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GettyOne half of the infamous "Toolbox Killers," Lawrence Bittaker laughs in court as his crimes are recounted. The deprayed duo became known as the "Toolbox Killers." Using devices for torturing their victims more commonly found in the garage, Lawrence Bittaker and Roy Norris were a sadistically brutal pair of serial rapists and killers stalking
teenage girls across the Los Angeles area for five dark months in 1979. From their van, they picked up hitchhikers, driving them to secluded spots where they could indulge in their most gruesome rape and torture fantasies. Their crimes, particularly the Halloween torture and murder of Shirley Ledford, would cause FBI profiler John E. Douglas to
classify Bittaker as "the most disturbing individual for whom he has ever created a criminal profile." Finally arrested after a sickening five-month murder spree, the prosecutor in their trial would similarly describe the events of that Halloween night as "one of the most shocking, brutal cases in the history of American crime." The Origins Of The
Toolbox Killers Lawrence Sigmund Bittaker was born on Sept. 27, 1940, and adopted as an infant. By his early teens, he was sent to the California Youth Authority for car theft. Released at 19, he never saw his adoptive parents again. Over the next 15 years, Bittaker was in and out of prison for assault, burglary, and grand theft. He was diagnosed by
a prison psychiatrist as being highly manipulative, and as "having considerable concealed hostility." In 1974, Bittaker stabbed a supermarket employee, barely missing his heart, and was convicted of assault with a deadly weapon, then sentenced to California Men's Colony in San Luis Obispo. Roy Lewis Norris was born on Feb. 5, 1948, and lived with
his family occasionally, but was more often placed in the care of foster families. Norris allegedly suffered neglect by these families, and sexual abuse by at least one. Norris dropped out of high school, briefly joined the Navy, and was then honorably discharged with a diagnosis of severe schizoid personality by military psychologists. In May 1970,
Norris was on bail for another offense when he violently attacked a female student with a rock on the campus of San Diego State University. Charged for the offense, Norris served almost five years at Atascadero State University. Charged for the offense, Norris served almost five years at Atascadero State University.
others." Three months later, he raped a 27-year-old woman after dragging her into some bushes. In 1976, Norris was incarcerated in the same prison as Bittaker, bringing the future "Toolbox Killers" together. Why Bittaker And Norris Were A Match Made In Hell Flickr/Michael HendricksonCalifornia men's prison colony in San Luis Obispo. By 1978,
Lawrence Bittaker and Roy Norris had become close prison acquaintances, sharing a perverse obsession with sexual violence against women. Norris told Bittaker and terror, and Bittaker his biggest thrill was overwhelming women with sexual violence against women. Norris told Bittaker his biggest thrill was overwhelming women with sexual violence against women.
sexually assaulting and murdering teenage girls, both men pledged that they would reunite once released, and planned to murder one girl of each teenage year, 13 through 19. Bittaker was released in November 1978, and Norris followed on January 1979. Within a month, Norris had raped a woman. Then, as promised, Norris received a letter from
Bittaker, and the pair met and began to put their twisted prison plan into action. Abducting teenage girls discreetly wouldn't be easy; they needed a suitable vehicle. Bittaker purchased a silver 1977 GMC Vandura. The passenger-side sliding door would allow them to pull up to
potential victims without having to slide the door all the way. They nicknamed their van the "Murder Mac." The pair picked up over 20 hitchhikers from February to June 1979, but didn't assault these girls — rather, these were practice runs. Scouting for secure locations, in late April 1979, they found an isolated fire road in the San Gabriel Mountains.
Bittaker snapped the lock on the entry gate with a crowbar and replaced it with his own. according to the book Alone With The Devil by courtroom psychiatrist Ronald Markman. The Toolbox Killers' First Victims Public DomainRoy Norris, pictured around the time he and Lawrence Bittaker began plotting their depraved spree of rape, torture, and
murder. In final preparations, Lawrence Bittaker and Roy Norris created a toolbox for torture. They bought plastic tape, pliers, rope, knives, an ice pick, as well as a polaroid camera and tape recorder — then the Toolbox Killers were ready to indulge in their sadism. According to the book Disguise Of Sanity: Serial Mass Murders, Bittaker also wanted
to build a small town in which to imprison kidnapped teenage girls, where they would remain naked, chained, tortured, and forced into sex acts. Between late June and September 1979, the pair abducted, raped, and killed four teenage girls ranging in age from 13 to 17. They drove their victims to the mountain fire road where they inflicted pain from
their toolbox assortment, the girls' screams forever lost in the mountain canyons. After realizing manual strangulation wasn't as easy as the movies, Bittaker started using wire from a coat hanger tightened with pliers. The depravity increased for Andrea Hall, their second victim. Up in the mountains, Bittaker inserted an ice pick through her ear, then
tried the other side, and finally stomped on the handle until it snapped. Hall, miraculously still alive, was finally strangled by Bittaker, and when the pair were finished with her, they threw her over the mountainside. The level of terror, pain, and sexual assault was escalating for Bittaker and Norris' victims. The pair's evil would only be surpassed in
later years by serial killers Leonard Lake and Charles Ng. On September 2, two younger girls were snatched hitchhiking. Fifteen-year-old Jaqueline Gilliam was continually raped by both men as Bittaker recorded her horror. Bittaker took photos of her in various states of naked distress, tormenting Gilliam by asking for reasons why he shouldn't kill
her. Meanwhile, 13-year-old Leah Lamp was left untouched under sedation. After two days of terror, Bittaker thrust his ice pick through Gilliam's ear, then strangled her with his coat hanger and pliers. The Toolbox Killers then roused Lamp and bludgeoned her on the head with a sledgehammer as she stepped from the van. Bittaker choked her and
Norris struck her repeatedly with a hammer, with both girls' bodies finally thrown down a ravine. Shirley Ledford's Halloween Night Of Hell Ledford Family/Public DomainShirley Ledford, the final victim of the Toolbox Killers. The repeated rape, unspeakable brutality, and horrific torture that Lawrence Bittaker and Roy Norris inflicted on 16-year-old
Shirley Ledford was all recorded for their sick enjoyment. Late on Halloween night 1979, Ledford left her restaurant shift toward a party in a colleague's car. From a gas station, Ledford decided to walk or hitchhike home rather than go to the party, and she may have entered the van after recognizing Bittaker as a customer from the restaurant. With
Bittaker's tape recorder running, Ledford was immediately bound and gagged. For two hours, Ledford was immediately beat her with a sledgehammer, twisted, squeezed, and tore at her breasts and vagina with pliers, as both men
encouraged Ledford to scream louder for the tape. After Norris rained repeated hammer blows to her elbow, then strangled her with a coat hanger and pliers, Ledford can be heard begging for death, "Do it, just kill me!" When Bittaker and Norris had finished with her, Shirley Ledford's body was left in a grisly display on the front lawn of a nearby
house. How The Toolbox Killers Were Arrested GettyLawrence Bittaker takes the stand in his trial in 1981. Roy Norris revealed the pair's rapes and murders to another rapist he had been incarcerated with, including Ledford's murder—the only Toolbox victim yet to be found. Norris also confided that another woman had been raped by them but
released afterward. The man notified police via his attorney, and investigators matched reports of several teenage girls reported missing over the previous five months to Norris' claims. There was also the September 30 report of a young woman dragged into a GMC van and raped by two men in their mid-30s. The rape victim was shown mugshots and
positively identified Bittaker and Norris. Norris was arrested for a parole violation on November 20, 1979, with Bittaker arrested for rape at his motel the same day. The search of Norris' apartment revealed a bracelet of Ledford's, while in Bittaker arrested for rape at his motel the same day. The search of Norris' apartment revealed a bracelet of Ledford's, while in Bittaker arrested for rape at his motel the same day.
seized and searched Bittaker's silver van, where they seized several items, including several cassette tapes, one of which contained Ledford's mother confirmed it was her daughter on the recording, screaming, pleading, and begging for her life. Investigators confirmed it was her daughter on the tape belonged to Bittaker and Norris.
initially denied all accusations, then faced with the evidence, confessed to five murders. Norris seeking a plea deal, to testify against Bittaker, took investigators into the San Gabriel Mountains, where the skulls of Gilliam and Lamp were eventually found. Gilliam's skull still contained the lodged ice pick, and Lamp's skull showed blunt force trauma.
The Jury Hears The Tape Of Shirley Lynette Ledford's Horrible Death Roy Norris plead guilty, sparing him the death penalty, and on May 7, 1980, was sentenced to 45 years to life, with parole eligibility from 2010. Lawrence Bittaker's trial began on Jan. 19, 1981. Norris testified about their shared history, and the five murders committed by them.
