TEXAS

Crime Stories

KM+BM MEDIA
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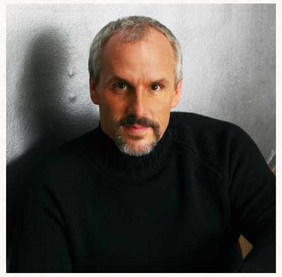
SYNOPSIS

From deep inside Texas, the lone-star state, lawmen and lawlessness go hand in hand. Texas Crime Stories is a new, true-crime format that covers the outrageous true-crime stories behind the murder and mayhem of Texas' most dangerous and notorious criminals. These are stories that could only happen in Texas, a state that has executed more people than the rest of the U.S. combined. How can you be sentenced to death row twice? Who was Amber Hagerman, the namesake of the now famous **Amber Alert** system, and what happened to her? How would hardened criminals serving time for capital crimes go on to commit even more heinous acts?

These incredible tales are captivating over **100K** listeners on the, now famous, viral-hit podcast by investigator Robert Riggs. Big Media is now ready to launch Robert's stories as a returnable true-crime series; **Texas Crime Stories**.

PRODUCTION TEAM



SETH ISLER | EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Seth has done extensive television and feature documentary work both domestically and abroad. For seven years, Seth served as Producer and VP of Development at Greystone Television and Films where he both developed and produced many shows and series for television. He has extensive field producing and directing experience on series for History Channel, MSNBC and A&E, including the award-winning special "The Unfinished Civil War" and A&E's biography of David Ben-Gurion, both of which he also narrated. He has worked with a wide variety of film and TV celebrities, politicians (including George Bush Sr. and Colin Powell), military leaders such as General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, federal and local law enforcement officials, historians, authors, and experts of various kinds.

ROBERT RIGGS | SHOW-RUNNER/INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

Peabody Award winning reporter has exposed wrongdoing and sent crooked politicians to jail throughout his career. Since his early days as a Congressional investigator, Riggs has left no stone unturned in seeking out corruption. He broke open a parole selling scheme in Texas and the corrupt release of a notorious serial killer. Riggs has been at the center of earth shattering stories from the war in Iraq, to the White House and Capitol Hill, to the Branch Davidian siege in Waco. He is always at the eye of the storm.

BILL JOHNSTON | FEDERAL PROSECUTOR

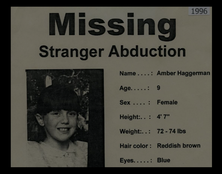
Bill Johnston devoted his career as a federal prosecutor to protect the sheep from the wolves. Today he specializes in complex fraud cases. He played a key role in launching a nationwide manhunt for notorious serial killer Kenneth Allen McDuff who tortured and murdered countless young women across Texas. Johnston was featured in Texas Monthly for spearheading an investigation into corrupt practices in the Texas parole system that set hundreds of convicted criminals free on early parole.

STORIES

EPISODE 1: THE LUBY'S MASSACRE

THE MASS SHOOTING THAT LED TO TEXAS' CONCEALED CARRY LAW

George Hennard crashed his pickup through the front door of a Luby's Cafeteria during the lunch hour. He jumped out and opened fire. He killed 23 people and wounded 27 others. After a brief shootout with police, Hennard fatally shot himself. At the time in 1991, it was the deadliest mass shooting by a lone gunman in U.S. history only to be surpassed by the Virginia Tech shooting. Why did he do it? The mystery remains. The incident prompted passage of the concealed carry law in Texas.



EPISODE 2: AMBER ALERT

THE CRIME RESPONSIBLE FOR THE AMBER ALERT SYSTEM

9-year old Amber Hagerman was last seen being snatched off of her bicycle and forced inside a black pickup truck on January 13, 1996 in Arlington, Texas. Four days later, a man walking his dog found her body five miles away in a creek. The police investigation went cold amid indications that the police had bungled the case. The case gave way to AMBER ALERTS that are used today to put out warning for missing children. Crude drawings depicting the murder were found at the crime scene. Former FBI serial killer investigator, John Douglas, the subject of Netflix's Mindhunter assisted Riggs in an analysis for his news report. In the wake of the report, the local police department dispatched officers to the scene to destroy all traces of the evidence. Today, Riggs and the prison investigator on the case are prepared to answer the question, "Who Killed Amber?"

