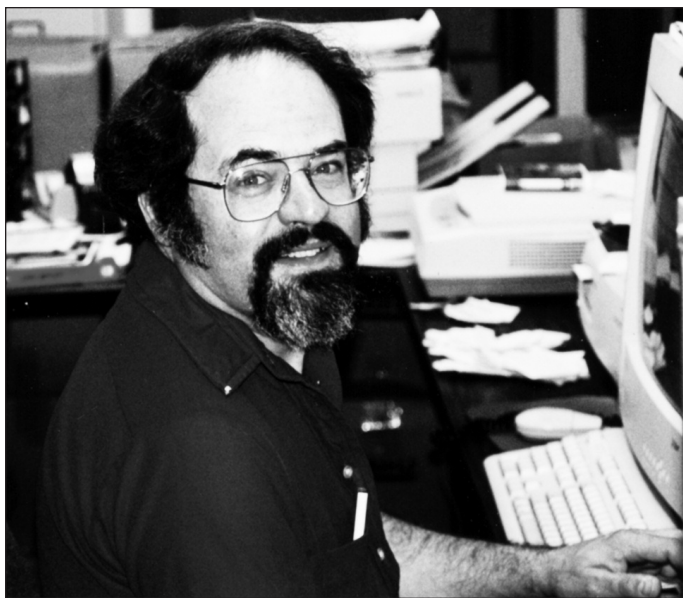


# Podcast Celebrates the Life and Work of Eugene Mallove

Christy L. Frazier



Gene Mallove in 1999.

In 2016, journalist David Kushner<sup>1</sup> published “The Coldest Case” (*Foreign Policy Magazine*, July/August),<sup>2</sup> profiling the life, work and death of *Infinite Energy* founder and editor Eugene Mallove.<sup>3</sup> Now, Kushner is covering Gene’s story in even more depth in his new podcast series, “Crime Waves,” on QCode Media,<sup>4</sup> a well-known podcast network.

The first season of “Crime Waves” is an eight-part series about Gene, titled “Cold Truth.” The first two episodes premiere November 6, 2023 (on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and other podcast services, such as Radio Public<sup>5</sup>); a short trailer aired on October 30. This is QCode’s first narrative non-fiction series, written and produced with the media company No Smiling<sup>6</sup> in partnership with Kushner’s Faceplant media company.

QCode describes the “Crime Waves” podcast as the “strangest true crime stories you’ve never heard of, told by the people who were there—and the ones who picked up the pieces.” They describe Season 1 as “the true story of the life, mysterious death, and still-unfolding legacy of Eugene Mallove, a scientist, writer, and prominent proponent of controversial cold fusion research.”

Kushner is an award-winning journalist and author, who has published numerous non-fiction books and has written for *Rolling Stone*, *Vanity Fair* and other national magazines. Heather Schroering and Sean Cannon, co-founders of No Smiling, researched, wrote and produced “Cold Truth” with

Kushner. Schroering is an award-winning investigative reporter, who got her start covering crime for the *Chicago Tribune*; she has produced chart-topping podcasts (including “Joe Exotic”). Cannon is a Peabody-winning journalist and producer, recognized for his role packaging and developing “The Pope’s Long Con” podcast.

Kushner had been following the cold fusion field to some degree since the beginning. He said, “I’d followed it from afar as a writer for *WIRED* and doing other tech coverage over the years. But I didn’t know anything about Gene Mallove...” He first learned about Gene’s murder in a local news story, which led to a deep dive into Gene’s background, his life and his death—and culminated with the *Foreign Policy* feature.

Kushner was so impacted by Gene’s story that it became the focus of this first season of his new podcast. He said, “Mallove was a fascinating person who went to extraordinary lengths for something he believed in. But his tragic death left many questions in its wake—not only about who killed him and why, but what the future of cold fusion would bring. I thought all that would make for a compelling podcast.” In a QCode press kit for “Crime Waves,” Kushner stated, “Eugene Mallove was someone who was thinking about energy problems for decades before it was mainstream.”

Kushner brings a sensitivity to the facts of Gene’s case due to his own personal history. In 2016, he published the memoir *Alligator Candy*, which tells the heart-wrenching story of his brother Jon’s abduction and murder in 1973 Tampa, Florida. Kushner said, “My own experience gave me a different level of connection to Mallove’s story and to his family, so that was always informing my perspective.”

