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## Confessions of a Self-Help Writer: The Journal of Michael Enzo

*Benjamin DeHaven*

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**Benjamin DeHaven : Confessions of a Self-Help Writer: The Journal of Michael Enzo** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Confessions of a Self-Help Writer: The Journal of Michael Enzo:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The ugly side of the self-help industry and people who are part of it, especially writersBy Eugenia Benjamin DeHaven was friends for almost 20 years with Michael Enzo. If people have heard of Enzo's name it is in connection to number of self-help books he wrote. However, there are many other books, Enzo wrote using aliases for unauthorized biographies of famous people. he was also frequently hired for writing

assignments on biographies of famous people. But when he was not writing, Enzo was living highly unpredictable life of self destructive individual full of hatred for the world around him. he was a liar, cheat, swindler, involved in unsavory deals with Chicago's Greek organized crime. His loathing of life led to lifestyle full of excess drinking, drugs, gambling. This was all happening until 2 years ago when Enzo disappeared when FBI started looking for him. No one knows his whereabouts, but people who thought were his friends and were betrayed in the process (like Benjamin DeHaven) are still determined to get even with Enzo and settle the score. DeHaven met Enzo in Chicago and they had a number of business ventures together. They even fell in love with the same woman. I can see how impressionable young men could have been fooled about seemingly easy life of Enzo who was a smooth talker and knew his way around the city. But over the years, Enzo took advantage emotional and financial of anyone around him including DeHaven. So when Enzo disappeared and DeHaven was shown a leather bound diary of Enzo stored under the porch of his ex-girlfriend's house, DeHaven decided to have this diary published so people can see Enzo for who he really was and still is. To his own admission, he published only "nice parts" of the diary and more provoking one he is planning to publish when one of the ongoing law suits is settled. Enzo is a troubled person. When he was young, I would have taken him for a prankster and class clown. But as he moves into adulthood it is obvious that he is manipulative and heartless. It is almost as if he loathes he has to live on this earth and for that reason he will take down himself and everyone else with him. I cannot see what people saw in the man, but parts of the book are really funny and parts so troubling one can only shake head and wonder - this man is truly beyond any salvation. You will read this think book in a quick sitting. The best part I like about it is the little pearls of wisdom that are compiled at the end of the book as a summary of the all underlined parts from the diary that caught DeHaven's eye. One can see how twisted events in one person's life created self-help mottos so many like to quote. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Just not the fun it promised.....By Amy E. Henry "Enzo wrote self-help books purely for profit." Somehow that is supposed to surprise us? I think most people realize the self-help industry is based on trends and self-serving affirmations. And the self-help industry is notorious for it's lowlife authors who are notorious for not taking their own advice. So the basis for DeHaven's book isn't as surprising or as revealing as it's meant to be, so it's not a platform to really launch a satire off of. To me, no matter what genre I read, tone is everything. The author in this sets a tone that is ingratiating and snarky that comes off as simply annoying. He's not as amusing as he thinks. Really, I tried to find some humor in the predictable self-help guru who is a complete loser, but all the little vignettes just feel contrived and overall, quite dull. Again, the tone of the writing, somehow, is insulting to the readers of THIS book as much as it insults those who actually follow self-help books. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. clever, but not always in a good way By Audrey Frances This novel operates on a somewhat confusing conceit -- that a character who has the same name as the author is a friend of a rather despicable individual named Michael Enzo, and chapters alternate between the author's narrative and Enzo's journal. The resulting tales of debauchery and outlandishness can be amusing, sometimes laugh out loud funny, but some of it is really not very funny, and the bits that are supposed to be profound are sometimes rather trite. zi found it annoying that the author would drop a sentence that's supposed to be wisdom for the ages, and someone is so convinced of it that the sentence is then underlined in the book, written in the margin, and then all of them are gathered into an appendix -- but they're not always worth this triple dose. Striving for a Chuck Pahluniak or Hunter Thompson vibe, the book sometimes succeeds. It's pretty funny, but not as funny as the author thinks it is, and the writing is disjointed -- a series of short anecdotes rather than a cohesive story. Short enough that you won't resent the time spent on it. Probably.

A funny, audacious, and devastating work of fiction loosely based on factual events. Some readers laughed, some cried, some were disgusted, and others felt they had gazed into the eyes of God. As much a comedy as a tragedy, "Confessions stands out to as a piece of unique literature that should be remembered for its originality as much as for its actual relevance as a mantra for living life in today's harsh reality." AJ Klatch D. Donovan, eBook Reviewer, MBR (Midwest Book Review) wrote, "not just one man's obsession, but the psychological trappings of the self-help industry as a whole.... reads like a thriller but is true life confession at its best." Who is Michael Enzo? You certainly haven't heard of him. As previously mentioned he has written over 108 self-help books. That's more published work than Agatha Christie, Dean Koontz and Stephen King. As DeHaven writes, only 54 of these books are directly attributed to Enzo. Almost his entire canon was published under the names of movie stars, politicians and business leaders. There are rumors abound that no less than 2 of the world's ten wealthiest men are said to have used Enzo as a ghost-writer. In my extensive research, I couldn't find a single person who willingly admitted to knowing Enzo, let alone that he wrote a book for them. I feel it imperative to opine that to me many of those people were obviously lying. Conversely, in interviews with readers of Enzo's many books, I encountered glowing remarks. Many of whom attribute their status in life to his words. None of those readers cared for a minute that the famous names appearing on their books were not the actual portents of such sage advice. What did Enzo write about in his journal? If you've been helped by any of his books then you probably don't want to find out. If you want to know the truth (or his version of it) then you'll get a glimpse of someone most easily classified as a psychopath. Enzo wrote self-help books purely for profit. Hypocrite isn't a strong enough word to describe him. Michael recounts drug deals, catastrophic gambling losses, molestation of

Virginia Ham, defiling the bathroom habits of cats and dogs alike, abandoning friends in need, sympathizing with underage prostitutes, supernatural proclivities in dorm rooms and the deaths of the closest of friends, some of whom he didn't even know. The confession that is most upsetting is that he would fall back on his tremendous talent, writing self-help, only as a last act to pay his debtors and ridiculous lifestyle. Benjamin DeHaven is also a recurring character in Enzo's stories and it's easy to understand why the two are no longer friends. Research tells me the two scribes were business partners, several times over, with all enterprises ending badly for DeHaven. They may have been each other's sponsor at various times via multiple incarnations of anonymous meetings. Their bond is so close that they even shared the same love for a woman named, Susan, who may or may not have been a porn star. DeHaven shares his own perspective of the Enzo years and at times seems to be admitting some responsibility for his counterpart's bad behavior. However, he claims his goal in releasing this journal is to destroy any positive connotations of the Enzo name. Frankly, DeHaven is often times shown in a very negative light, which to me adds a much needed layer of credibility to such a fantastical story. In conclusion, the confessions of both, Michael Enzo and Benjamin DeHaven, leave me wondering just how close these two actually were. I can't tell if DeHaven truly wants to ruin any remaining good name Enzo may have or if he's actually doing it out of love, reaching out to the one person who is still lost. Michael Enzo, wherever you are, pick up a self help book and give it a read. Who knows, you may have written it. PalookaMA Entertainment, Mark Amos

D. Donovan, Midwest Book "Eye-opening (even eye-popping at points) and involving, Confessions reads like a thriller but is true life at its best." PalookaMa Entertainment "A Quixotic adventure with lurid depravity and emotional complexity. DeHaven is risking the foulest of vengeance."