

Michael Jackson's Mad Dog: Tom Sneddon and the Case That Haunts



For nearly two decades, the name Tom Sneddon has been synonymous with the Michael Jackson child molestation case. As the lead prosecutor in the high-profile trial, Sneddon became a lightning rod for controversy, with some accusing him of being a relentless and overzealous pursuer of the pop icon while others hailed him as a fearless champion of justice.

TO KILL A MOCKING BIRD KEY WITNESS: Michael Jackson . Mad Dog D.A. Tom Sneddon . The



Immigrants' Daughter . by Josh Levine

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Sneddon's early life gave little indication of the headline-making role he would one day play. Born in 1941 in Butte, Montana, he grew up in a working-class family. After graduating from high school, he served in the U.S. Air Force before attending law school at the University of California, Los Angeles.

In 1970, Sneddon joined the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office, where he quickly rose through the ranks. He gained a reputation as a tough prosecutor, particularly in child abuse cases. In 1993, he was appointed district attorney, a position he held until his retirement in 2007.

Sneddon's career took a dramatic turn in 1993 when 13-year-old Jordan Chandler accused Michael Jackson of molesting him. The allegations sent shockwaves through the entertainment world and beyond. Sneddon, who had known Jackson for years, was tasked with investigating the case and ultimately prosecuting the singer.

The trial that followed was one of the most closely watched in American history. Sneddon presented a damning case against Jackson, alleging that he had engaged in a pattern of sexual abuse with Chandler. Jackson, who steadfastly denied the allegations, was ultimately acquitted of all charges.

Despite the acquittal, Sneddon remained convinced of Jackson's guilt. He continued to pursue the case, even after Jackson's death in 2009. In 2013, he published a book titled "Untouchable: The Strange and Twisted Truth About the Michael Jackson Case," in which he detailed his investigation and trial.

Sneddon's relentless pursuit of Jackson has led to accusations that he was motivated more by a desire for publicity than a genuine belief in Jackson's guilt. Some critics have also questioned his tactics, particularly his use of hypnosis on Chandler. However, Sneddon has defended his actions, arguing that he was simply doing his job.

The Michael Jackson case continues to haunt Sneddon. In a 2020 interview with the Santa Barbara Independent, he said that he still believes Jackson was guilty and that he has no regrets about his handling of the case. However, he also acknowledged the toll that the case has taken on his life.

"It's been a very difficult experience for me," he said. "I've been vilified, I've been criticized, I've been called names. But I've always tried to do what I thought was right."

Tom Sneddon is a complex and controversial figure. His role in the Michael Jackson case has forever cemented his place in the annals of American

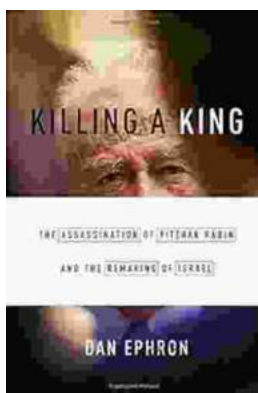
crime. Whether he is remembered as a relentless pursuer of justice or a publicity-hungry prosecutor remains to be seen.



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