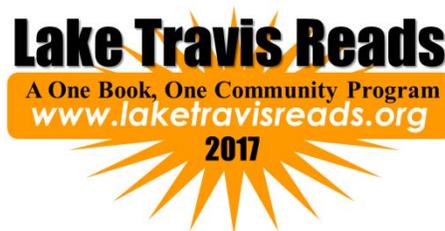


NEWS RELEASE

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December 1, 2016

LAKE TRAVIS READS *The Midnight Assassin: Panic, Scandal, and the Hunt for America's First Serial Killer*, by Skip Hollandsworth

Popular cultural education program features bestselling true crime book

Now entering its tenth year, **LAKE TRAVIS READS 2017** will feature the new book by Skip Hollandsworth, *The Midnight Assassin: Panic, Scandal, and the Hunt for America's First Serial Killer*. The narrative history details a series of gruesome murders in Austin in the mid-1880s that were never solved. Hollandsworth, who lives in Dallas with his wife and daughter, has been praised for his in-depth research and ability to give equal attention to history and the grisly details that make the story so gripping.

The murders were sensational at a time when news was beginning to travel faster across the country and the open spaces of Texas were becoming more heavily populated. The killer struck women, mostly with an ax blow to the head. African-American servant women were the first victims, but after a year, the killer began attacking socially prominent white women. Pressure grew on the Austin mayor, police, and the Texas governor to solve the case. Top detectives from Houston and Chicago were called in to assist and bloodhounds were dispatched, all to no avail. When Jack the Ripper stories began circulating in London, newspapers at the time even speculated that Austin's killer had moved across the Atlantic. Hollandsworth details his obsession with the crimes and his relentless search for information in train records, ship manifests, and prison records of the era, as well as interviews with descendants of the people involved. In an interview with *The Houston Post*, the author lamented that we may never know the identity of the killer: "It just seems impossible to believe that there is no way that we will ever know who the Midnight Assassin was. Austin only had 17,000 people [at the time]; how did nobody know who he was?"

Hollandsworth also co-wrote the screenplay for the feature film *Bernie* with Richard Linklater, who directed the 2011 black comedy that starred Jack Black as Bernie Tiede, confessed murderer of 80-year-old millionaire Marjorie Nugent in Carthage, Texas. He is the Executive Editor of Texas Monthly and has been a finalist four times for a National Magazine Award, the magazine industry's equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize.

The community is invited to hear Hollandsworth speak at the 2017 **LAKE TRAVIS READS** "Evening with the Author" on Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at Lake Travis Community Library, located at 1938 Lohmans Crossing Road in Lakeway. The event is free and open to the public. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing.

LAKE TRAVIS READS is a "One Book, One Community" program co-sponsored by Bee Cave Public Library, Lake Travis Community Library, and Spicewood Community Library that encourages the community to read the featured title and then meet the author at a special evening event. Copies of the featured book are available at the libraries for checkout in a variety of formats including print, audio, and digital.

For more information, visit www.laketravisreads.org or any of the participating libraries.