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JOURNALIST GAINS ACCESS TO COUNTRY'S MOST EXTREME SUBCULTURES AND REVEALS AMERICA'S UNDERWORLD COULD BE RIGHT NEXT DOOR

– From Theft Rings to Meth Labs, Johnson Risks His Life to Get the Story –

(Silver Spring, Md.) – He's been chased, blindfolded and threatened with his life. He's negotiated with meth cooks, arms dealers and gangsters. Mark Allen Johnson puts everything on the line to pursue stories most wouldn't dare. In Discovery Channel's all-new **AMERICAN UNDERWORLD**, premiering Monday, September 19th at 10PM ET/PT, Johnson enters some of the most extreme, violent and hard-to-access subcultures in the country – from drug manufacturers to the sex trade – to tell the stories of an underground world that could be right next door.

Using unorthodox methods, Johnson uses a mix of brains and bravado to gain access to highly secretive worlds. Securing the trust of his subjects alone can be a deadly business, often requiring months of negotiations. Pointing a video camera at them truly puts his life at risk. Entering these worlds – sometimes blindfolded and separated from his crew – Johnson brings back some of the most raw and compelling footage on television.

Episode 1: Drugs

Premieres Monday, September 19th at 10PM ET/PT

Homemade drug manufacturing is a big business, and one that is taking place in kitchens across America. Johnson shows firsthand how drugs are made, distributed and used, from one of the largest crack cocaine businesses in Los Angeles to a highly toxic – and rarely seen – “shake ‘n’ bake” meth production process in rural Tennessee. After extensive negotiations, Johnson also gains the trust of a major homemade steroid producer and supplier who cooks up performance-enhancing drugs from raw ingredients sent from secret foreign suppliers. He tests them on himself before distributing them to people in gyms and homes across America.

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Episode 2: Theft

Premieres Monday, September 26th at 10PM ET/PT

Every 40 seconds, a car is stolen in America. Specialized car thieves are constantly “shopping” for cars – your cars – that meet their customers’ specifications. Johnson gains unprecedented access to a car theft ring and follows a thief who identifies a truck he needs, parked right in front of the owner’s house in a typical suburban neighborhood. He disarms the alarm system, drives it back to a secret “chop shop” where a gang is ready to strip and rebuild it (complete with new VIN number) , then resells it for a \$7,000 profit – all in less than 24 hours. Johnson also spends 48 hours with a veteran identity thief who shows just how vulnerable we are when his accomplice, a waitress, “skims” customers’ credit card information onto a hard drive to be used later to make easy money.

Episode 3: Sex Trade

Premieres Monday, October 3rd at 10PM ET/PT

The sex trade is a multi-billion dollar business, but working girls vary from streetwalkers controlled by outlandish pimps to highly sophisticated escorts charging thousands of dollars an hour. Johnson investigates the world of pimps, from Chicago – the birthplace of the American street pimp – to our nation’s capital where a pimp named Good Game sends his number one prostitute out to work the streets 24/7. But Mark doesn’t stop there. He gains access to girls working the sex trade with unparalleled intimacy. One girl has ditched the traditional pimp in favor of the Internet, making a six-figure income from high-class liaisons in five star hotels. And in Texas, Mark meets a man who has three girls living with him, working as strippers to support a lavish suburban lifestyle.

AMERICAN UNDERWORLD is produced for Discovery Channel by The Incubator, where Lisa Andrae is executive producer. For Discovery Channel, Cameo Wallace is executive producer.

About Discovery Channel

Discovery Channel is dedicated to creating the highest quality non-fiction content that informs and entertains its consumers about the world in all its wonder, diversity and amazement. The network, which is distributed to 100.8 million U.S. homes, can be seen in 210 countries and territories, offering a signature mix of compelling, high-end production values and vivid cinematography across genres including, science and technology, exploration, adventure, history and in-depth, behind-the-scenes glimpses at the people, places and organizations that shape and share our world. For more information, please visit www.discovery.com.

About Discovery Communications

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