Introducing photographic evidence, a witness from Bittaker's motel testified that he had been shown naked photos of distressed girls by Bittaker, and told one of them had been killed. Another 17-year-old girl testified that Bittaker had played her a cassette tape, apparently the rape of Gilliam, according to court records. Then the 17-minute audio of
Shirley Ledford was played for the jury, and many cried, burying their heads in their hands. Prosecutor Stephen Kay was reduced to tears — but Bittaker sat through the whole thing smiling. Norris had testified bittaker that amused himself, denying
rape and murder, stating he paid the girls for sex and permission to take their photographs. In closing, prosecutor Kay told the jury, "If the death penalty is not appropriate in this case, then when will it ever be?" On February 19, the jury found Bittaker guilty of five counts of first-degree murder, and several other charges, and on February 19,
Bittaker was sentenced to death. On death row, after various appeals and stays of execution, Bittaker never expressed any remorse for his crimes but did seem to revel in his celebrity, autographing items with the name "Pliers Bittaker." He died in San Quentin State Prison on Dec. 13, 2019. Norris died in prison of natural causes on Feb. 24, 2020. In
the aftermath of the Toolbox Killers' savagery, Stephen Kay reported recurring nightmares, according to The Daily Breeze. He would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to the girls but would be rushing to Bittaker's van to prevent harm coming to Bittaker's van to be a bittaker's va
reality of torture and murder. After learning about the Toolbox Killers, read the gruesome story of Junko Furuta. Then, discover the horrifying story of David Parker Ray, The Toybox Killers easily go down as two of the darkest, most disturbing serial
killers in American history. Armed with a specially enhanced van they nicknamed "Murder Mac" and a toolbox filled with pliers, ice picks, and more, Lawrence Bittaker and Roy Norris abducted young women, brought them into the San Gabriel Mountains in California, raped them, tortured them, and murdered them. In total, Bittaker and Norris killed
five women in a five-month span in 1979: Lucinda "Cindy" Schaefer, 16; Andrea Hall, 18; Jacqueline Gilliam, Lamp, and Ledford were all eventually found. But where are the bodies of Schaefer and Hall? That's the question
Laura Brand, a private investigator and one of the foremost experts on The Toolbox Killers, wants answered, she told the crowd at CrimeCon 2021, presented by Oxygen, during a panel entitled "What Hell Is Like: The Untold Story Of The Toolbox Killers," Brand spent several years interviewing Bittaker and Norris, and her interviews with Bittaker will
be the backbone of an upcoming Oxygen special about the sadistic murderer entitled "The Toolbox Killer." Ledford's body had been found because they disposed of her in plain sight: an ivy bed in a suburban neighborhood. The partial remains of Lamp and Gilliam were located in the mountains after Norris struck a deal to avoid the death penalty and
agreed to testify for the state and help authorities find the bodies. An ice pick was still embedded in Gilliam's skull when it was discovered, Brand started corresponding with the two men in 2014, and in 2018 (after her boyfriend kicked her out when she was seven and a half months
pregnant, she noted in the presentation,) Brand traveled to San Quentin Prison, where Bittaker was held on death row, to finally speak in person with him. He ended up drawing her a map of where he put Hall and Schaefer's bodies, as well as where he hid crucial evidence after he was tipped off to Norris' arrest, including the missing tape of Gilliam's
torture, Brand said. Brand's mission is to now get together the resources necessary to act on that map and find these bodies and evidence, as well as determine whether in "The Toolbox Killer," airing on Oxygen this fall. For more on Bittaker and Norris, including how they were
caught, check out Oxygen's digital evidence kit on The Toolbox Killers. When a rapist and a violent offender met in San Luis Obispo Men's Colony Prison, a deadly bond was forged. Lawrence Bittaker was serving time for stabbing a store clerk who accused him of shoplifting in 1974. Roy Norris was imprisoned for rape. They discovered a shared
interest in sadism and became friends, weaving stories of rape and torture and escalating fantasies. Once they got out, they acted on those plans - and murdered at least five teenage girls in California with unspeakable brutality. Bittaker and Norris were nicknamed the Toolbox Killers because they employed a wide array of instruments such as
screwdrivers, icepicks and pliers to inflict pain and death. If the pair hadn't been caught, however, the horrific crimes could have escalated even further, according to a criminologist who formed a relationship with Bittaker in the hopes of gleaning the locations of missing victims' bodies. Laura Brand, who specializes in the study of serial killers,
conducted interviews with Bittaker which inform a new documentary, The Toolbox Killer, currently streaming on various platforms. Criminologist Laura Brand interviewed over 50 serial killers, but I mean, this case just stopped me dead in my
tracks," Ms Brand, 33, tells The Independent. "I had first read about it in college, and I dropped the book out of my hand ... I was like, 'Oh my god, are these guys even human?' "That was my first thought, because they're like putting an ice pick in these innocent girls' ears up in the mountains after they had just abducted them in a van." Bittaker and
Norris killed their victims over a five-month period, kidnapping the teens - some of whom were walking home or hitchhiking at the time - and driving them to local mountains, where they would torture, rape and kill them, according to authorities. The girls ranged from 13 to 18 years old and, in addition to their horrific torture techniques, the men
filmed the crimes - which began in June 1979 with the death of Lucinda Lynn Schaefer, 16. She was followed by Andrea Joy Hall, 18; Jacqueline Doris Gilliam, 15; Jacqueline Leah Lamp, 13, and Shirley Lynette Ledford, 16. They were only caught after Norris told another former inmate about their devious exploits. That inmate told police, which led to
the pair's arrests. Norris eventually testified against Bittaker after pleading guilty to all charges in exchange for prosecutors not seeking the death penalty against him. A Los Angeles County jury convicted Bittaker of five counts of murder, five counts of kidnapping as well as other charges including criminal conspiracy, rape, oral copulation, sodomy
and being an ex-felon in possession of a firearm. He was sentenced to death on 22 March1981 but, since California avoided executions for decades, instead died in prison in 2019. Norris was sentenced to a term of 45 years to life and died two months later. Despite extensive searches of the San Gabriel mountains, where the other victims were located,
the bodies of Ms Hall and Ms Schaefer were never found. That's why criminologist Ms Brand reached out to imprisoned Bittaker. She hoped he could give her more specific details of where the teenagers had been left after their brutal attacks - and she was motivated by a personal tragedy. "Right after my 27th birthday, my best friend was murdered,"
she tells The Independent. "Right after she was murdered, the first thing I said to the detectives was, 'Did she suffer?' That's all I wanted to know. And they were like, 'She didn't suffer' - and I just keep thinking, Bittaker and Norris's victims [families], they never, ever got that solace from the detectives. 'Bittaker, one of the most sadistic serial killers
in US history, sent notes and drawings to Ms Brand in addition to their interviews (Laura Brand)When she first contacted Bittaker, he "rebuffed" those overtures, she tells The Independent. "He wouldn't even send me a visiting form. The only reason I even
got into the prison with him [was] I had to finagle with the other serial killers inside of San Quentin ... and said a Hail Mary that he would even come down, because he could still say no." Bittaker materalised, however, and she was "shocked" - not only because he
agreed to speak with her but because he was "not what you would expect at all.""He was so shy and timid, and he wouldn't even look me in the eyes for a good two hours," she tells The Independent. "I kept thinking in my head, 'Is this really a serial killer?'"His demeanor was "almost sheepish," Ms Brand says. "I couldn't believe this was like the
nation's most sadistic serial killer just sitting in front of me."The "matter-of-fact" answers he gave her regarding the brutal crimes, however, certainly provided insights. Criminologist Laura Brand reached out to serial killer Bittaker in jail hoping to glean information about the locations of victims' bodies (Laura Brand) "One of the most jarring things I
ever heard was [when] I asked him the question: 'Why are you a serial killer, and why am I not a serial killer, What's the difference between us?'" she tells The Independent. "And he just looked at me point-blank and he's like, 'Well, do you want to kill?' I said, 'No.' Bittaker told her: "That's your answer right there ... Some people want to eat broccoli;
