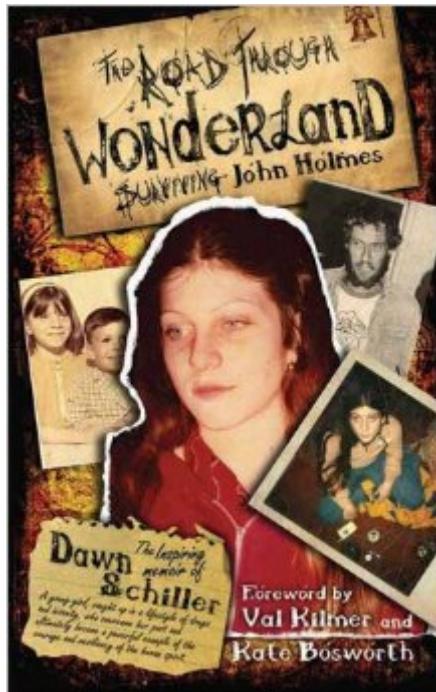


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# The Road Through Wonderland: Surviving John Holmes (5 Year Anniversary)



## **Synopsis**

Painstakingly honest, this chilling memoir reveals how a teenager became immersed in the bizarre life of legendary porn star John Holmes. Starting with a childhood that molded her perfectly to fall for the seduction of "the king of porn," this autobiography recounts the perilous road that Dawn Schiller traveled—from drugs and addiction to beatings, arrests, forced prostitution, and being sold to the drug underworld. After living through the horrific Wonderland murders of 1981, she entered protective custody, ran from the FBI, and turned in John Holmes to the police. This is the true story of a young girl's harrowing escape from one of the most infamous public figures, her struggle to survive, and her recovery from unthinkable abuse.

## **Book Information**

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (332 customer reviews)

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## **Customer Reviews**

First, my usual disclaimer: While Dawn and I are not friends, I am acquainted with her. When I discovered she was writing a book about her experiences, I approached her to review it. A word of warning: if you are looking for titillating details of the porn industry or John Holmes, you will be disappointed. This book is about Dawn and her ordeal as Holmes' girlfriend, not about porn, the porn industry, or Holmes' place in that. There is very little mention of it in this book, as it has very little relevance to Dawn's story. In fact, she had no idea who he was or why he was famous for some time after they met. (He was a major porn star in the 70s, for those who aren't aware of that.) The book is quite well written, drawing the reader into the story rather quickly. It keeps the reader's interest almost effortlessly, and I would have finished it in one sitting if my schedule had

allowed. I found myself deeply interested in the characters and events. The book begins with Dawn's difficult childhood in a dangerous neighborhood in Florida, and moves through these turbulent years to her parent's divorce and the move to L.A., setting the stage for her introduction to Holmes. She goes into considerable detail about many of the milestone events which were turning points in her life and relationship with Holmes and others. While not overtly explicit, she is quite candid about her thoughts and feelings, giving the reader a deeper insight into the process of seduction in an abusive relationship. Most of the book details her rollercoaster ride as Holmes' underage girlfriend. The reader gets to witness the cycle of abuse/romance/abuse which becomes familiar to anyone even mildly aware of the problem of abusive relationships.

The Road Through Wonderland is a well expressed memoir that methodically details the highs and lows of Dawn Schiller's relationship with 32 year old porn legend, John Holmes. In the summer of 1976, Schiller was a young teenage girl left to her own devices after the sudden divorce of her parents resulted in a relative state of abandonment by her father. The setting of Dawn's meeting with Holmes is in Glendale, California, almost a decade after the wake of the 60s revolution and during a less restrictive era, when the lines of social mores were slightly askew in comparison to today's climate of clearly defined laws regarding matters of sexual consent. As an adult film star, Holmes was at the pinnacle of his career and Schiller is unaware of his stature in the X-rated industry, until the nature of his work is divulged by a tenant at the Glendale cottages where John and his wife of eleven years, Sharon, are co-managers. John shields Dawn from his profession and despite the differences in their ages, he and Schiller share an almost immediate mutual attraction. In more than half of the book, Dawn describes the first few years of their forbidden but blossoming romance and basks in John's adoring attention while remembering to respect Sharon by maintaining a demeanor of discretion. Holmes plays multiple roles in their burgeoning relationship - both as a father figure and charismatic Svengali. Eventually, Sharon becomes a trusted friend and surrogate mother to Schiller. Dramatically, Holmes is converted from an attentive and caring boyfriend into a paranoid and violent desperado after he introduces cocaine into the fold. Schiller spends her final year with Holmes in fear of a man she no longer recognizes.

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