EPISODE 4: CHIVA - BLACK TAR HEROINE

IT'S A CRIME TO LET A PERSON DIE OF AN OVERDOSE BUT IT WASN'T ALWAYS

In the late 1990s a mysterious epidemic of teenage heroin overdose deaths swept through Plano, Texas, an affluent suburb of Dallas. Teens were snorting the new popular drug of choice called "Chiva". It was a potent form of black tar heroin. The DEA sent in its top undercover agent to identify the heroin suppliers. The cartels were literally walking "Chiva" across the border with Mexico past immigration officers hidden in hollowed-out heels of cowboy boots. In the wake of the overdose deaths, Texas lawmakers passed legislation that made selling drugs that result in an overdose a murder charge. And they passed legislation that made it a crime for people that witness an overdose if they do not seek emergency medical help. The lone survivor of a heroin overdose remains confined to a wheelchair today suffering from some brain damage. He and his parents are available to talk about the case.

EPISODE 4: TWIN PEAKS MASSACRE

THE DEADLIEST BIKER SHOOTOUT IN U.S. HISTORY

In 2015 the deadliest biker shootout in U.S. history erupted at a Twin Peaks restaurant in Waco, Texas. As terrified dinners took cover, a bloody melee broke out between 200 members of rival gangs, the Bandidos and the Cossacks. Police cameras captured the deadly brawl. When the smoke cleared, 9 gang members were dead and 20 others were injured. Police arrested 177 bikers, however, a prosecutorial fiasco followed over the next four years. The only person to go to trial was Christopher Carrizal, president of the Dallas Bandidos chapter. The county spent $1.3 million preparing for Carrizal's trial and investigating all of the Twin Peaks cases. In November 2017, the jury in Carrizal's case voted 10-2 for acquittal, causing a mistrial. Many of those arrested were bystanders and have filed millions in civil rights lawsuits against the police and DA. Voters kicked the DA out of office and his replacement dropped all of the charges.

EPISODE 5: ASHLEY'S LAWS

THE CRIME THAT LED TO THE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY

In Texas, Ashley's laws require convicted sex offenders to register with a local law enforcement agency. The sex offender registry is available on-line to let the public know if an offender lives nearby. Seven-year-old Ashley Estell is the namesake of the law. She was abducted from a soccer tournament as her mother watched her brother playing at a popular venue in Plano, Texas, an affluent suburb of Dallas. Investigative reporter Robert Riggs uncovered that the alleged killer was out on early parole. He was convicted of capital murder but his sentence was later overturned due to issues with the forensic evidence. Prosecutors insist they got the right man. The controversy continues over who killed Ashley.

EPISODE 6: THE BAPTIST PREACHER MURDERER

THE PREACHER WHO WAS ACTUALLY A DEVIL

35-year old Matt Baker was a charismatic Baptist preacher idolized by his church congregation. His 31-year old wife Kari, described as the perfect pastor's wife, was reported to have committed suicide in 2006 on the anniversary of the death of their daughter. Karie left a typed note on her bedside table before she overdosed on sleeping pills. It read "I want to give Kassidy a hug, I need to feel her again." Her husband Matt called 911 a few minutes after midnight to report her apparent suicide. Police dispatched to the preacher's home called a Justice of the Peace and read him the suicide note. They agreed not to order an autopsy, and the Justice of the Peace didn't even come out to the house that night to pronounce Kari dead, as is required by Texas law. But Kari's three aunts suspected their niece was the victim of foul play. They heard rumors that Matt lived a secret life in which he sexually preyed upon young vulnerable women. The trio started their own investigation and eventually exposed the preacher as a murderer.

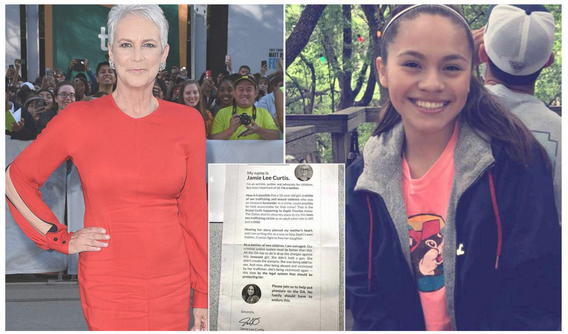
EPISODE 7: MURDER, MAYHEM, AND METHAMPHETAMINES

THE REAL BREAKING BAD IN TEXAS

Wendell Shackleford became one of the "top 15 fugitives" in the nation wanted by U.S. Marshals. Shackleford's drug ring acquired chemicals to manufacture huge quantities of methamphetamine in an abandoned cattle rendering plant near Hamilton, Texas. Wendell's girlfriend, a Houston girl with a meth habit, was his first known victim. Wendell strangled her with an electric cord, stuffed her body into a 55-gallon barrel, and filled it with lime powder to decompose it. When Shackleford suspected that Jack Willtrout, a partner in the drug ring, was stealing, he shot Willtrout in the head and took his body to an abandoned rendering plant where they incinerated it for twenty-four hours. Forensics experts identified a "Wrangler" brand zipper (the pants Jack commonly wore), a glass piece that matched Jack's glasses prescription, and a tooth-cap that matched Jack's dental records. Shackleford received a life sentence in federal prison.

