda, there's often a sense that Brown is pushing a right-wing individualistic philosophy (the Ayn Rand quotes...) and there's also a strong and pretty nasty streak of sexism running throughout the book. His parents don't come out of it much better - in fact, if there was one thing this book highlighted for me that I hadn't thought much about before, it's exactly how privileged, spoilt and cosseted all these kids were. Added to that, going by the evidence in this book, the repeated claim that Brown was Dylan Klebold's 'best friend' seems shaky: it doesn't appear that the two were particularly close. I never usually leave books without a rating, but I'm not sure where I would place this one: I'm less confident about rating it because it's not as if I've read a lot of true crime to compare it to. It was interesting to read this to get the perspective of someone who was close to the shooters and the subsequent investigation (Brown himself was implicated as a potential accomplice and went through a legal battle to establish his innocence). But the style and tone were offputting, and I don't feel I really learned anything new - there wasn't anything here that I haven't already read on the internet, although I realise it would have been far more revelatory when it was first published in 2002.2000s-release non-fiction read-on-kindleApril 23, 2017This was an interesting read for me because it was written by someone who considered Harris and Klebold to be close friends.It was eye opening to learn just how inept the Jefferson County Police, SWAT and other law enforcement officers were during the shootings.There was a huge cover up involved and Brooks Brown had handed them all the evidence that was needed to stop this attack from ever happening a year earlier and law enforcement did nothing with that information. To this day they still will not explain why it took them over three hours to get inside the library after students came pouring out after the killers had left the library. It is very possible that lives could have been saved if the SWAT team had responded quickly.The only teacher who was killed bled to death just minutes before they finally made it in the building. All the while they had students telling them that both Klebold and Harris had committed suicide.They let the bodies of the slain students remain in the building for over 28 hours. The bodies of two students were left outside on the sidewalk overnight uncovered only to have their pictures published on the front cover of every major newspaper, before their parents had been informed. A badly handled situation.No one seemed to want to accept the fact that bullying was going on in Columbine. Administrators turned a blind eye on it or placed the blame on the actual ones being bullied because they "didn't fit in".Shameful.In no way do I think that the killers were not to blame for what they did. They planned it for a year, but I do think that what they dealt with on a daily basis contributed to their feelings of hatred.Don't blame the parents. They were victims, too. They were clueless because these were two highly intelligent young men. They were excellent at lying and hiding things. Their parents were not allowed to grieve the loss of their sons because their sons were the reason for everyone else's loss.The author really wanted to open people's eyes to what was going on in that nice clean school. He wanted people to be aware it can happen anywhere. He was right.... It continues to happen..... VA Tech..... Newtown.....it has to stop.I wish people would acknowledge that bullying does exist and the consequences can be deadly.September 22, 2018It's difficult rating books like these, books that are so personal, because I don't want to say "what you went through is worth two stars". I think this book was very self-serving for Brown. And I think he should have waited a few years to write it. The book reeks of somebody who is totally incapable of introspection. He spends the opening chapters blaming teachers and authority for not "getting" him and going so far to target him. There are SO. MANY. EVENTS from his childhood he extensively recounts, that come down to a big fat get over it. I have to wonder if he wrote the book a little later, he might have reflected back on himself a little more carefully, but honestly, probably not. Brown defends his lack of interest in schoolwork and argues that teachers didn't appreciate his interpretation of literature, while referencing George Orwell and Ayn Rand, and just comes across as a classic clueless edgelord. He goes out of his way to describe himself as the gifted slacker, and talks like his teachers should have been grateful to be in his presence; he defends