

Black Herman

Professor Sterling Haynes, Columnist

Abracadabra, learn the magical feats of a black magician.

Benjamin Rucker was born June 8, 1889, in Amherst, Virginia. Rucker was fascinated with the brilliance of magic. As a teenager he secured an apprenticeship to magician Prince Herman. Together the two toured across the south performing magic.

When Prince Herman died, Rucker adopted the name Black Herman in his honor. As a solo act, he continued to tour while incorporating his own style.

His major influences were African folk magic, divination, and mysticism. Despite his popularity, Black Herman was often met with backlash in the south. Spooked attendees felt his performances were works of evil.

In 1910, Black Herman found new horizons in Harlem, New York. Performing stage magic to diverse audiences in the north.

As his popularity grew, so did his production budget. He hired African American actress Madame Debora Sapphirra. Her role was a psychic mind reader and assistant for his shows.

Secrets of Magic, Mystery, and Legerdemain was published in 1925. Herman purchased his own printing company to ensure the book's quality and accuracy. It's written for aspiring magicians to



Sterling Haynes

learn magic and illusion.

Black Herman's Private Graveyard was his most popular performance. Audiences would watch in awe, as he was buried alive in a coffin. Being proclaimed dead by a local doctor. Unbeknownst to the

audience, a local doctor who was part of the act, proclaimed he was dead.

On April 15, 1934, Black Herman died in Louisville Kentucky. He had a rocky marriage with Mrs. Eva Rucker. That produced three children.

Cartoon Characters Mayor Maxwell and Bubble Gum Belinda are created by Sterling Haynes.

To learn more about my cartoon characters visit sterlinghaynes.com ★

THE FAMILY TURNING REALWORLD LAW INTO A GAME-CHANGING MOVEMENT

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Some families pass down recipes. Others pass down traditions. The Johnson family passes down legal knowledge, sharpened by decades of experience and rooted in a shared belief that knowledge is power, especially when it comes to the law.

What began as a simple desire to help people understand their rights has grown into a national movement. Today, the Johnsons, from Omaha, are the creators of CRIME NO CRIME, an educational, debatedriven game that teaches players how everyday decisions can lead to real legal consequences. And now, they've expanded that mission with the Politics, Law & Life Podcast, a show that goes even deeper into the laws, stories, and life lessons that shape our communities.

A Family of Lawyers with a Calling

"They say that justice is elusive and sometimes hard to find. Well, we're a family of lawyers and seeking justice is not just our family's calling, it's our family's passion," the podcast opens, grounding listeners in the heart of their mission.

For decades, the Johnsons have lived at the intersection of politics, law, and everyday life. Their careers span prosecution, defense, civil law, and public service, but their shared purpose has always been the same: to make the law understandable and accessible to everyday people.



The Birth of CRIME NO CRIME



The idea for CRIME NO CRIME™ came from a simple observation: most people don't truly understand the law until they're already in trouble. The Johnsons wanted to change that.

They created a game that turns legal scenarios into lively debate, teaching players how small choices can lead to big consequences. It's fun, fastpaced, and surprisingly eyeopening, a tool that families, schools, and community groups now use to spark conversations about safety, responsibility, and realworld decisionmaking.

The game's success revealed something deeper: people were hungry for clarity, guidance, and honest conversations about the justice system.

From the Game to the Podcast: Going Deeper into the Law



To meet that need, the family launched the Politics, Law & Life Podcast, a show that blends legal insight with personal stories and realworld wisdom. As they say in the show, they bring perspectives "informed by politics, sharpened by the law, and refined by our individual life experiences."

Where the game introduces the scenarios, the podcast breaks them open, explaining the laws behind them, the reasoning, the consequences, and the life lessons that come with them.

Why Their Work Matters

In a world where misinformation spreads quickly and legal trouble can come from a single bad decision, the Johnsons are offering something rare: clarity, empowerment, and truth.

CRIME NO CRIME teaches people to think before they act; the Politics, Law & Life Podcast teaches them why it matters. Together, they form a powerful educational movement, one that is saving families from costly mistakes, strengthening communities, and giving people the tools to navigate life with confidence.

A Family Legacy with National Impact

What makes the Johnsons' work so compelling is not just their expertise, it's their authenticity. They speak from experience, from faith, and from a deep belief that every person deserves to understand the laws that govern their lives.



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