

## About Todd Bensman

Todd Bensman is the Center's Texas-based Senior National Security Fellow. He is the author of "[America's Covert Border War: The Untold Story of the Nation's Battle to Prevent Jihadist Infiltration](#)", the untold story of a secret American border program created to prevent terrorist infiltration over the U.S. Southwest Border.

Prior to joining CIS in August 2018, Bensman led homeland security intelligence efforts for nine years in the public sector. Bensman's body of work with policy and intelligence operations is founded on more than 20 years of experience as an award-winning journalist covering national security topics, with particular focus on the Texas border.



In 2009, Bensman transitioned from journalism to join the Texas Department of Public Safety's Intelligence and Counterterrorism Division, where he managed teams of intelligence analysts that worked in concert with federal homeland security and U.S. Intelligence Community agencies to identify and mitigate terrorism threats. From the State of Texas fusion center for nine years, he designed and directed collection operations that fed into the Intelligence Community and prompted or advanced federal counterterrorism investigations. Among his original programs was a specialized effort to help federal partners disrupt human smuggling networks transporting migrants to the U.S. land border from countries where Islamist terrorist organizations are active.

Prior to his government experience, Bensman worked on staff for The Dallas Morning News, CBS, and Hearst Newspapers, covering the FBI, federal law enforcement and serving on investigative teams. He reported extensively on national security issues after 9/11 and worked from more than 25 countries in Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. In Texas, he authored long-form investigative stories with emphases on border security related to illegal immigration and Mexico's drug war. His reporting on human smuggling from Muslim-majority countries, Mexico's drug war, and cross-border gun smuggling to cartels earned two National Press Club awards and an Inter-American Press Association award, among others. The Texas Institute of Letters twice recognized Bensman's border coverage for high excellence in newspaper reporting. During the early 1990s, he reported on the Gulf War, to include scud missile attacks and refugee issues, from Israel, Egypt and Jordan. He went on to cover Eastern Europe, to include armed conflict in Moldova and a year covering warfare in Bosnia, where he provided frequent dispatches from the siege of Sarajevo.

Bensman holds a master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School, Center for Homeland Defense and Security; his thesis was entitled "[The Ultra-Marathoners of Human Smuggling: Defending Forward against Dark Networks that Can Transport Terrorists across American Land Borders](#)". He also holds a master's degree from the University of Missouri School of Journalism, and an undergraduate degree in journalism from Northern Arizona University.