the fact he was failing his classes from middle school "only" because he didn't do the work, not because he couldn't do it. He always paints himself as the innocent victim, that everything just happened to happen around him, some of the events he describes are just unbelievable. There are little things he talks about in the book that speak volumes about his character, like blaming Eric for being angry that Brooks was always running late to pick him up from school with the justification "he didn't care about school". The cluelessness is astounding. The book doesn't make me feel empathy for Brown. It doesn't make me feel empathy for Eric or Dylan. There are honestly too many contradictions about who was bullying who at Columbine, whether Eric and Dylan were pushed to the edge or were just disturbed individuals. Brown does nothing to shed light on the situation, the book is too ingratiating. He's not a particularly talented writer. It was not an enjoyable book. April 23, 2014This was a good counterpoint to Cullen's book on Columbine. Cullen creates a bit of a smoke and mirrors act in an attempt to deflect blame away from the school culture as a contributing factor in the tragedy. Brooks Brown was there, he was a student, he should know what he saw and he seems to be a credible witness. I do think that Eric and Dylan were also bullies themselves. Even the incidents Brown points out, like Eric throwing ice into his windshield demonstrates the bullying, though I'm not entirely sure he ever makes that connection himself. It really is sad what happened to boys like Brooks who suffered so much in the wake of this. They are the invisible victims and I don't believe one can ever really make sense of what happened at Columbine because what happened was not the result of mature, rational thinking. It can't be understood in those terms either. There truly are no easy answers. I saw a video on utube of Eric Harris in the cafeteria which was filmed at an earlier time, I'm not sure when. The nervous energy of this kid was just so obvious. He appeared to be jumping out of his skin. And he doesn't really participate in the conversations going on around him. Very strange. As much as he disgusts me, it really didn't take long to see he had serious issues, even taking the violence out of the equation. What a shame. So many what ifs. Even fifteen years later, I am as horrified and mystified as I was when this was fresh. But thank you Brooks. I found your book informative and overwhelmingly sad. Thanks for sharing your experience with the reading public. February 6, 2016As someone who has been interested in Columbine for nearly a year, I was super excited when I finally got this book and reading it did not let me down. Although it did take me awhile to read, I got through it in the end.Brooks really goes into detail about everything surrounding Columbine. He talks about the media, about the victims and their families, he talks about how him and his family, and how they were all affected when he was accused of being in on the plotting and killings, and I wasn't expecting so much detail.I remember when I began reading it and started thinking, hmm....he's a little stuck up, but after all he's been through, having his whole community think he's a killer because a police officer is accusing you, even though you and him both know he's lying for three years, my gosh, how he managed to pull through and keep going.But I now know why Columbiners are obsessed with this book, he talks so much about growing up with Dylan Klebold, and he tells so many memories and proves that Dylan wasn't born a killer, and overall, it's such an interesting read!!!December 16, 2016DNF.I was expecting something good from this book. Brooks Brown, a childhood friend of both Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris, sets out to give us insights into the boys he grew up with, who went on to commit the murderous acts at Columbine High School in 1999. I'm 100 pages in, and I can honestly say there has very little of much substance into anything. I feel as if every second sentence I'm reading starts with the words "I went home and told my mom". Frustrating and irritating. So with that in mind, I'm jumping ship. I doubt this book is going to provide me with anything more insightful than the memoirs of a tattle tale. Harsh perhaps, but I've no time to spare for what I sadly feel, is a weak story. December 1, 2011This book offers yet another telling and evaluation of the shootings at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. I read this on the tail of David Cullen's, Columbine, which I preferred. I liked Cullen's take for 2 reasons: a. He is an impartial 3rd party. I felt that sometimes