

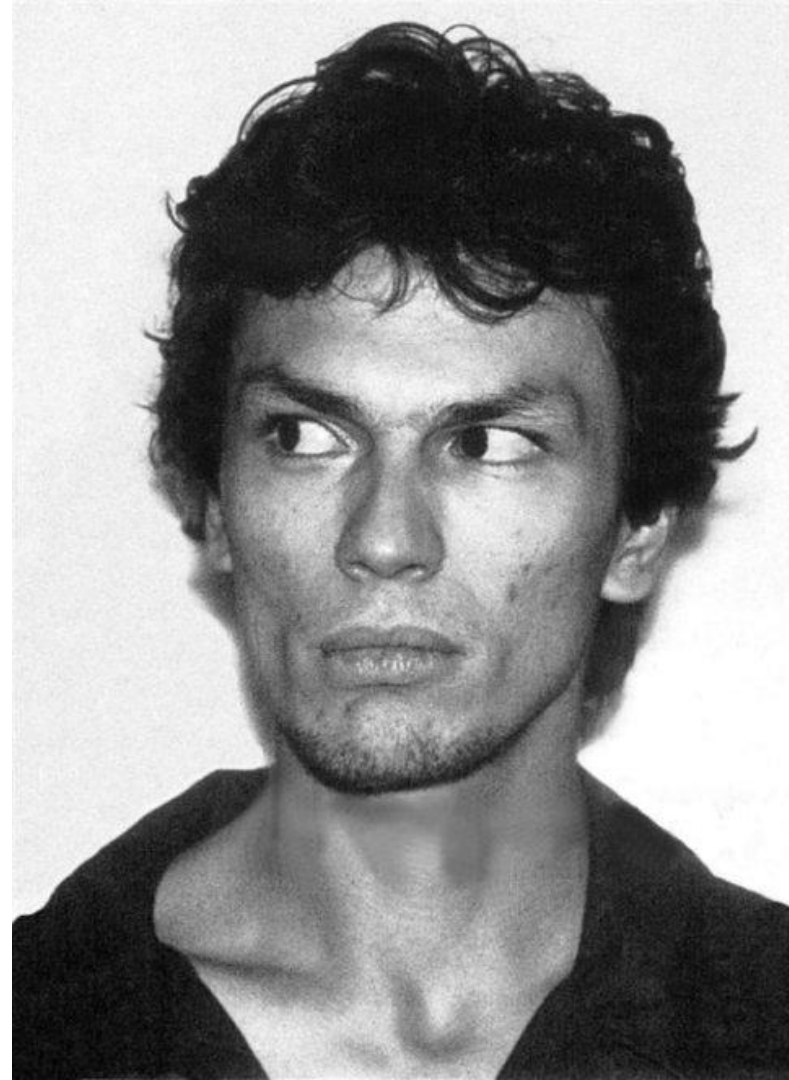
# THE NIGHT STALKER

**Elissa Media**

# BIO: RICHARD RAMIREZ

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- Serial killer, rapist and burglar
- His highly publicized home invasion crimes spree terrorized the residents of los angeles area, and later the residents of san francisco area.
- SPAN OF KILLINGS: June 1984 - August 1985
- Dubbed as “NIGHT STALKER” by news media
- used a wide variety of weapons, including handguns, knives, a machete, a tire iron, and a hammer.



# CRIME LAYOUT

## TIMELINE & PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE

- Richard Ramirez was born Ricardo Leyva Muñoz Ramírez on February 29, 1960, in El Paso, Texas, the youngest of seven children born to Mercedes and Julian Ramírez, a Mexican American railway worker.
- Had a troubled childhood and was heavily influenced by his older cousin, a Green Beret named Mike who had recently returned from fighting in the Vietnam War.
- The two also discussed Satanic worship and smoked marijuana together, and Ramirez's teenage rebellion led him to commit petty crimes to fuel his drug habit, which further alienated him from his Catholic parents.
- As a result, he spent even more time with his cousin. When Mike murdered his wife, Ramirez was present, sowing the final developmental seeds for the future serial killer.

# CRIMINAL BEGINNINGS

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- Criminal record began in 1977, when he was placed in juvenile detention for a string of petty crimes.
- Moved to San Francisco, California, and then to Los Angeles, progressing to cocaine addiction and burglary, and cultivating an interest in weapons and Satanism.
- A car theft charge in 1983 led to a jail sentence.
- The following year, Ramirez was released from jail a conscienceless, Satanic criminal with poor hygiene, rotten teeth and no prospects.