In 2021, Kushner made his first foray into podcasting with the six-part “Alligator Candy” serial.<sup>7</sup> That podcast opens with the question: “How do you live knowing that unimaginable things can happen at any time, and how do you go on when they do?” Kushner knows firsthand the tremendous impact the murder of a loved one has on a family and a community, so he has a perspective that perhaps all journalists do not have.

“Cold Truth” follows Gene’s story chronologically. Each episode averages 30 minutes. The first episode will of course introduce his unthinkable murder on May 14, 2004, but also highlight Gene’s early life and career and his overall perspectives about science (particularly cold fusion). The podcast will include audio of Gene, a nice touch that this long-form media allows. Gene did an extensive amount of press, so the show had a great deal of source audio to utilize. Actor Jason Kravits voices some of Gene’s written word material.

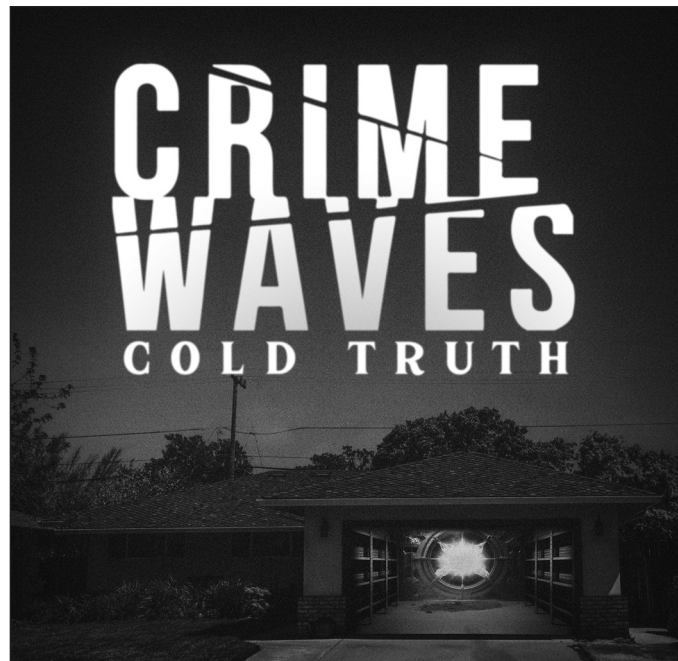
Gene's daughter, Kimberlyn Woodard, was interviewed for the podcast. She was hesitant to do any media on her dad again, stating, "I wasn't sure about doing it at first. I did an interview for a true crime show years ago and vowed never to do it again. It really bothers me that one family's tragedy is another's 'entertainment.'" In April 2016, the Investigation Discovery show "Unusual Suspects" released an episode about Gene's murder ("Stone Cold Fusion").<sup>8</sup> In January 2021, the Oxygen Network produced a very similar episode in the show "An Unexpected Killer." Kim (and her brother Ethan Mallove) participated in the first show, but she has still today not watched it. Both shows were typical true crime series that include re-enactments; this made for especially difficult viewing for those who knew and loved Gene.

Woodard said that her correspondence with Kushner convinced her to participate in "Cold Truth." She noted, "I figured someone who had experienced a trauma like we have would surely be more compassionate and empathetic about our story." She listened to the "Alligator Candy" podcast. "He said a lot of things that resonated with me," Woodard said. "It was well done. I began to think about him doing a podcast about my dad's life's work and death as maybe a good way to capture his life in a way that would tie his life story together. Maybe my kids would listen to it someday and understand a little bit more about their grandfather, who he was, what he was passionate about and what ended his life."

Some other familiar names/voices are included in the podcast. Recent interviews were conducted with cold fusion advocate and *Infinite Energy* co-founder Jed Rothwell, and cold fusion scientist Edmund Storms, who was an early advisor to the magazine. *Infinite Energy* is published by the non-profit New Energy Foundation (also founded by Gene), represented in the podcast by Board member Rick Broussard.

Archived interviews with Norwich (CT) Police Detective James Curtis (now retired) will help to tell the story of the investigation into Gene's murder.

This is the first time I have chosen to be on the record with an audio/video interview, and I echo the sentiments of Kimberlyn: I am hopeful that this re-telling of Gene's story in this type of medium will help to further secure his legacy



as an honest, faithful scientist and journalist.

"Crime Waves: Cold Truth" will air every Monday beginning November 6. Episodes 1 and 2 premiere November 6, followed by one episode for six weeks thereafter (with the final episode on December 18). Each episode will remain available after its release date.

#### References

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