some people don't.""He made it so simplistic, but it gave me such chills how directly he said it right to me," Ms Brand tells The Independent. When a tape of Shirley Lynette Ledford was played in court, both jurors and lawyers cried. "Everybody who has ever heard that tape has had it affect their lives," prosecutor Stephen Kay, weeping, told reporters
during recess. "I just picture those girls, how alone they were when they died." Ms Brand felt similarly. "What they were doing to her was beyond barbaric," she tells The Independent. "I've heard the 30 seconds of the tape ... and it's just her screaming. "It's a visceral reaction, because you're hearing a real-life scream. It's so much different than what
you'd hear in a horror movie. You can feel it in your gut when you're hearing the screams." Before his death, convicted serial killer Bittaker and Norris was on "another level," she says - and strangely hard to reconcile with the timid man
before her in San Quentin, especially in his final days. "I'll never forget, he was sitting there shaking and crying in front of me, and he's like, 'You're scared of getting an IV and you put icepicks through girls' ears? I couldn't even hold back. I just said it
straight out to him, because it seemed so ridiculous to me ... crying over that, after what he did."She last met with him about three weeks before his death and continued to press him on details about where several unlocated bodies might be - particularly Ms Schaefer and Ms Hall. But they're not the only ones Ms Brand believes are out
the mail for 15 months," Ms Brand tells The Independent. "Then, at the very end, I saw him about three weeks before he died, too." She says she hopes that information will lead to the discovery of other victims and comfort for their families. Bittaker "could've died and taken this all the to
grave with him if I had not gone and spoken with him prior," she says. This article is about the serial killers known as the Toolbox Murders (1978) and Toolbox Murders (2004). American serial killers and rapists known as the Tool Box Killers Lawrence
Box Killers, were two American serial killers and rapists who committed the kidnapping, rape, torture and murder of five teenage girls in Southern California over a five-month period in 1979.[4]:19 Described by FBI special agent John Edward Douglas as the most disturbing individual for whom he has ever created a criminal profile,[5]:135 Bittaker
thirty years. He died of natural causes at California Medical Facility in February 2020.[8] Bittaker and Norris became known as the "Tool Box Killers" because the majority of instruments used to torture and murder their victims, such as pliers, ice picks and sledgehammers, were items normally stored inside a household toolbox.[4]:19 Lawrence
Sigmund Bittaker was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on September 27, 1940, as the unwanted child of a couple who had chosen to not have children.[9]:84 He was placed in an orphanage by his birth mother and was adopted as an infant.[10] Bittaker's adoptive father worked in the aviation industry, which required the family to frequently move
around the United States throughout his childhood.[11] Bittaker was first arrested for shoplifting at the age of 12 and obtained a minor criminal record over the next four years after further arrests for the same offense—in addition to petty theft—which brought him to the attention of juvenile authorities. Bittaker would later claim these numerous
theft-related offenses committed throughout his adolescence had been attempts to compensate for the lack of love he received from his parents.[12]:250 Although reported to have an IQ of 138,[13] Bittaker considered school to be a tedious experience and dropped out of high school in 1957.[9]:257 By this stage in his adolescence, he and his
adoptive parents were living in California. Within a year of dropping out, he had been arrested for car theft, a hit and run, and evading arrest.[12]:250 For these offenses he was imprisoned at the California Youth Authority, where he remained until he was 18 years old.[12]:250 Upon release, Bittaker discovered that his adoptive parents had
lived within a short distance of his parents' home due to his grandfather's real estate investments.[9]:74 His father worked in a scrapyard and his mother was a drug-addicted housewife. He occasionally lived with his parents throughout the state of
Colorado.[5]: 136 Norris's childhood recollections were interspersed with memories of wrongful accusations while living with his biological parents, and of being neglected by many of the foster families he lived with, frequently being denied sufficient food or clothing.[14]: 140 He also claimed to have been sexually abused when in the care of a
Hispanic family, later stating the prejudice he held toward Hispanic people originated from the neglect and abuse he endured as a child when placed in the care of this family.[5]:136 While living with his birth parents at the age of 16, Norris visited the home of a female relative who was in her early twenties and began speaking to her in a sexually
suggestive manner. She ordered him to leave her house and informed Norris's father, who threatened to subject him to a beating. Norris subsequently stole his father arm. [9]: 76 He was later apprehended as a runaway, and
returned to live with his parents. Upon his return home, Norris's parents informed him that he and his younger sister were unwanted children and that they intended to divorce when both reached adolescence. [9]: 77 A year later, Norris dropped out of school and joined the United States Navy. He was stationed in San Diego in 1965 and was deployed
to serve in the Vietnam War in 1969, although he did not see active combat during his four-month tour of duty.[9]:66 Within days of his parole from the California Youth Authority, Bittaker was arrested for transporting a stolen vehicle across state lines.[12]:250 In August
1959, Bittaker was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment, to be served in the Oklahoma State Reformatory. He was later transferred to the medical center for federal prisoners in Springfield, Missouri, to serve the remainder of his sentence. [12]: 250-251 In 1960, Bittaker was released from prison and soon reverted to crime. Within months of
his release, he had been arrested in Los Angeles for robbery and, in May 1961, was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. While incarcerated for this robbery, he was characterized by a psychiatrist as being highly manipulative. The psychiatrist also described Bittaker as "having considerable concealed hostility."[12]:251 Bittaker was released on
parole in 1963 after completing two years of his sentence. In October 1964, he was again imprisoned for parole violation. In 1966, Bittaker underwent further examinations by two independent psychiatrists, both of whom classified him as a borderline psychopath: a highly manipulative individual unable to acknowledge the consequences of his actions
[12]:251-252 Bittaker explained to one of them that his criminal activities gave him a feeling of self-importance, although he insisted circumstantial matters pertaining to his environment and upbringing decreased his ability to resist committing crimes. Bittaker explained to one of them that his criminal activities gave him a feeling of self-importance, although he insisted circumstantial matters pertaining to his environment and upbringing decreased his ability to resist committing crimes.
society.[12]:251-252 A month after his parole in July 1967, Bittaker was again arrested and convicted of theft and of leaving the scene of an accident. He was sentenced to five years but was released in April 1970. In March 1971, Bittaker was again arrested for burglary. Due to repeated parole violations, he was sentenced to serve between six
months and fifteen years imprisonment in October 1971.[12]:251 Three years later, Bittaker was again released from prison.[12]:251 In 1974, Bittaker was arrested for assault with attempt to commit murder, after he stabbed a young supermarket employee who had accused him of stealing. The supermarket employee had observed Bittaker stealing.
a steak and had followed Bittaker outside and into the store's parking lot, where he asked Bittaker whether he had forgotten to pay. Bittaker responded by stabbing his pursuer in the chest, narrowly missing his heart. He attempted to flee but was quickly restrained by two other supermarket employees.[15] The employee, Gary Louie, survived the
stabbing, and Bittaker was convicted of the lesser charge of assault with a deadly weapon[16]:174 and sent to California Men's Colony in San Luis Obispo.[12]:252 In November 1969, Norris was arrested for his first known sexual offenses: he was charged with both rape and assault with intent to commit rape.[12]:253 In the latter incident, he had
attempted to force his way into the car of a lone woman. Three months later, in February 1970, Norris attempted to deceive a lone woman into allowing him to enter her home. When the woman refused, he attempted to break into her house; the woman into allowing him to enter her home. When the woman into allowing him to enter her home. When the woman refused, he attempted to break into her house; the woman into allowing him to enter her home.