Brooks Brown was a little too involved and connected to tell a story. And b. Cullen's book came out in 2009, which gave it a little more perspective due to the passage of time.Some facts in the two books are very similar, if not word for word. Some facts are in one book and not the other. In some instances, the two books stand in stark contrast. Brown maintains that bullying was the key reason for the Columbine massacre. Cullen blames it on Eric Harris's psychopathic and Dylan Klebold's depressive tendencies.One sentence in No Easy Answers angered and bothered me. Brooks states that "Eric and Dylan created this tragedy, but Columbine created Eric and Dylan." If this is his theme, I completely disagree. I will agree that Columbine High School seemed to be a toxic environment for groups other than the accepted "norm." It also seemed to be a school that worshiped sports and athletes. But Brooks himself says that he and Dylan were bullied starting in the 1st grade. His theory might be easier to stomach if the two had snapped and gone on a shooting spree. But they planned for a year. The hostile high school environment may have exacerbated the situation, but those two had some serious mental problems.I've read some reviews where readers felt that Brooks Brown whined and played the victim with this book. I agree to an extent. I also lost a little respect for him when he went on a media spree and got tied up with Michael Moore, although he says he never received payment for his appearances. I also felt he got a little preachy at times.I did not like how the book kept switching point of view. Within chapters, it would switch from Brown's 1st person account to his co-author's 3rd person interviews and recollections.I'm fascinated by this topic in a sick sort of way. I think that it is polarizing. I've developed some rather strong opinions. I agree with many of the ideas presented in this book, just not all. At the very least, it made me think and enabled me to write this rather lengthy review. That's what books are for.September 24, 2009Brooks Brown is angry. And who can blame him? He already took his share of shit at school, along with his friends. Then two of them, including his best friend from childhood, walked into Columbine one day and became notorious mass murderers. Just before Eric Harris entered the Columbine cafeteria armed to the teeth and ready to commit random slaughter he ran into Brooks Brown. "Brooks, I like you now. Get out of here. Go home." For some reason Harris decided to warn Brown off -- albeit in an oblique way. Thus, Brooks Brown would survive the day, but become guilty by association and used as a scapegoat by the Jefferson Co. law enforcement. The next several years would be hell. And the memories would never fade. Imagine being completely robbed of your youth in that way and having your identity completely entwined with Columbine. And living in a society that still lives by the myth that high school is the Best Years of Our Lives. I recently read David Cullen's detailed study of Columbine and Brown's account provides an interesting counterpoint to both the official story most of us heard 10 years ago and Cullen's more updated revelations. Cullen's book goes into the ineptitude and dishonest practices perpetuated by elements of the Jefferson Co. Sheriff's Dept. and police force. He also talks about the ordeal of Brooks Brown and his family. As you may guess, Brown's account of the events is far more scathing. Where Cullen took a middle-of-the-road view toward the prevalence of bullying at Columbine (yes, it happened but probably no more or no less than it happens at thousands of other high schools across the nation.) Brown pulls fewer punches and describes the Columbine atmosphere as being wide open to marauding gangs of jocks and filled with teachers and administrators who turned a blind eye and favored the alpha males.Brown also shares details with the reader about his fraught relationship with Eric Harris. While Klebold had been a good friend when Brooks was in grade school, he did not meet up with Harris until entering Columbine High School. Brown and Harris became friendly through their mutual friendship with Dylan Klebold. However things took a dramatic turn for the worse when Harris and Brown had a fairly trivial falling out which Harris conflated into a full fledged vendetta. Harris threatened Brown repeatedly, vandalized his car and posted death threats against Brooks and his family on his website. The Browns grew alarmed at Eric's spiraling violence and attempted to get the police involved more than once. They also filed a police report that lead to a search warrant of the Harris home which was written up but never