

## **Book Review in *Reader's Weekly***

### ***“The World Of Drugs”***

***By Stevie Perchman***

Recently, I finished a book by Stevie Perchman called *The World of Drugs*, and I have to say, I was impressed. This book follows a heroin addict, Bertram Smith, and his journey through a life of suffering. Perchman does an excellent job explaining the hassle Bert has to go through just to scrape together enough money for a single dose of heroin. Bert usually went to a gang called the “Peckers”, who gave him money in return if he stole an item for them. All day, he thought of the next time he would take heroin, and struggled to get enough food, money, or shelter. He lost his job, wife, and house, like most addicts, and had to live in a

local park, under a tree. He worked at a nearby convenience store, making minimum wage, only managing to get the everyday necessities.

He started using heroin at the early age of 17. His parents were often not around, so he was left on his own most of the time. During lunch, as he was walking to a sandwich shop, a senior pulled him into an alley. He pulled out a pack of white powder, supposedly heroin, and told Bert to take it. Bert ended up taking it, and he soon began liking it. After his Junior year, he dropped out and started taking his parents money to buy heroin. The dealer

he bought from was the same person who had introduced him to heroin.

The dealers name was Tommy Smithers, and he lived in the apartments. He made the same as most drug dealers, about \$20-\$30k per year. "Drug dealers make roughly \$30,000 per year," (Becker, cheatsheet.com) as much as a small business employee. wanting to make more, he kept telling Bert that heroin was fine, just to get him to buy it. Bert had started to become friends with Tommy, and sometimes he got discounts on heroin, because he bought from him so much. Bert had soon trashed his life that he started to look for help. Bert had told Tommy about this, and Tommy, worried he might lose his best customer, tried to steer him away from help. This is very common for drug dealers. Drug dealers often convince

addicts that the drug they are addicted to is better than treatment. He sugar-coated heroin, saying that he could deal with life much better with heroin than with professional help.

After Tommy had convinced Bert that heroin was the best option, Bert started taking more and more heroin per dose. Bert had almost taken triple the usual amount taken in a dose, worrying Tommy. Tommy tried to get Bert to lower his intake, but Bert pushed back, saying he could find another dealer if he didn't get what he wanted. Tommy knew he had to keep Bert for his revenue, so he let Bert purchase as much as he wanted. Tommy's life was hard enough as it was, with moving locations to avoid suspicions, importing his supplies from distant places, and running from the police.

Tommy had been dealing for over 15 years, and had over 750 customers during that time. 90% of those 500 had gotten addicted, and 107 of those had died due to overdosing. Worse, those people had gotten others hooked, increasing the number of deaths from drugs in their town. Overall, Tommy had probably caused over 200 deaths due to drugs. Bert, too, was near the edge of overdosing.

Two weeks later, after Bert had started taking over 1200 milligrams per dose (1.2 grams), about 2500 per day (2.5 grams), Bert had gone through too much suffering. He went to Tommy, and asked for 6 grams of heroin, and willingly wanting the money, Tommy sold it to him for \$600. The highest tolerance body tolerance for heroin in a single dose is about 1800 mg

(heroin.com, *How Heroin Addiction and Overdose Cause Death*). Bert didn't care that the price was so high, and loaded the heroin into several syringes. Bert knew this was the end of his suffering, and injected the 6 grams into several veins in his body. 15 minutes later, Bert was doubled over, breathing hard in under the tree in the park. After 10 minutes of heavy breathing and slowly lumbering around on his hands and knees, Bert passed out, dead.

This book by Stevie Perchman is a very fascinating novel about how easy it is to get addicted to heroin and other substances. I highly recommend this book to adults who want a string-pulling novel about a man who was caught up in drugs at an early age. Many people die every year due to drugs. In 2016, 64,632 people died over overdosing on drugs

(Hedergaard, *Drug Overdose Deaths in the United States, 1999-2016*). I enjoyed expanding my knowledge by reading this intricate writing by a well known author.

This book is in most bookstores, even at airports, bus stations, and other travel stands. This book probably isn't a good fit for children under the age of 15, as it has a very sad and very mature storyline, so this would be better for older audiences.



Stevie Perchman is a two-time Best Selling author of multiple fictional books on drugs like *The Way of the Needle* and *From Farm to the Dealers*. He does community talks (like me) about safety with drugs and alcohol. He has a wife and three kids, a dog, and a large aquarium of fish with many sea creatures as well. He enjoys going to the beach, riding bikes, and watching movies with his family.