harm.[12]:253 Less than three months after this offense, Norris was diagnosed by military psychologists with schizoid personality disorder.[12]:253[17] He was given an administrative discharge from the Navy under terms labeled as psychologists with schizoid personality disorder.[12]:253[17] In May 1970, Norris—on bail for his latest offense—attacked a female student
whom he had been stalking on the grounds of the San Diego State University campus. Norris repeatedly struck her on the back of the head with a rock until she slumped to her knees before he repeatedly beat her head against the sidewalk as he knelt upon her lower back. Shortly thereafter, Norris was charged with assault with a deadly weapon; he
was committed to five years' imprisonment at Atascadero State Hospital, where he was classified as a mentally disordered sex offender.[18]:85 Norris was released from the Atascadero State Hospital in 1975, with five years' probation, having been declared by doctors as an individual who was of "no further danger to others".[12]:254[17] Just three
months after his release, Norris approached a 27-year-old woman walking home from a restaurant in Redondo Beach and offered her a ride on his motorcycle. When she declined, Norris parked his motorcycle and grabbed the woman's scarf, twisting it around her neck, before informing her he intended to rape her[12]:254 and dragging her into
nearby bushes. Fearing for her life, the woman did not resist the rape was reported to police, they were initially unable to find the perpetrator. However, one month later, the victim observed Norris' motorcycle and noted the license number, which she immediately gave to police. Norris was arrested for the rape; one year
later, he was tried and convicted for this offense[12]:264 and sent to California Men's Colony, where Bittaker and Norris first became acquainted, discovering a common interest in sexual violence Bittaker and Norris initially became loosely
acquainted in 1977, one year after Norris arrived at San Luis Obispo. Bittaker's initial impression of Norris upon his arrival at California Men's Colony was that he was a savvy individual who largely associated with hardened criminals from motorcycle gangs, in addition to dealing in contraband drugs.[19]:44 The pair gradually became more closely
acquainted and began talking in friendly terms when Norris taught Bittaker how to construct jewelry.[19]:44 According to Norris, Bittaker saved him from being attacked by fellow inmates on at least two occasions. By 1978,[12]:253 the pair had become close acquaintances; discovering they shared an interest in sexual violence and misogyny, with
Norris also divulging to Bittaker the biggest stimulation for him was of seeing frightened young women, adding this was the primary reason he had amassed a lengthy record for sexual offenses. [19]: 42 Bittaker—who is not known to have committed any sexual offenses prior to his meeting Norris—himself divulged to Norris that if he ever raped a
woman, he would kill her so as not to leave a witness to the crime.[12]:254 When alone, the pair regularly discussed plans to assault and murder teenage girls after they were released. This shared fantasy evolved into an elaborate plan to murder one girl of each teenage year from 13 through 19.[17] The pair vowed to become reacquainted once they
were released.[20]:60 Bittaker was released from California Men's Colony on October 15, 1978; he returned to Los Angeles and found work as a skilled machinist. This work earned Bittaker close to $1,000 a week (the equivalent of about $4,800 as of 2025[update]), and despite classifying himself as a loner, he became friendly with several people in
his neighborhood,[19]:44 earning a reputation as a generous and helpful individual who occasion, he is known to have purchased large quantities of fast food and wine which he then handed to homeless individuals in downtown Los Angeles.[9]:85 Bittaker was particularly popular
among the local teenagers, and later admitted the primary reason he always had beer and marijuana in his Burbank motel was that his residence would remain a popular place for teenagers to socialize. [19]:44 On January 15, 1979, three months after Bittaker was released from California Men's Colony, Norris was also released from prison and moved
into his mother's home in Redondo Beach. Within one month of his release, he had raped a woman whom he then simply abandoned in a desert.[21] He soon found employment as an electrician in Compton.[9]:85 Shortly thereafter, he received a letter from Bittaker.[12]:255 In late-February, the pair met at a hotel and rekindled their plan to kidnap
and rape girls.[12]:255 The GMC Vandura van Bittaker and Norris purchased to use when committing their abduct teenage girls, Bittaker decided they would need a van as opposed to a car. With financial assistance from Norris,[5]:136 Bittaker purchased a silver-gray 1977 GMC Vandura in February 1979. The
vehicle was windowless on one side and had a large passenger-side sliding door. According to Bittaker, when viewing this sliding door, he realized he or Norris could "pull up [to a teenage girl] real close and not have to open the doors all the way."[12]:255 The pair would nickname this van "Murder Mac".[22]:160 From February to June 1979,
Bittaker and Norris picked up over twenty female hitchhikers.[12]:255 The pair did not assault these girls in any manner: these practice runs were merely a way for them to develop ruses to lure girls into the van voluntarily and of discovering secluded locations.[12]:255 In late-April, the pair found an isolated fire road in the San Gabriel Mountains
Bittaker broke open the locked gate with a crowbar and replaced the lock with one he owned.[12]:255-256 Lucinda Lynn Schaefer, on June 24, 1979.[23] Schaefer was last seen leaving a fellowship meeting at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Redondo Beach.[24][25]:
231 In his written accounts of the events of this day, Bittaker stated he and Norris first finished constructing the bed the pair had installed in the rear of the van, beneath which they placed tools, clothes, and a cooler filled with beer and soft drinks. At approximately 11 a.m., the pair drove to "the beach area, drinking beer, smoking grass, and flirting
with girls. We had no set routine."[12]:256 At approximately 7:46 p.m.,[26] Norris spotted Schaefer walking down a side street toward her grandmother's home and remarked to Bittaker, "There's a cute little blonde."[12]:256 After unsuccessfully attempting to entice Schaefer into their van with alternative offers of marijuana and a lift home, Bittaker
and Norris drove further ahead and parked alongside a driveway. Norris then exited the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the door. When Schaefer passed the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the door. When Schaefer passed the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the door. When Schaefer passed the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van, with his head and shoulders obscured from view behind the van and the 
door. Using a ruse they would repeat in most of their subsequent murders, Bittaker turned the radio to full volume as Norris bound the victim's arms and legs and gagged her with duct tape as Bittaker drove Schaefer to the fire road in the San Gabriel Mountains where, in April, the pair had previously switched the locks.[12]:257 Despite initially
screaming when she was abducted, Schaefer quickly regained her composure. In his written account of the conditions of which she had no control. She shed no tears, offered no resistance, and expressed no great concern for
her safety ... I guess she knew what was coming."[12]:257 At the fire road, Norris first raped Schaefer after instructing Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van, Bittaker to "go take a walk" and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van and return in one hour. Upon returning to the van and return in one hour. Upon return in one hour. U
him whether they intended to kill her, to which Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, end to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before she was killed if that was Bittaker and Norris replied, "No." In response, Schaefer requested to be allowed time to pray before the pray
than release her: each stated the other argued that they should kill her.[12]:259 In any event, Schaefer pleaded for "only a second, to pray,"[5]:137 before Norris attempted to manually strangle her. After approximately 45 seconds, he became disturbed at "the look in her eyes"[2] and ran to the front of the van, vomiting. Bittaker then manually
strangled Schaefer until she collapsed to the ground and began convulsing. He then twisted a wire coat hanger around her neck with Vise-Grip pliers until Schaefer's body was wrapped in a plastic shower curtain and thrown over a
Pacific Coast Highway.[12]:258 As the pair slowed the van to offer Hall a lift, another vehicle from a distance until Hall exactly that, which she accepted. Bittaker and Norris followed the van in order to dupe Hall into believing
Bittaker was traveling alone. Inside the van, Bittaker offered Hall a cold drink from the cooler in the rear of the van, Pounced on Hall when she attempted to retrieve the drink and, after a strenuous fight, managed to subdue her by twisting her arm behind her back, causing her to
scream in pain. Norris then gagged Hall with adhesive tape and bound her wrists and ankles. [29] Bittaker and Norris drove Hall to a location, she was raping Hall for the second time, Norris drove Hall to a location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location, she was raping Hall for the second time, Norris drove Hall to a location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location, she was raping Hall for the second time, Norris drove Hall to a location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location in the San Gabriel Mountains beyond where they had earlier taken Schaefer. At this location is the second time, the second time is the second time.
