



# **The Phantom Killer: Unlocking the Mystery of the Texarkana Serial Murders: The Story of a Town in Terror**

*James Presley*

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Set in the rowdy, often lawless town of Texarkana shortly after WWII, *The Phantom Killer* is the history of the most puzzling unsolved cases in the United States

The salacious and scandalous murders of a series of couples on Texarkana's "lovers lanes" in seemingly idyllic post-WWII America created a media maelstrom and cast a pall of fear over an entire region. What is even more surprising is that the case has remained cold for decades. Combining archival research and investigative journalism, Pulitzer Prize nominated historian James Presley reveals evidence that provides crucial keys to unlocking this decades-old puzzle.

Dubbed "the Phantom murders" by the press, these grisly crimes took place in an America before dial telephones, DNA science, and criminal profiling. Even pre-television, print and radio media stirred emotions to a fever pitch. *The Phantom Killer*, exhaustively researched, is the only definitive nonfiction book on the case, and includes details from an unpublished account by a survivor, and rare, never-before-published photographs.

Although the case lives on today on television, the Internet, a revived fictional movie and even an off-Broadway play, with so much of the investigation shrouded in mystery since 1946, rumors and fractured facts have distorted the reality. Now, for the first time, a careful examination of the archival record, personal interviews, and stubborn fact checking come together to produce new insights and revelations on the old slayings.

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