EPISODE 8 | ATTACK ON DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS

In 2015 a heavily armed man in an armored van attacked the Dallas Police Department headquarters shooting at officers and patrol cars with assault rifles. He had planted bombs around the facility. The Dallas SWAT team had a rolling gun battle with the man in a pursuit that ended in the parking lot of a fast-food outlet ten miles away. The incident prompted police departments across the state to start erecting barriers and additional security measures around their facilities.

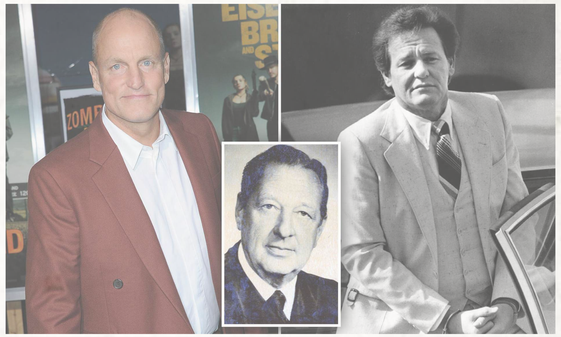


EPISODE 9 | SEX TRAFFICKING VICTIM OR COLD-BLOODED KILLER?

The capital murder case of 16-year old Zephi Trevino has drawn national attention. Jamie Lee Curtis took out a full-page ad in The Dallas News and Kim Kardashian tweeted a petition to support Trevino. Trevino, her boyfriend 18-year old Phillip Baldenegro, and 19-year old Jesse Martinez are charged with luring two men to an apartment to rob them. Police say they savagely beat the two men and shot one of them to death in August 2020. The Dallas district attorney plans to try this teen sex trafficking victim as an adult when she is still just a child. Criminal defense attorney David Finn, who represents Baldenegro , says cell phone records indicate that Trevino planned the ambush. A petition to drop the charges has garnered more than 400,000 signatures while a fund set up for her legal defense has raised more than $100,000 after Kim Kardashian West tweeted about the case in July. This will be a hotly contested case in court and social media.

EPISODE 10 | THE CULT OF MATAMOROS

On March 13, 1989, a satanic cult abducted an American tourist, Mark Kilroy, from the Mexican border town. They tortured him before killing him as he tried to escape after 12 hours of being at the cult's ranch. The cult was known for ritualistic killings. Investigators found their temple strewn with the remains of sacrificed victims and dead animals.

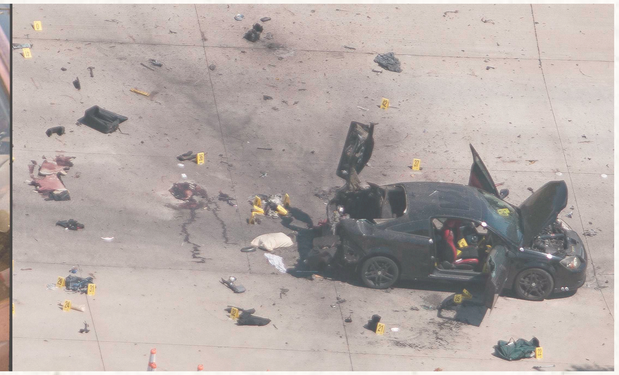


EPISODE 11 | TEXAS HITMAN

Charles Harrelson (the biological father of the actor Woody Harrelson) was a notorious Texas hitman for hire. In 1968 Harrelson was hired to kill Texas grain dealer Sam Degalia Jr. who was reputedly a member of a rival Mafia family located in the small town of Hearne. Harrelson assassinated federal Judge John H. Wood on May 29, 1979 at his home in San Antonio. Harrelson was allegedly hired by Jamiel Chagra, an El Paso drug kingpin whose drug trafficking case had landed in Judge Wood's court.

EPISODE 12 | THE REPUBLIC OF TEXAS

A separatist group led by Richard McLaren ended up in a deadly armed standoff with the Texas Rangers in the Davis Mountains in 1997. The separatists first started making news by filing false liens against people's property claiming that it belonged to their republic. The liens often blocked the rightful owners from selling their homes. In response, Texas lawmakers made it a crime to file a false lien against property.

