

# NAT GEO SAYS TV THRILLER THE HOT ZONE: ANTHRAX "INSPIRED BY TRUE EVENTS" — FORMER FBI AGENT REVEALS REAL STORY IN BOOK

*Much more than "inspired by true events" - former FBI agent's book tells the complete true story of 2001 anthrax attacks from the inside out for the first time*

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA, UNITED STATES, November 28, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- National Geographic Channel says in its marketing and press materials that season two of their hit series The Hot Zone, premiering tonight, is only "inspired" by true events of the 2001 anthrax attacks – rather than basing it on actual events. That's surprising news to one of the FBI agents who investigated the case.

"Why would you fictionalize something that is already stranger than fiction?" asks former FBI agent R. Scott Decker, PhD, who spent almost a decade hunting the anthrax killer.

As soon as the case was closed, Decker retired so he could write the only book about the case to reveal how the investigation really took place. Decker says producers on the National Geographic project did not contact him, or anyone in his FBI circles, to investigate the story or to fact-check the three-night event series.

Decker's award-winning book, [Recounting the Anthrax Attacks](#): Terror, the Amerithrax Task Force, and the Evolution of Forensics in the FBI, tells the true story from the inside out about the crimes that crippled our nation in the fall of 2001. Just a few weeks after the horrific events of September 11, 2001, America was attacked again by another fatal act of terrorism – letters containing anthrax were mailed to victims in Florida, Washington, D.C., and New York. The crime spree marked the first time a sophisticated biological weapon was released in America. The assault killed five people, caused panic throughout the United States, and launched the largest investigation in the FBI's history.

Now, National Geographic's much-anticipated scripted TV series, The Hot Zone: Anthrax, tells a fictionalized and greatly simplified version of the investigation. Decker hopes viewers won't believe the watered-down TV account —

"TV can't create anything more engrossing or more relevant to us now than what actually

happened," says Decker. "We learned valuable lessons that can help fight deadly pathogens like COVID, so it's a crime to so drastically change the story — the truth deserves to be told."

Dr. Decker, who earned a PhD in Human Genetics, served as an agent for the FBI for 22 years, before retiring as a supervisory special agent in 2011 – ten years after the anthrax attacks and on the heels of the FBI finally closing the topsy-turvy investigation.

The author spent his early FBI career chasing bank and armored car robbers throughout Boston. Several of his cases formed the basis of *The Town*, the 2010 movie from Warner Brothers, directed by Ben Affleck and adapted from Chuck Hogan's book, *Prince of Thieves*. After he retired, Decker committed the next six years to writing the only book dedicated to telling the complete story of what happened during the FBI's anthrax investigation.

"The research and writing process was exhaustive," says Decker, "I reached out to my former colleagues, scientists, victims, and even suspects to get all the details right." He says his intention was to create a book that was "accessible to the public and so accurate that a college forensics class could study how a real-life case of this magnitude was investigated."

New York Times best-selling author Richard Preston – who wrote the book on which National Geographic's *The Hot Zone Season 1* was based – says Decker's book "is fascinating and absolutely authentic — a behind-the-scenes account, never before told in such detail."

According to Preston, Decker ran the 'dark biology' part of the FBI's investigation and adds, "I don't think the world realizes just what the FBI accomplished or how they did it, or the pitfalls and difficulties of the investigation, but Decker tells us the story from the inside."

Decker, now based in Las Vegas, says when traditional methods failed, the FBI formed the new science of microbial forensics – an unprecedented scientific discipline that helped identify a second suspect – one who possessed the knowledge and skills to unleash a living weapon of mass destruction.

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