

One man's vow 294 ends in solution of teen murders



**KENT
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WACO — Ghastly photos of the kind stacked on the desk will unpin your civilized underpinnings. There are hundreds of them in four stacks, pictures of the crime scene, the clues and the tortured, murdered teen-agers.

To know that mothers and fathers of the three victims saw these bloody depictions of the violence is joltingly sad. To witness these photos is to force back a sob or swallow a cry for vengeance.

Sheriff's Investigator Truman Simons of McLennan County doesn't review the photos. Simons, 43, knows them all. He was present when they were taken. His memories of the dead kids are vivid and forever red.

He wanted me to see the photos for a reason. Teeth prints were useful in the case. Scientific techniques — forensic odontology — can convert photos of bite marks on a victim together with a suspect's dental impressions into admissible evidence.

Through the measurements of photogrammetry, bite wounds provide a mirror image of the distinctive dental weapons of the biter.

Another reason for Simons' digging out the photos was perhaps to lend immediacy to a murder case now 52 months old. Moreover, these cruel photos explain his obsession. It has driven him through lost nights and dog-tired days since the killings.

The grisly photos of the victims justify or account for Simons' behavior on the night of July 14, 1982, when the corpses were found by two



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Sheriff's Investigator Truman Simons points to the place where the bodies of three murdered teen-agers were found.

fishermen in Speegleville Park on the shores of Lake Waco. The victims had been dead for about 24 hours.

After combing the scene with other investigators, Simons had knelt by each murder victim — Jill Montgomery, Raylene Rice, and Kenneth Franks. He vowed: "Whoever did this to you is going to pay for it."

Simons was then a patrol sergeant with 17 years of experience in the Waco Police Department. He was tough as a slapjack and he thought he had seen everything. But the memory of those kids wouldn't leave him alone.

He embarked on one of the strangest trails of
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