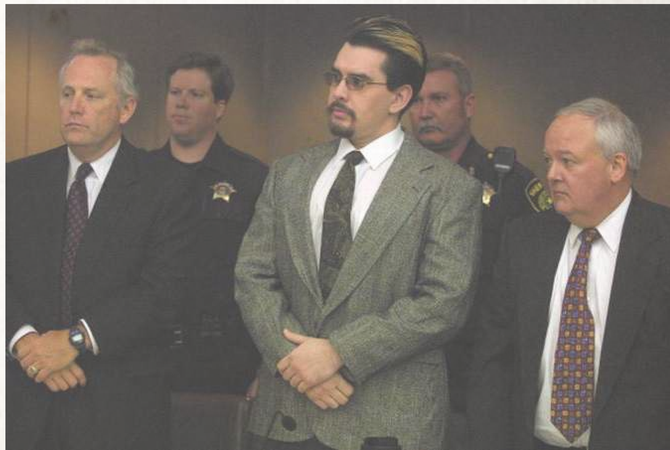


EPISODE 13 | ISIS IN TEXAS

A pair of ISIS inspired terrorists from Arizona armed with AK47 assault rifles planned to take out a conservative group hosting a Muhammad cartoon contest at a community center in Garland, Texas on May 3, 2015. They pulled up at an entrance where 59-year old Garland Police officer Greg Stevens was on security duty. As they bolted out of the car with raised rifle barrels, Stevens single handedly stopped the attack. The two terrorists fired 35 rounds, one round struck an unarmed security guard. From thirty-feet away Stevens, a self described old traffic cop, killed the pair shooting 14 rounds from his handgun. President Obama awarded Stevens the Medal of Valor for his bravery which averted a disaster. Since then he has lived with numerous death threats from jihadist groups.

EPISODE 14 | THE TEXAS 7 PRISON BREAK

Seven inmates staged a sensational prison break from a maximum-security unit dressed as guards and drove out the gate in a prison vehicle on December 13, 2000. Their ringleader, 30-year old George Rivas, was serving 18 consecutive life sentences. Officer Aubrey Hawkins was shot eleven times and run over by the escaping inmates. The brutal killing set off an nationwide manhunt which led to their apprehension. One committed suicide rather than surrrender to police. Four of the six sentenced to die by lethal injection have been executed.



PRESS

PODCAST DOWNLOADS: 101 K

Countries: Full List

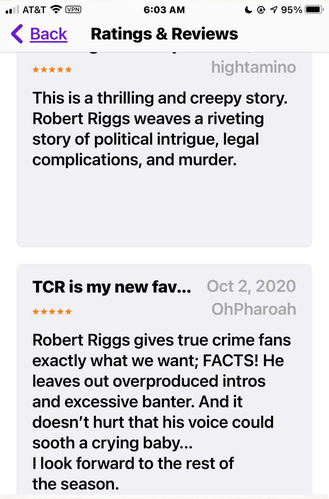
Country	Continent	Total
United States	North America	98,069
United Kingdom	Europe	2,249
Canada	North America	2,052
Australia	Oceania	1,693
Norway	Europe	336
Sweden	Europe	261
Ireland	Europe	212
Germany	Europe	191
New Zealand	Oceania	178
South Africa	Africa	168
Netherlands	Europe	164
Denmark	Europe	150
India	Asia	147
France	Europe	112
Switzerland	Europe	86
Philippines	Asia	85
Mexico	North America	77
Austria	Europe	66
Hong Kong	Asia	64
Saudi Arabia	Asia	57
Spain	Europe	50
Singapore	Asia	45
Paraguay	South America	43
Brazil	South America	42
Israel	Asia	40
Malaysia	Asia	40

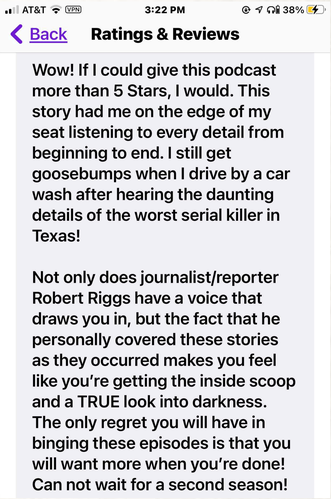
"Resurrected tales of terror are moving listeners to the edge of their seats. Culling through reporter notes from stories he'd written decades ago, Robert Riggs created a hair-raising podcast that's attracted more than 55,000 listeners in its first three months."

- Dallas Observer

CRITIC REVIEWS:

FAN REVIEWS:





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