served. All this happened a year before the shootings. Brown tries to make sense out the tragedy for his own sanity. He is trying to reconcile his relationship with both killers, (but especially with Dylan Klebold). He has survivor's guilt. He feels guilty for being friends with these very disturbed young killers. Hence, this account is highly personal and shown through the rather unique perspective of a Columbine student who was not a victim in the sense of being physically wounded in the attacks...and also someone who identified to a certain extent with Klebold and Harris.Readers who are interested in learning more about the events at Columbine should not bypass this one.September 25, 2012I can see why Brooks had to write this book, both for necessary inner and outer redemption, seeing as he and his family really went through bad times after Columbine (and before, obviously, when Eric Harris threatened Brooks and nobody acted upon it). However. As important a book this is for Brooks, his family and many others directly concerned... I doubt it's that helpful to people outside. Or well, at least it wasn't for me. Some anecdotes mentioned made me doubt Brooks and his family as narrators early on - there was an incident mentioned back when Brooks and Dylan Klebold accidentially somewhat ruined a girl's coat and the teacher made them clean it, probably a tad too thoroughly, with a teethbrush and all - however, Brooks' mother made it sound as if some torture had happened. Considering what happened later, the relation was way off for me.Also, Brooks himself... I don't know. Giving his first interview while Columbine was still happening? Yep, see my eyebrows raised. And in the end, it all gets a tad too preacher-y. Uh. Guess this was just too personal for my liking. Brooks was too close, too involved, to convince me as 100% reliable narrator. Sorry.If you're interested in the topic of Columbine, I'd rather rec Dave Cullen's Columbine, which, personally, I prefered lots more.ETA: Also, this was edited sloppily - really, really weird line breaks like "would[line break]n't" or "could[line break]n't" all the time - those disturbed my reading way too much. And woah, personal pet peeve: The German town is called Erfurt, NOT Ehrfurt, how hard can such little research be?2-stars-okay medium-book read-author-male-only January 28, 2013I read this book when I went to a book club based on True Crime. I was annoyed they chose a book about School Shooters then I was swayed when they chose a great writer who had many things to say about the tragic event. Brooks Brown kept a blog at 1Up that I used to read during free periods between classes in college. A few times, he mentioned the massacre but he captured my interests when he wrote some amusing antidotes on parents and video games. Something I know too well about.His account of what happened to the killers was understandable and dare I say... relatable. Relatable to teens today. We still notice bullying in our schools and it affects the mind in many ways. Some aren't as tragic as Eric and Dylan but still heartbreaking. Brooks Brown opened our eyes to a whole different side to them unlike the media who branded them, "Monsters" or "freaks". It was interesting to hear about them on the lead up to the massacre and hear about the ever lasting effects afterwards.On an unrelated note, I read this book when I was five months pregnant. I was so impressed with this book, when I gave birth to my son, I called him Brooks after Brooks Brown himself :)September 24, 2016“Truth is stranger than fiction, because fiction has to make sense.” - Mark Twain3,5*I’ve wanted to read this for years, mainly as a follow-up to Columbine by Dave Cullen and it’s weird now that I’ve put some distance from it to finally pick it up and go back to it again. I’m glad that I didn’t read this right after Dave Cullen’s acclaimed book because I’m afraid I would be biased. I mean, for me, that’s the best book I’ve read on the Columbine tragedy. On its own, No easy Answers also delivers a punch. It’s told from Brook Brown’s perspective, who was friends with Eric and Dylan long before they were mass murderers. He was childhood friends with Dylan and later on met Eric in High School. It’s the closest thing we’ll get of the boys viewpoints and it’s told from one of the people who knew them better than anyone else. Not just that, it gives you a different perspective of what happened that day and the events preceding it. There are some harsh truths covered up as lies. It's unbelievable how much the police concealed and the extent they went to just to cover their own mess. Columbine could've been prevented if only they'd taken action on Brown's complaints against Eric