# DETAILS OF THE CRIMES

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Theft turned to violence in 1984. Ramirez's first known murder took place on June 28, 1984; his victim was 79-year-old Jennie Vincow, who was viciously sexually assaulted, stabbed and murdered during a burglary in her own home. What followed was a spree of brutal murders, rapes and robberies, leaving more than 25 victims in its wake.

Ramirez's second known killing occurred nearly nine months after his first. On March 17, 1985, he attacked Maria Hernandez, who managed to escape him, and then killed her roommate, Dayle Okazaki. Not satisfied with these assaults, he also shot and killed Tsai Lian Yu the same evening, spurring a media frenzy that saw Ramirez dubbed the "Valley Intruder" by the press.

Just 10 days later, on March 27, Ramirez murdered 64-year-old Vincent Zazzara and Zazzara's 44-year-old wife, Maxine, using an attack style that would become a pattern for the killer: The husband was shot first, then the wife was brutally assaulted and stabbed to death. In this case, Ramirez also gouged out Maxine Zazzara's eyes.



# CONTINUED...

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A full-scale police operation yielded no concrete results, and Ramirez repeated his attack pattern on pensioners William and Lillie Doi in April 1985. Over the next two months, his murder rate escalated rapidly, claiming another dozen victims in a frenzy of burglary, assault and brutal violence—complete with Satanic rituals—and driving Los Angeles into a panic. After the press demanded that the police do more to catch the killer, a dedicated task force comprised of hundreds of law-enforcement officers was established, and the FBI stepped in to assist.

This relentless media and police pressure, aided with photo-fit descriptions from his surviving victims, forced Ramirez to leave the L.A. area that August. He moved north to San Francisco, taking his first victims there, Peter and Barbara Pan, on August 17. His unmistakable MO, complete with Satanic symbolism, meant that his "Valley Intruder" moniker was no longer applicable, so the press quickly coined a new name for the criminal: the "Night Stalker," as most of his assaults took place at night in his victims' homes.

# FINAL MURDER

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Ramirez's next—and final—attack, on August 24, 1985, led to the identification of his stolen car by the victim four days later. After a televised appeal, the car was found, complete with his fingerprints inside, and his criminal record enabled the police to finally put a name to the "Night Stalker."



# THE EVIDENCE

- Fingerprints
- Bullet casings
- Pentagrams drawn in the crime scene
- Taking the eyes of the victims
- Witness getting license plate number



Close-up of pentagram drawn on Mabel Bell's wall.  
(Author's collection)

# SCIENCE BEHIND IT

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- Due to the time of the case and the lack of technology available, there weren't very many databases that could be used to analyze the evidence.
- Everything had to be compared/analyzed by hand. The witness getting the license plate number gave a break to the case.
- A fingerprint lifted from the crime scene and car matched, which is when police were able to stop the ends to the Night Stalker.

# FORENSIC SCIENCE INVOLVED

- Fingerprint analysis
- Footprint analysis
- Handwriting analysis

# FINDING THE SUSPECT

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## CAPTURE

National television and print media coverage featuring his prison photo, along with a series of clues from witnesses and survivors, led to Ramirez's capture on August 30, after he was badly beaten by East L.A. residents while attempting a carjacking and police were called to the scene.

# TRIAL

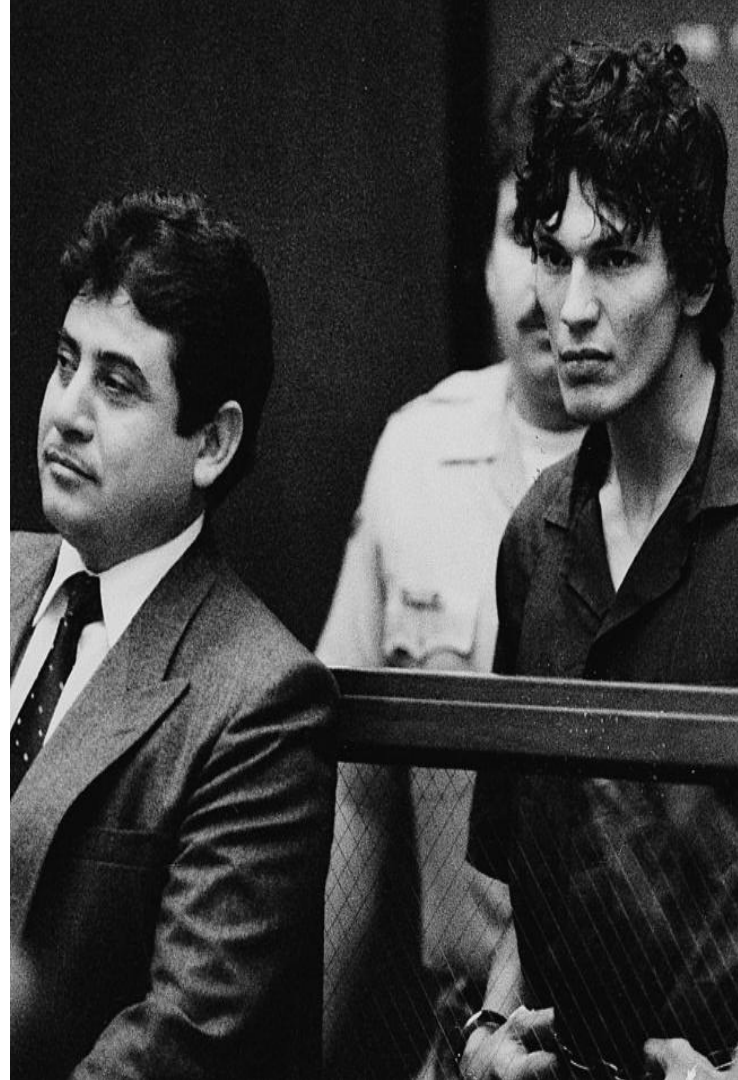
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Ramirez claimed that he has been mistakenly identified and did everything possible to delay the onset of the trial, which saw him charged with 14 murders and 31 other felonies in connection to his killing spree.