saw what he believed to be vehicle headlights approaching. Bittaker clasped his hand over Hall's mouth and dragged her into nearby bushes as Norris drove to a location farther in the San Gabriel Mountains. Bittaker forced Hall to walk uphill naked
alongside the road and to then perform oral sex on him, before ordering Hall to pose for several Polaroid pictures. [12]: 259 Bittaker and Norris drove to a nearby hill, this time as Norris drove to a nearby store to purchase alcohol. When Norris returned, Bittaker was alone and in possession of
two further Polaroid pictures he had taken,[27] both of which depicted Hall's face in expressions Norris later described as being of "sheer terror" as she begged for her life to be spared.[9]:88 Bittaker informed Norris that he had told Hall he was going to kill her and challenged her to give him as many reasons as she could come up with as to why she
should be allowed to live, before thrusting an ice pick through her ear into her body over and thrust the ice pick into her body off a cliff. [12]: 258-259 Jackie Doris Gilliam On September 3, Bittaker and Norris observed two
girls named Jackie Doris Gilliam and Jacqueline Leah Lamp sitting on a bus stop bench near Hermosa Beach. Lamp and Gilliam had been hitchhiking along the Pacific Coast Highway before Bittaker and Norris observed them as they were resting at the bus stop. Bittaker and Norris offered the girls a ride, which Gilliam and Lamp accepted. Inside the
van, both girls were offered marijuana by Norris, which they accepted.[12]:259 Shortly after entering the van, both girls realized that Bittaker and Norris attempted to allay the girls' concerns with
excuses, which did not deceive either girl. Lamp, aged 13, attempted to open the sliding door, whereupon Norris hit her on the back of the head with a bag filled with lead weights, [15] briefly knocking her unconscious, before overpowering 15-year-old Gilliam. As he began to bind and gag Gilliam, Lamp regained consciousness and again attempted to
flee the van, whereupon Norris twisted her arm behind her back and dragged her back into the van. As this struggle ensued, Bittaker—noting the girls' struggle was in full view of potential witnesses—stopped the van, punched Gilliam and Lamp were driven
to the San Gabriel Mountains, where they were held captive for almost two days,[12]:260 being bound and gagged between repeated instances of sexual and physical abuse. Both men slept in the van alongside their two hostages, with each alternately acting as a lookout. On one occasion, Bittaker walked Lamp onto a nearby hill and forced her to
pose for pornographic pictures before returning her to the van. Bittaker also asked Norris to take several Polaroid pictures of himself and Gilliam, both nude and clothed. In the first of three instances in which Bittaker raped Gilliam, both nude and clothed. In the first of three instances in which Bittaker raped Gilliam, both nude and clothed. In the first of three instances in which Bittaker raped Gilliam, both nude and clothed. In the first of three instances in which Bittaker raped Gilliam, both nude and clothed. In the first of three instances in which Bittaker raped Gilliam, both nude and clothed. In the first of three instances in which Bittaker raped Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, both nude and clothed. In the first of three instances in which Bittaker raped Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam, be also created a tape recording of himself and Gilliam and Gil
 informing Gilliam to feel free to express her pain. [n 1] Bittaker is also known to have tortured Gilliam by stabbing her breasts with an ice pick and using vise grip pliers to tear off part of one nipple. [31] After almost two days of captivity, Lamp and Gilliam were murdered. At Bittaker is subsequent trial, Norris claimed he had suggested that Gilliam be
killed quickly as, unlike Lamp, she had been largely cooperative throughout the period of her captivity, whereupon Bittaker replied, "No, they only die once anyway." Gilliam was struck in each ear with an ice pick, and then strangled to death.[19]:41 After Bittaker had murdered Gilliam, he then forced Lamp out of the van. Upon exiting the sliding
door, Bittaker shouted to her: "You wanted to stay a virgin; now you can die a virgin!"[25]:232 before Norris struck her upon the head with a sledgehammer. Bittaker then strangled Lamp until he believed she had died; when Lamp opened her eyes,[12]:260 Norris again bludgeoned her repeatedly as Bittaker strangled her to death.[31] The bodies of
Gilliam and Lamp were thrown over an embankment into the chaparral.[31] Bittaker and Norris abducted their final victim, 16-year-old Shirley Lynette Ledford, on October 31, 1979. Ledford was abducted as she stood outside a gas station,[9]: 252 hitchhiking home from a Halloween party in the suburban Sunland-Tujunga neighborhood of Los
Angeles. Investigators believe Ledford accepted a ride home from Bittaker, as he is known to have frequented the McDonald's restaurant in which Ledford was offered marijuana by Norris, which
she refused.[3] Bittaker drove the van to a secluded street, where Norris drew a knife, then bound and gagged Ledford with construction tape.[12]:258 Bittaker remained with Ledford in the back of the van. After removing the construction tape from
the girl's mouth and legs, Bittaker tormented Ledford: initially slapping and mocking her, then beating her with his fists as he repeatedly shouted for her to "scream louder". As Ledford continued screaming, Bittaker began asking her as he struck her: "What's the matter? Don't
you like to scream?"[12]:261 As Ledford began to cry, she pleaded with Bittaker, repeatedly saying, "No, don't touch me." In response, Bittaker again ordered her to scream as loud as she wished, then began alternately striking her with a hammer, beating her breasts with his fists[25]:232 and torturing her with pliers both between and throughout
instances when he raped and sodomized her. Repeatedly, Ledford can be heard pleading for the abuse to cease and making statements such as, "Oh no! No!"[12]:262 as sounds of Bittaker alternately extracting either the sledgehammer or the pliers from the toolbox can be heard on a tape recording he made after entering the rear of the van. Norris
later described hearing "screams ... constant screams" emanating from the rear of the van as he drove.[3] Shortly after Norris switched on the time he had been in the rear of the van with Ledford.[27] Norris first shouted for Ledford to: "Go ahead and
scream or I'll make you scream."[12]:262 In response, Ledford pleaded, "I'll scream if you stop hitting me," then emitted several high-pitched screams as Norris then reached for the sledgehammer as Ledford—seeing him do this—screamed, "Oh no!" Norris then struck Ledford
 once upon the left elbow. In response, she informed Norris he had broken her elbow, before pleading, "Don't hit me again."[12]:262-263 In response, Norris then proceeded to strike Ledford 25 consecutive times upon the same elbow with the sledgehammer, before asking
her, "What are you sniveling about?" as Ledford continuously screamed and wept.[9]:252 We've all heard women scream in horror films ... still, we know that no-one is really screaming. Why? Simply because an actress can't produce some sounds that convince us that something vile and heinous is happening. If you ever heard that tape, there is just
no possible way that you'd not begin crying and trembling. I doubt you could listen to more than a full sixty seconds of it. Roy Norris, describing his recollections of the audio tape the pair had created of Shirley Ledford's rape and torture. April 1997.[9]:82 After approximately two hours of captivity, Norris killed Ledford by strangling her with a wire
coat hanger, which he tightened with pliers.[32] Ledford did not react much to the act of strangulation, although she died with her eyes open.[9]:89 Bittaker then opted to discard her body on a random lawn in order to view the reaction from the press. The pair drove to a randomly selected house in Sunland where Norris discarded Ledford's body in a
bed of ivy upon the front lawn. Ledford's body was found by a jogger the following morning. An autopsy revealed that, in addition to having been sexually violated, she had died of strangulation after receiving extensive blunt-force trauma to the face, head, breasts, and left elbow, with her olecranon sustaining multiple fractures. Her genitalia and
rectum had been torn, caused in part by Bittaker having inserted pliers inside her body.[25]: 233-234 In addition, her left hand bore a puncture would later claim the tape recording the pair had created of Ledford's clear abuse and torture offered nothing other than the
evidence of a threesome, adding that, toward the very end, Ledford was screaming for him and Norris to kill her.[5]:139 In November 1979, Norris became reacquainted with a friend named Joseph Jackson, an individual with whom he had previously been incarcerated at California Men's Colony.[5]:146 Norris confided in Jackson regarding his and
Bittaker's exploits over the previous five months, including graphic details of the murder of Shirley Ledford (the only victim whose body had been found at this time).[14]:143 Norris also divulged to Jackson that, in addition to the five murders he and Bittaker had
abducted or attempted to abduct young women who had either escaped their attackers or, in one instance, had actually been raped, but released, [25]:226 Upon hearing Norris's confessions. Jackson consulted his attorney, who advised him to inform authorities, [12]:264 Jackson agreed, and he and his attorney informed the Los Angeles Police
Department, who in turn relayed the two men to the Hermosa Beach police.[12]: 264 A Hermosa Beach detective named Paul Bynum was assigned to investigate Jackson had occurred between June and October.[12]: 264 Bynum initially
noted that Jackson's statements as to Norris's confessions did match reports on file of several teenage girls who had been reported missing over the previous five months.[12]:264 In addition, the incident Norris had confided to Jackson where he claimed he and Bittaker had sprayed mace in the face of a woman, who had then been dragged into
Bittaker's GMC van and raped by both men, matched a report filed in relation to an incident that occurred on September 30. In this filed report, a young woman named Robin Robeck had been sprayed in her face with mace before being dragged into a van and raped by two Caucasian men in their mid-30s, before being released. [12]:263 Although
Robeck had reported the abduction and rape to police, they had been unable to identify her assailants.[12]:263-264 Bynum dispatched an investigator to visit Robeck at her residence in Oregon, to show her a series of mug shots. Without hesitation, Robeck positively identified two photos presented to her as those of the men who had kidnapped and