Harris's dangerous behavior the year before. What a shame.I noticed a stark contrast between the two books. On the one hand, Dave Cullen downplays the bullying they suffered, claiming Eric was a psychopath and Dylan was depressed thus easily swayed into the plan; on the other hand, Brooks Brown reiterates how much it played a key role in the shootings. And it’s obvious, really, from his account and the evidence they left behind, though not the sole reason. I feel like it became too self-serving towards the end, and a bit preachy. Some parts seemed unnecessary and I didn’t see the need for them to be detailed or even included in the book. Apart from that, it’s a particularly interesting read and it paints a very personal and insightful picture of their friendship and the ultimate betrayal. March 22, 2016I've fallen and I can't get up. This is the third book about Columbine I've read in the last year and a half. How two kids who barely tapped into the average human lifespan's reservoir managed to dig a rabbit hole this deep is beyond me, but here I am.This book comes from a friend of the killers, Brooks Brown. While other books are written by adults who couldn't have known them the way he did, Brown believes those best fit to uncover the truth about the Columbine massacre and other school shootings are fellow teens. He's a skeptic with an exhausting tone. The book is peppered with conservative leanings; Brown's ultimate plea rings, "Wake up, sheeple!"However, I'll agree to receive this book contextually. It sounds like a self righteous 20 year old man who is working through societal trauma wrote this because one did. The book offers insight to life at Columbine that objective reporters and otherwise generationally removed adults can not, and in that, it's a valuable account. Like Dave Cullen's book on the massacre, No Easy Answers walks us through the failings of the police department, teachers, and other authoritative figures to follow up on preventative measures, and Brown's agenda stems greatly from this fallacy. In this book, Brown insists "Eric and Dylan created this tragedy, but Columbine created them."February 24, 2012I read this because I have a weird fascination with Columbine, and had just read the book Columbine. This book, however, was a waste of time. It doesn't give you much in the way of insight into Eric Harris or Dylan Klebold. This kid hung out with them and had some conflicts with Eric. However, Brooks just uses this book as an opportunity to try and establish himself as a free thinker. Who cares.September 21, 2011When the author mentioned "My juggalos" in the forward, I didn't think this was going to be a very good book, but I found that it's very insightful and honest. I ended up really, really liking it.May 16, 2016I knew Dylan long enough to know that he didn't start out as a monster. He became one. That's what makes his fate so scary.The next Dylan could be your son. Your neighbor. Your best friend. Not somefaceless, anonymous killer who comes out ofthe dark and snatches your loved ones. A regular person who faces the cruelty of the real world just like the rest of us—and in whom something erodes away over time.It's too late to stop Eric and Dylan. But maybe if we realize what we're doing toone another and take action now, we can save the kids who would otherwise godown the same path. - Brooks BrownAvevo dodici anni a quell'epoca, tredici li avrei compiuti due mesi dopo, quando i due adolescenti Dylan ed Eric compirono quello che dopo tutti scoprirono essere un vero e proprio attacco terroristico all'interno della scuola, che entrambi frequentavano: la Columbine High School.Quel massacro è rimasto impresso nella mia memoria per sempre e, qualche volta, mi ritrovo a navigare in internet per cercare sempre più dettagli su cosa è realmente successo quel giorno.Ovviamente per avere le mie risposte, per sapere il perchè quei due ragazzi erano così pieni di rabbia e odio. Perchè erano così depressi e disturbati da commettere un atto così tragico.Brooks Brown, amico intimo di Dylan Klebold (che diventerà amico anche di Eric Harris successivamente) cerca di darsi e darci delle risposte, ripercorrendo fatti accaduti prima, dopo e durante il massacro. Il libro è stato pubblicato nel 2002, solo tre anni dopo il massacro.Mi è piaciuto, se può essere usata questa frase su un argomento così delicato, su un libro basato sulla realtà, che lo rende ancora più sconvolgente.Su alcune cose non sono d'accordo con lui che cerca di raccontarci, di farci credere come Eric sia stato il più "terribile" tra i due, come abbia attirato Dylan, magari facendo leva sui problemi personali che il giovane aveva a quei tempi.Credo solo che, terribilmente, il