Almost three years after his apprehension, on July 22, 1988, the jury selection process began.

The case took a full year to hear, given the number of witnesses and sheer amount of evidence.

During this time, Ramirez attracted a large, cult-like following—many of whom were black-clad Satan worshipers—who appeared daily at his trial.



# TRIAL CONTINUATION...

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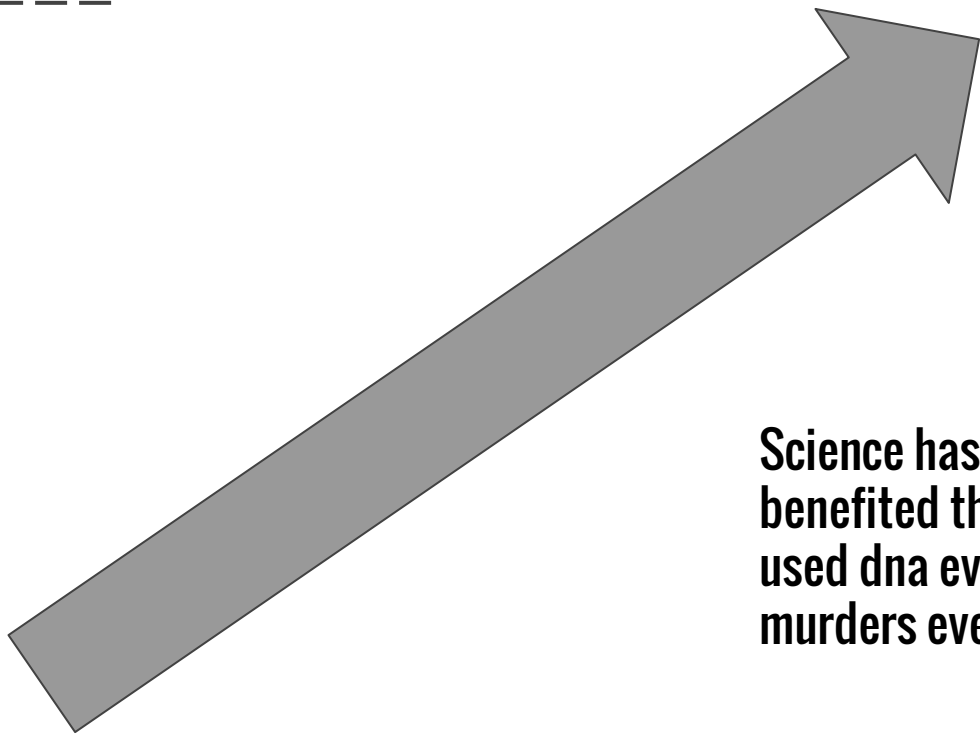
On September 20, 1989, the jury finally returned a unanimous guilty verdict on 43 charges, including 13 counts of murder, five counts of attempted murder, 11 sexual assault charges and 14 burglary charges.

On November 7, 1989, Ramirez received 19 death sentences, and was subsequently transferred to San Quentin Prison in California.

Following his conviction, Ramirez was linked to several more vicious crimes, most recently in 2009, when a DNA sample connected him with the April 10, 1984, rape and murder of a nine-year-old girl in San Francisco.

# HOW HAS SCIENCE CHANGED?

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**Science has definitely improved and in fact even benefited this case, when law enforcement later used dna evidence to convict ramirez or more murders even after his initial sentencing...**

**MY OPINION... GUILTY**

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**THANKS FOR LISTENING**