



# **A Death in Texas: A Story of Race, Murder, and a Small Town's Struggle for Redemption**

*Dina Temple-Raston*

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On June 7, 1998, a trio of young white men chained a black man named James Byrd, Jr., to the bumper of a truck and dragged him three miles down a country road. From the initial investigation and through the trials and their aftermath, *A Death in Texas* follows the turns of events through the eyes of Sheriff Billy Rowles and other townspeople trying to come to grips with the killing. Drawing on extensive interviews with key players, Dina Temple-Raston brings to life a cast of remarkable characters: the unrepentant baby-faced killer, Bill King; Jasper's white patriarch and former Jack Ruby defense attorney, Joe Tonahill; the hard-drinking victim, James Byrd Jr.; the determined district attorney, Guy James Gray; and Sheriff Rowles, who held them together.

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