raped her on September 30. The two individuals she identified were Bittaker and Norris to the rape of Robin Robeck, the Hermosa Beach police placed Norris to the rape of Robin Robeck, the Hermosa Beach police placed Norris to the rape of Robin Robeck, the Hermosa Beach police placed Norris was arrested by the Hermosa
Beach police for parole violation. The same day, at the Burbank motel where he resided, Bittaker was arrested for the rape of Robin Robeck. [35] Mug shots of Bittaker and Norris, she was unable to positively identify her
assailants in a police lineup.[33] Nonetheless, police had observed Norris dealing in marijuana, whereas Bittaker had been in possession of drugs at the time of his arrest. Both were held on charges of parole violation.[36]:30 A search of Bittaker's apartment revealed several Polaroid photographs which were determined as depicting Hall and Gilliam—
both of whom had been reported as missing earlier the same year. Inside Bittaker's van, investigators discovered a sledgehammer, a plastic bag filled with lead weights, a book detailing how to locate police radio frequencies, [27] a jar of Vaseline, two necklaces (later confirmed as belonging to two of the victims), and a tape recording of a young
woman in obvious distress, [37] screaming and repeatedly pleading for mercy while being tortured and sexually abused. [33][38] The mother of Ledford—named by Jackson as being that of her only daughter; the voices of the two men
mocking and threatening Ledford in the process of her torture and abuse were identified as being Roy Norris and Lawrence Bittaker glanned to use these acidic materials upon their next victim.)[31] Inside Norris's apartment
police discovered a bracelet he had taken from Ledford's body as a souvenir. Also found at the homes of both Bittaker and Norris were Polaroid pictures of almost 500 teenage girls and young women, most of which had apparently been taken at Redondo Beach, [19]:41 with others taken by Bittaker at a Burbank high school. Most
of these pictures had been taken without the girls' knowledge or consent.[33][19]:41 On November 30, 1979, Norris attended a preliminary hearing in relation to the September 30 rape. By this stage, Norris was beginning to display visible signs of stress.[12]:265 At the hearing, Norris waived his Miranda rights before Detective Bynum and Deputy
District Attorney Stephen Kay began questioning him, initially in relation to the evidence recovered from his and Bittaker's residences. [12]: 264-265 Initially, Norris denied any involvement in any murders, rapes or disappearances; however, when
confronted with the evidence investigators had compiled, Norris began to confess, although he did attempt to portray Bittaker as being more culpable in the murders than himself. In what Bynum and Kay later described as a "casual, unconcerned manner," [12]:266 Norris divulged that he and Bittaker had been in the habit of driving around areas
such as the Pacific Coast Highway and randomly approaching girls whom they found attractive with offers of a ride, posing with the pair for photographs, [33] or marijuana. Most of those whom they approached rejected whatever given ruse Bittaker and Norris used to entice them into the van, although four girls had accepted lifts from the pair and
had been murdered, with a fifth victim—their first—being grabbed by force.[12]:257 Rear view of the GMC Vandura van Bittaker and Norris used to abduct their victims Inside the van, the girls would typically be overpowered, bound hand and foot, gagged, and driven to locations deep within the San Gabriel Mountains, where they would be sexually
assaulted by both men, then usually killed by strangulation with a wire coat hanger, although two of the victims had had ice picks driven into their ears before being strangled. Norris admitted to bludgeoning their youngest victim, Lamp, about the head with a sledgehammer as Bittaker strangled her, and admitted to repeatedly striking Shirley
Ledford upon the elbow with a sledgehammer before strangling her to death. The bottles of acid found at Bittaker's motel, Norris stated, were intended for use upon the next victims "for fun".[16]: 184 According to Norris, the level of brutality Bittaker
had exhibited toward their victims had increased on each successive instance they had lured a girl into the van; their final victim, Ledford, had actually pleaded to be killed in order that her agony could cease. Additional details by Norris provided further corroborating evidence to support his confessions. For example, he knew that their first victim,
Schaefer, had left a meeting at a Presbyterian Church shortly before she was abducted and that Schaefer had lost one shoe as she had been dragged into Bittaker had unsuccessfully asked her to date him prior to October 1979.[9]:85 In a press statement
relating to the police investigation into the murders issued on February 7, 1980, Los Angeles County Sheriff Peter Pitchess also stated that, in relation to the
Polaroid pictures found in Bittaker and Norris's apartments, police had located 60 of the young women depicted in the pictures as being individuals who had been reported missing,[41]:718 and that these teenage girls
and young women may well have been murdered. [42] although Pitchess did stress that they had no conclusive evidence to suggest that these additional 19 women photographed had fallen victim to Bittaker and Norris. [43] One of the Polaroid pictures seized from Bittaker and Norris depicts an unidentified young white woman, alone with Bittaker and
Norris, in circumstances very similar to the pictures found depicting known victims Hall, Lamp, and Gilliam. The young woman in the pictures has never been identified. This photograph is indicative there may have been one further victim[25]:234 whom neither bittaker or Norris ever mentioned to investigators.[19]:42 The San Gabriel Mountains.
Bittaker and Norris murdered and discarded the bodies of four of their victims at this location. Norris agreed to return to the San Gabriel Mountains to search for the bodies of the girls to whose abduction and murder he had confessed to
assisting in. In each instance, Norris brought detectives to the area where he and Bittaker had disposed of their victims' bodies of Schaefer and Hall had been discarded, their bodies were never found. [32] On February 9, 1980, [44] the skeletonized bodies of Lamp and Gilliam were
found at the bottom of a canyon, alongside a dry river bed.[12]:266 The bodies were scattered over an area measuring hundreds of feet in diameter. An ice pick was still lodged in the skull of Gilliam;[12]:260 the skull of Lamp bore multiple indentations—evidence of the numerous hammer blows Norris had stated he inflicted.[45] In February 1980,
Norris and Bittaker were formally charged with the murders of the five girls.[46] At the arraignment, Bittaker was denied bail, whereas Norris's bail was set at $10,000.[47] Within one month of his being charged with murder, Norris had accepted a plea bargain in which he would testify against Bittaker in return for the prosecution agreeing not to
seek the death penalty against him.[31] On March 18, 1980, Norris pleaded guilty to four counts of first-degree murder, one count of second-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall),[2] two counts of first-degree murder, one count of second-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall),[2] two counts of first-degree murder, one count of second-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall),[2] two counts of rape, and one count of second-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall),[2] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall),[2] two counts of first-degree murder, one count of second-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall),[2] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall),[3] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [3] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (in relation to victim Hall), [4] two counts of first-degree murder (i
against Bittaker, prosecutors had agreed to seek neither the death penalty nor life without parole at the upcoming sentencing, Norris was reviewed by a probation officer who testified at his sentencing that Norris had again accused Bittaker of the actual torture of their victims, and that for Norris
himself, the feeling of power and the dominance he had over the victims was the main overriding factor, as opposed to having sexual intercourse with them.[12]:266 The probation officer added that Norris "never exhibited any remorse or compassion about his brutal acts toward the victims ... the defendant appears compulsive in his need to inflict
pain and torture upon women." In conclusion, the probation officer testified that Norris "can realistically be regarded as an extreme sociopath, whose depraved pattern of behavior is beyond rehabilitation."[12]:266 On May 7, 1980, Norris was sentenced to forty-five years to life imprisonment, with eligibility for parole from 2010.[20]:61 On April 24,
1980, Bittaker was arraigned on 29 charges of kidnapping, rape, sodomy, and murder in addition to various charges of criminal conspiracy and possession of a firearm.[19]:42 He was also charged with two counts of conspiracy and possession of a firearm.
released to murder Robin Robeck in order to prevent her from testifying against him at his upcoming trial.[50] The charges for the rape of Robin Robeck would later be dropped because of a lack of physical evidence as well as Robeck's failing to identify her attackers in a lineup.[46] When asked by Judge William Hollingsworth as to how he pleaded,
Bittaker remained silent—refusing to answer any questions.[19]:42 In response, the judge entered a plea of not guilty on his behalf.[51][19]:42 Bittaker's trial began on January 19, 1981.[25]:226 He was tried in Torrance, California, before Judge Thomas Fredericks.[52] The star witness to appear for the prosecution at the trial of Bittaker was Norris,
[53] who began his testimony on January 22. Norris testified as to how he became acquainted with Bittaker in jail, and how the pair had formulated a plan to kidnap, rape and kill teenage girls. Responding to questions from the prosecutor, Norris stated that in June 1979, he had unsuccessfully attempted to abduct and rape a woman, who escaped
unharmed.[27] When he informed Bittaker of this incident, they both agreed to act together on all future abductions.[54][12]:254 Norris then chronologically recounted for the court the details of each of the five murders he and Bittaker had committed in addition to the September 30, 1979 rape of Robeck; the attempted abduction of a woman named