fato abbia fatto incontrare due persone piene di risentimento verso una scuola che non li aiutava, verso un istituto che chiudeva gli occhi se qualcuno veniva preso di mira (aggiungerei crudelmente). Verso compagni che li ignoravano o deridevano, torturandoli psicologicamente per molto tempo (non parlo solo della Columbine, ma anche delle scuole che avevano frequentato precedentemente). Non voglio assolutamente trovare una "scusa" per ciò che hanno fatto, continuerò a condannare il loro atto vile e crudele, ma dopo qualche anno a bollarli solo come dei "pazzi psicopatici" ho un'altra percezione dei fatti, di come alcune cose si sarebbero potute evitare, se qualcuno li avesse ascoltati e aiutati, invece di ignorare e perdere le speranze perché quei due erano "strambi". Una grossa causa di quel fatto sanguinoso è stata la NEGLIGENZA da parte della POLIZIA.Hanno fatto un pessimo, un TERRIBILE lavoro su tutti i fronti.Quando Brooks fu minacciato di morte da Eric nel '98 e i genitori ne parlarono con la polizia, non venne fatto nulla, Eric fu solo costretto a scusarsi con i genitori di Brooks, che non gli credettero, intimandogli di stare alla larga dalla loro casa e da loro figlio. Eric era un ragazzo che non lasciava correre una sciocchezza, estremamente vendicativo, quindi non lasciò correre una cosa del genere. Continuò a quasi perseguitare quella famiglia e quel ragazzo orchestrando giochetti ai danni di Brooks. Tutti sapevano chi fosse (magari Dylan lo aiutava, anche se fu lui ad avvisare Brooks della minaccia, dicendogli di leggere sulla pagina web di Eric cosa aveva scritto, chi lo sa! In questo libro, Brooks si domanda se Dylan non l'avesse fatto per avvertirlo, ma solo per vedere la sua reazione, anche se poi dirà a Brooks di non parlarne con Eric) ma nessuno fece alcunché. LA POLIZIA se ne lavò le mani, ignorando successivamente le parole e LA MINACCIA di Eric Harris ai danni di Brooks (quest'ultimo scoprì - solo dopo la strage - la seconda minaccia, dove Eric un po' di tempo prima di fare pace con Brooks aveva descritto minuziosamente sul suo diario tutto quello che avrebbe voluto fare alla famiglia di Brooks la mattina del 20, prima di andare alla Columbine. Di come avrebbe ucciso prima i suoi genitori e poi avrebbe preso il suo tempo per bloccare Brooks, orinare e sputare su di lui, prima di ammazzarlo). Se la polizia, dopo la prima denuncia, avesse preso la questione seriamente, se avesse scavato più a fondo, quante cose potevano essere evitate?Durante il massacro, i poliziotti, i dannati agenti speciali della SWAT, non mossero il culo per aiutare i ragazzi intrappolati nella scuola, rimasero fuori, senza entrare, se non dopo tante ore (grazie a questo, il professore Dave Sanders morì dissanguato) semplicemente perché avevano paura e non erano addestrati in operazioni del genere.Sul serio? La SWAT non era addestrata ad affrontare una cosa del genere?A distanza di diciassette anni mi viene ancora da ridere sull'assurdità di questa dichiarazione perché, ci credo. Molti dei sopravvissuti quel giorno SI SALVARONO da soli, come quel ragazzo che si lanciò dalla finestra della biblioteca dopo il suicidio di Dylan ed Eric.Ci sono alcune prove che uno (dei tanti) ragazzi uccisi nella biblioteca non fosse stato ucciso nè da Eric nè da Dylan, ma da alcuni poliziotti. I bossoli sparsi intorno al ragazzino appartenevano alle pistole usate dai poliziotti e, successivamente, sparirono dalla scena del crimine.Lo sceriffo intraprese una personale battaglia per mettere in cattiva luce Brooks e il ragazzo fu anche coinvolto "nell'investigazione" come possibile terzo responsabile della strage. Volevano far credere alla gente che Brooks aveva aiutato Dylan ed Eric e in molti credettero alle sue allusioni, tanto che il ragazzo (oggi trentacinquenne) fu spesso allontanato dalla comunità e bollato come "killer".Si parla anche di come la musica e il cinema violento furono la causa della strage, altra cosa assolutamente ridicola. Brooks spiega come una cosa del genere veniva usata dalla gente che voleva "risposte facili" e dell'assurdità di dare la colpa a Marilyn Manson, ai KMDFM e ai Rammstein (le ultime due band erano le favorite dei due ragazzi, MM lo disprezzavano, ma il cantante fu comunque accusato di quella strage dai cattolici e da tutta la comunità).Eric Harris era razzista, amava quelle idee, si dice abbia scelto il 20 Aprile per il massacro perché era la data di nascita di Hitler. Sì, era un coglione con idee assurde, ma anche nel suo passato possiamo trovare qualcosa che ha influito sulla sua psiche e, successivamente, il bullismo, la negligenza degli insegnanti, la strafottenza di coloro che avrebbero dovuto accompagnarli in quel percorso importante e