

## About Beyond The Darklands

What turns a person into a monster? In this new, insightful documentary series, one of Australia's leading clinical psychologists, Dr Leah Giarratano, explores the dark side of human behaviour as she delves into the minds of some of Australia's most notorious criminals.



Interviews with those who knew them - family members, schoolmates and colleagues among them - reveal the lives and psychology of those who have committed shocking crimes.

**The Birnies:** In 1986 David and Catherine Birnie went on a five week rampage of sexual violence - abducting, raping and murdering four Perth women. As teenage lovers the Birnies formed an intense bond of sex, devotion and crime. Reuniting in their 30's, their relationship spiraled into depravity. Cruising the streets together, they abducted young women to satisfy David Birnie's sexual desires. The Birnies are Australia's serial killing couple.

**Andrew "Benji" Veniamin:** Between 1999 and 2004, Benji was Melbourne's most feared underworld executioner. Too small to make it as a boxer he was determined to make the big time in crime. He was sometimes charming, often violent, always fearless, and convinced he would not live past thirty. He was right. By the time he was shot dead by Mick Gatto, police believe he had killed seven men, some of them senior underworld figures, some of them his close friends, but the Victorian police never managed to bring a single murder charge against him.

**Peter Dupas:** When Peter Dupas attacked his next door neighbour with a knife at the young age of 15 no one suspected he might go on to be one of Australia's worst serial killers. He had always been described as a tubby, shy boy, one that simply looked too weak to even stick up for himself at school. But it was under that unassuming, baby-faced guise Peter Dupas got away with brutal sexual crimes against women throughout Melbourne for over 30 years until he was finally apprehended in 1999.

**Arthur Neddy Smith:** Neddy is Australia's most notorious gangster. As a career criminal Smith enjoyed the protection of the corrupt NSW police during the 1970's and 80's, most notably from disgraced former detective Roger Rogerson. He was given the "greenlight" to commit any crimes he wanted in return for giving favorable evidence about a police shooting. He rode a wave of criminal success organising armed robberies and dealing heroin that earned him millions of dollars and a lifestyle that matched. When the police protection deal fell apart, Neddy blew the whistle on a decade of police corruption, sparking a royal commission. Now 64 years old, he is serving a life sentence in prison for murder, never to be released.

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**Bilal Skaf:** In 2000, a series of brutal gang rapes took place in the area around Greenacre, NSW. The gang leader was 18 year old Bilal Skaf, who with his brother Mohammed, organised the abduction and rape of 4 girls in 3 separate attacks, one of them lasting more than 6 hours. Up to 14 men were involved, the youngest just 13. According to police these were the worst rapes they had ever investigated. The Judge agreed, and as one of the victims tells us, 8 years later, she still has trouble coping. Even after they were caught, the rapists continued to harass the victims, knowing that without key testimony from a victim, police would have no case. At no stage did Skaf show any remorse or compassion for the girls whose lives he ruined. Today Bilal Skaf is locked away in the NSW Supermax prison, a fate reserved for the worst of the worst.

**Leslie Camilleri and Lindsay Beckett:** The master and his apprentice. Together, and fuelled by injecting each other with amphetamines, Leslie Camilleri and Lindsay Beckett abducted teenagers; Nichole Collins and Lauren Barry from their camp site in Bega, NSW and took them on a hell of a road trip. Along the way the girls were subjected to degrading and repeated sexual abuse. After 10 hours of torture, at their final stop, Camilleri ordered Beckett to kill the girls after they washed themselves in a creek to get rid of evidence. Lauren was drowned and stabbed. Nichole's throat was slashed while she was tied to a tree. At the time, the men were well known to police and the judicial system as a double act responsible for other violent crimes and sexual abuse. When months later a jury found Camilleri guilty and he was sentenced to life in prison never to be released, all he did was yawn.

**Katherine Knight:** On February 29th 2000 former abattoir worker Katherine Knight stabbed her de facto husband to death, skinned him and then cooked his body parts in a pot on the stove. She then proceeded to set the table for his children's arrival, complete with vindictive letters. This appalling murder shows the darkest reaches of the human mind and has rocked the small country town of Aberdeen ever since. Knight is Australia's first and only woman to be jailed for the remainder of her life without parole.