Jan Malin, which had also occurred on September 30; and the attempted abduction of an unidentified young woman on September 27.[27] In reference to the actual murders, Norris stated that after he unsuccessfully attempted to strangle Schaefer, Bittaker had strangled her with a wire coat hanger. The pair had then thrown her body into a location
at or near the San Dimas Canyon.[28]:377 In reference to the murder of Hall, Norris stated he had been told by Bittaker, smiling and holding Polaroid pictures he had taken of Hall after informing her he intended to kill her.[9]:89 With
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reference to victims Lamp and Gilliam, Norris stated that the two girls were held captive for "over a day" before being murdered, adding that Bittaker strangled her. When discussing the abuse and torture of Ledford, Norris stated he had, upon the insistence of Bittaker, committed the actual murder of Ledford, adding Bittaker had informed him that "I should kill her, because I hadn't killed anyone yet. I knew this was coming, so I agreed." Norris then confessed to having killed Ledford by strangling her with a coat hanger, which he had tightened with pliers in much the same manner Bittaker had with previous victims Schaefer and Lamp. Norris then stated the pair had driven to Sunland, where he discarded Shirley Ledford's body upon the front lawn as Bittaker having shown them pictures of the victims he had retained as keepsakes and which had been found in his motel. One witness, a 17-year-old neighbor of Bittaker's named Christina Dralle, testified that Bittaker had once played a cassette tape to her in which she heard two girls screaming and Bittaker laughing. [55] Another witness to testify

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was Lloyd Douglas, who had shared a jail cell with Bittaker following his November 1979 arrest. Douglas testified that Bittaker had informed him he had stabbed one of Gilliam's breasts with an ice pick, which he then twisted as the tool remained
inserted in the wound;[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] Douglas also stated Bittaker had informed him he had "pulled on" the genitals and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip, before tearing off part of one nipple.[15] he had also "pinched" Gilliam on the legs and breasts with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of the legs and breast with a vise grip of
The defense contended that Norris was the actual perpetrator of the murders and that Bittaker had only become aware of Norris's activities shortly before his arrest when Norris had informed him he had murdered several girls whom they had both previously encountered and sexually assaulted. To support their case, the defense produced a friend of
 Norris named Richard Shoopman, who testified that Norris had repeatedly divulged to him his desire to rape young girls. [27] Shoopman also testified that Norris had informed him that the look of shock and fear on the face of a young girl was a prime sexual stimulus for him. In support of Bittaker's case, the defense also referenced the Polaroid
 images taken of the facial expressions of Hall, and of Bittaker's statements regarding Norris's revelations to Bittaker regarding his prime sexual stimulations while both were incarcerated at California Men's Colony in 1977.[31] Shirley Lynette Ledford. The audio recording of her abuse at Bittaker's hands was the most damning evidence presented at
 his trial. The most damning evidence presented at Bittaker's trial was a 17-minute section of the audio tape the pair had created of Ledford's abuse and torment. The audiotape, which had been found inside Bittaker had repeatedly played as he drove in the weeks prior to his arrest—adding that
 Bittaker considered the contents to be "real funny"[19]:42—was presented in evidence on January 29, with Stephen Kay forewarning the jury: "For those of you who do not know what hell is like, you will find out."[56][n 2] More than 100 people were present in the courtroom as the tape was played, and many members of both the jury and the
 audience wept openly upon hearing the contents, with several members of the audience either burying their heads in their hands, dabbing tears from their eyes or rushing out of the courtroom before the tape had finished.[58] Bittaker was undisturbed at hearing the contents of the tape, and smiled throughout the duration of the recording.[36]:28 Ir
one of two instances throughout the trial when prosecutor Stephen Kay was reduced to tears,[12]:267 he walked out of the courtroom during recess following the hearing of the recording of Ledford's rape, abuse, and torture. Weeping openly, Kay stated to the reporters gathered outside the courtroom: "Everybody who has heard that tape has had it
 affect their lives. I just picture those girls ... how alone they were when they died."[58] When questioned by reporters whether the audiotape should have been introduced into evidence, given the courtroom through the contents being broadcast, Kay simply stated: "You're darn right it
[the audio tape] should have been. The jury needs to know what these guys did."[59] On February 5, 1981, Bittaker denied any knowledge of the abduction and murder of Schaefer, and claimed he had paid Hall to pose for the Polaroid photographs depicting her found at his Burbank motel after Hall had
agreed to his offer of $200 for sex. He then claimed Norris had walked Hall into the San Gabriel Mountains, before returning alone and informing Bittaker he had told Hall to "find her own way home." [31] Bittaker had a similar explanation for the double murder of Lamp and Gilliam: he claimed Norris had walked Hall into the San Gabriel Mountains, before returning alone and informing Bittaker had a similar explanation for the double murder of Lamp and Gilliam: he claimed Norris had walked Hall into the San Gabriel Mountains, before returning alone and informing Bittaker had a similar explanation for the double murder of Lamp and Gilliam: he claimed Norris had walked Hall into the San Gabriel Mountains, before returning alone and informing Bittaker had a similar explanation for the double murder of Lamp and Gilliam: he claimed Norris had walked Hall into the San Gabriel Mountains, before returning alone and informing Bittaker had a similar explanation for the double murder of Lamp and Gilliam: he claimed Norris had walked Hall into the San Gabriel Mountains, before returning alone and informing Bittaker had a similar explanation for the double murder of Lamp and Gilliam: he claimed Norris had walked Hall into the San Gabriel Mountains, before returning alone and informing Bittaker had a similar explanation for the double murder of Lamp and Gilliam and Gil
pictures, and that he had last seen the girls alone with Norris in his GMC van. With regard to the murder of Ledford, he claimed she had agreed to theatrically scream for the tape recorder, [60] and that she was not tortured in his presence, but had been left alone with Norris in his van. [61] Bittaker's trial lasted for over three weeks. On February 9,
 1981,[62] the prosecution and defense counsels began their closing arguments. In the closing argument delivered by the prosecution, Kay apologized to the jury that he was only asking for the death penalty, adding that he wished the law permitted him to request that the same suffering be inflicted upon Bittaker that he had inflicted upon his victims
 [63] Kay then described Bittaker as an "excuse for a man" as he held aloft pictures of each of the five murdered girls before the jury.[64] Seeking the death penalty for Bittaker, Kay referred to the case as "one of the most shocking, brutal cases in the history of American crime" and added: "Make no mistake, ladies and gentlemen, a punishment of life
 imprisonment in prison would be a total, complete victory for him. If the death penalty is not appropriate in this case, [then] when will it ever be?"[64] In his own closing argument before the jury, Deputy District Attorney C. Randolph Ramsey discredited Bittaker's claims that—contrary to Norris's testimony—Shirley Lynette Ledford had agreed to
scream, weep, and plead for mercy theatrically for the tape recording introduced as evidence, stating to the jury: "You've heard the sounds on this tape ... Ms. Ledford screaming, yelling 'Don't touch me! No, no, no, no! That tape should be sufficient corroboration by itself!"[65] Defense attorney Albert Garber requested the jury discount the
testimony of Norris; arguing in favor of Bittaker's claims that Norris had committed the earlier testimony of the prosecution had repeatedly recited the "gory details" of the murders. Garber harked to the earlier testimony of a
psychologist named Michael Maloney, who had testified as to Bittaker's inability to empathize with other people's feelings and emotions[27] in addition to the fact that, with the exception of Bittaker's previous criminal convictions were for nonviolent offenses. The defense also claimed that insufficient
 corroborative evidence existed to convict Bittaker.[27] They [Bittaker and Norris] lack the internal prohibitions, or conscience, that keep most of us from giving full expression to our most primitive, and sometimes violent, impulses. Forensic Psychiatrist Dr. Ronald Markman, reciting conclusions of his analysis of Bittaker and Norris, 1989.[25]:234 On
 February 17, 1981,[54] after deliberating for three days, the jury found Bittaker guilty of five counts of first-degree murder, one charges of kidnapping, nine charges of sodomy, and three charges of unlawful possession of a firearm.
[66] Deliberations as to whether Bittaker should be sentenced to death or life without parole began February 19.[66][n 3] The jury deliberated for just 90 minutes[66] before they returned with their verdict: Bittaker was sentenced to death for the five counts of first-degree murder upon which the prosecution had sought this penalty.[53] He showed no
emotion as the verdict was delivered, although he did stare at the jurors.[68] Superior Court Judge Thomas Fredericks then ordered Bittaker to appear in court on March 24 for formal sentence imposed was ever reverted
to life imprisonment, Judge Thomas Fredericks imposed an alternative sentence of 199 years, 4 months' imprisonment to take immediate effect. [25]: 234 [70] Bittaker appealed his conviction and sentencing, citing procedural errors such as the validity of warrants used to authorize the search of his van and motel room, and the dismissal by the judge of
a woman initially hired at the stage of jury selection to advise the defense counsel in matters relating to jury views upon the death penalty. Nonetheless, Bittaker end not affect the overall verdict.
[71] An initial execution date for Bittaker again appealed this decision of the U.S. Supreme Court that he be executed. A renewed execution date was scheduled for July 23, 1991. Bittaker again appealed the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court that he be executed, and
 was granted a further stay of execution on July 9, 1991.[9]: 253 Bittaker granted several death row interviews following his 1981 conviction. He never expressed any remorse for his crimes, repeatedly stating the only remorse he felt had been for the fact he and Norris were arrested, thus "ruining" his own life.[73] He corresponded with numerous
individuals, responding to letters he received with the nickname "Pliers" Bittaker in reference to one of the implements he and Norris had used to torture and murder their victims.[7] While incarcerated, Bittaker filed more than 40 frivolous lawsuits over issues as trivial as his being served a broken cookie and crushed sandwiches by the prison
cafeteria,[74] which he cited as examples of his being subjected to cruel and unusual punishment.[75] Bittaker was declared a vexatious litigant in 1993,[76] as a result of which he was not allowed to file lawsuits without the permission of a judge or attorney.[76] Despite the fact Bittaker considered his life to have been a "wasted" one[77] and
claiming to wish he "could go back and not do it", having "hurt so many people", he also marveled that he and Norris had little in common before their acquaintance at California Men's Colony in San Luis Obispo in 1977, before adding that they had "one hell of a lot in common now!"[19]:44 Mug shot of Bittaker (2018) Mug shot of Norris (2018) When
 asked in 2016 if he would consider writing to the victims' families, Bittaker claimed he was "too ashamed to even try and beg for forgiveness".[77] The sincerity of his expressions of remorse have been disputed by numerous professionals, who referenced Bittaker's consistent revelling in his notoriety and who noted the fact he would tailor his outlook
on his actions to one of regret to those whose attention he wished to maintain.[78] Bittaker died while incarcerated on death row at San Quentin State Prison on December 13, 2019, at the age of 79. His death was reported as being due to natural
causes at California Medical Facility on February 24, 2020, at the age of 72, having been transferred to this facility one week prior to his death.[80] In the years following Norris's conviction, he had repeatedly claimed to have twice contemplated
confessing to his and Bittaker's responsibility in the murders to the police; he also claimed to have deterred three potential victims, he claimed only Bittaker enjoyed the acts of torture and murder, stating: "I didn't enjoy killing—that
was Lawrence [Bittaker]. It was his favorite part: watching the women struggle to live; knowing he'd soon be taking life away."[5]:135 Both investigators and psychologists have stated Norris derived equally extreme gratification from the domination, abuse, and torture inflicted upon the victims as Bittaker; these respective parties have also
referenced Norris's extensive history of physical and sexual violence against women prior to his meeting Bittaker, and his repeated instances of denial of culpability for his actions.[9]: 66 Norris initially became eligible for parole in 2009.[81] Norris declined to attend the parole hearing, thereby automatically deferring his parole eligibility for another
ten years. He was denied parole again in 2019, and died while still incarcerated early the following year.[81][82][83] I'm upset that he beat the system. He died a natural death, something that his victims didn't have a chance for. They had their whole lives ahead of them; they never got to get married, have children or grandchildren. Stephen Kay,
reflecting on news of Bittaker's death via natural causes. December 16, 2019.[84] Stephen Kay, the prosecutor at Bittaker's trial, still considers the murders committed by Bittaker and Norris as being the worst criminal causes, he
had been more deserving of being executed than any other inmate incarcerated on California's death row. In interviews, he has stated that for over two years following the trial of Lawrence Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker, his sleep was disturbed by recurring nightmares in which he would be rushing to Bittaker.
get there too late. [81] Paul Bynum, the chief investigator of the murders committed by Bittaker and Norris, committed by Bittaker and Norris as haunting him and of his fear they may be released from prison.
[81] The audio cassette Bittaker and Norris created of themselves raping and torturing Ledford remains in the possession of the FBI Academy; this recording is used to train and desensitize[85] FBI agents to the raw reality of torture and murder. [86] The 2012 documentary film The Devil and the Death Penalty focuses upon the murders committed by
 Bittaker and Norris in addition to issues relating to the death penalty appeals process in California. Stephen Kay is among those interviewed by the director.[87] Douglas, John E.; Burgess, Ann W.; Burgess, Allen G.; Ressler, Robert K. (2006). Crime Classification Manual: A Standard System for Investigating and Classifying Violent Crimes. San
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 [1989]. Alone with the Devil: Psychopathic Killings that Shocked the World. London: Piatkus Publishers, pp. 248-277, ISBN 0-7499-1002-X. A 90-minute documentary, The Killing of America, features a section devoted to the trial of Bittaker. Directed by Sheldon Renan, this documentary was released in September 1981. [88] The crime documentary.
 series Arrest & Trial has broadcast an episode detailing the murders committed by Bittaker and Norris. This episode was initially broadcast in October 2000. The Investigation Discovery channel has broadcast a documentary, titled Wicked Attraction, was initially
broadcast in August 2009.[89] The Toolbox Killer. Commissioned by Peacock, this 90-minute documentary contains interviews with Bittaker and FBI profiler Mary Ellen O'Toole and was initially broadcast in September 2021.[90] Capital punishment in California Crime in California List of serial killers by country List of serial killers in the United States
Violent Criminal Apprehension Program ^ Bittaker later claimed to have buried this tape recording of Gilliam's rape was never found.[30] ^ Judge Fredericks had earlier denied motions by the defense to omit the tape recording from admission as evidence.[57] ^ Prior to the counsels' deliberations pertaining to
Bittaker's sentencing, Stephen Kay informed reporters: "I will not rest until the penalty of death is brought back against Lawrence Bittaker Sentenced to Death". Boca Raton News. Associated Press. February 25, 1981. p. 3A. Retrieved October 16, 2017. ^ a b c "Man Faces 45 Years in Killings". The Gadsden Times. Associated
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against his conviction December 2019 UPI article detailing Bittaker's death February 2020 Mercury News article detailing Norris's death Retrieved from "Ice picks, pliers, and screwdrivers. They seem like ordinary tools — but for convicted serial murderers Lawrence Bittaker and Roy Norris, these common implements served much darker purposes
They became instruments of torture and death for the predatory pair infamously known as the Toolbox Killers. In 1979, Bittaker and Norris used the roads of California as their hunting grounds and relied on the remote areas of the San Gabriel Mountains, where they brutalized and killed their victims. The depraved crimes are explored in the gripping
Peacock original special The Toolbox Killer. Their prey: young women aged 18 and under, some of whom were hitchhiking. The teens made the dire mistake of getting into the deadly duo's van that they ghoulishly nicknamed "Murder Mack," The New York Daily News reported in 2015. RELATED: 'For Those Who Don't Know What Hell Is Like': What Is
The Lynette Ledford Tape? After raping and torturing the teens, Bittaker and Norris would kill them and dump their bodies. They also used audio and photos to capture the vicious assaults. The Los Angeles Times reported that Bittaker took photographs of one victim "performing a sexual act," all the while staying in contact with Norris by walkie-
talkie. Another audio of an attack was later played during Bittaker's trial, and led people to flee the court room, according to The New York Daily News. The Toolbox Killer is built around interviews Bittaker did with criminologist Laura Brand later in life, sharing his side of the twisted story. The show also features invaluable insights from law
enforcement, journalists, and family members of victims. The Toolbox Killers Lawrence Bittaker Photo: AP Lawrence Bittaker was put up for adoption at birth and was adopted by the Bittakers, who would later disown him after he committed a string of crimes, including theft. Norris' childhood was difficult and he was often placed in foster homes. He
later joined the United States Navy but was honorably discharged after military psychologists determined he had schizoid personality disorder. Pennsylvania-born Bittaker, who was from Colorado, was "the muscle," according to The Toolbox Killer. The two met
while behind bars at the California Men's Colony in San Luis Obispo Prison. Bittaker was serving time after being convicted of assault with a deadly weapon, having stabbed a gas station worker in 1974, according to All That's Interesting. Norris, a convicted sex offender, was sent to the prison after raping a woman in 1976. Bittaker was released on
parole from prison in October 1978, while Norris was released on parole three months later in January 1979. The Toolbox Killers' Victims After their release, Bittaker and Norris began their string of killings with the abduction and murder of 16-year-old Lucinda Lynn "Cindy" Schaefer, reported the Los Angeles Times in 1989. Andrea Hall, 18;
Jacqueline Gilliam, 15; Jacqueline Leah Lamp, 13; and Shirley Lynette Ledford, 16, were killed over the following five months. The bodies of Schaefer and Hall, unlike the other victims, haven't been found. The killers recorded and took Polaroids of their victims, including Shirley Ledford. During the trial, the Ledford tapes were played aloud in court,
 bringing many to tears. "For those of you who do not know what hell is like, you will find out," prosecutor Stephen Kay said when introducing the evidence, according to UPI. How Were The Toolbox Killers Caught? On November 20, 1979, Bittaker and Norris were arrested. The charges came about after Norris told a prison friend about his and
Bittaker's crimes and that friend, shaken by what he heard, went to authorities. After his arrest, Norris turned on Bittaker in order to escape the death penalty. In April 1981, he was sentenced to 45 years to life in prison. Did The Toolbox Killers Ever Reveal Where All Their Victims' Bodies
Were?Bittaker faced 26 charges, including five counts of murder, five counts of kidnapping, criminal conspiracy, rape, oral copulation, sodomy, and being an ex-felon in possession of a firearm. He was convicted on all counts and sentenced to death on March 22, 1981. Where Are The Toolbox Killers Now?The Toolbox Killers are now dead. Four
decades after killing five young women, Bittaker, 79, died of natural causes on death row in San Quentin State Prison on December 13, 2019. Norris, 72, died of natural causes in prison two months later. To learn more about the case, Bittaker's thoughts on the murders, and the latest on efforts to recover the bodies of Schaefer and Hall, watch The
Toolbox Killer, streaming on Peacock. (This story was originally published on September 22, 2019 and has since been updated.)
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