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IMPROPER ARREST HELPED SOLVE A MURDER IN MICHIGAN, NEW BOOK REPORTS

Case Involved Witchcraft, a Ouija Board Death Prophecy, Psychics, and a Suspected Satanist Who Taunted a Clergyman

The 1976 murder of a 17-year-old Caro, Mich., girl might have gone unpunished had police not unknowingly violated the rights of the suspected killer's sister, according to a new book.

The body of Robin Adams "likely would never have been found but for the arrest and incarceration of Nora Garza," journalist Richard W. Carson, writes in *Murder in the Thumb*, which Marquette Books of Spokane, Wash., will publish May 15. Garza received full immunity to testify before a grand jury. Her arrest was improper but the judicial error was overlooked by her lawyers, the book points out.

Carson, who worked in Michigan at the time, spent more than two decades investigating the death of Adams, an attractive, blue-eyed blonde, who had recently graduated from Caro High School.

The case went unsolved for nearly eight years. Then, in 1984, after testimony at the secret grand jury, state police arrested Melvin Garza, Adams' 27-year-old former boyfriend, and his younger sister Nora and charged them with first-degree murder.

"While she was being held in jail, police pressured Nora to lead them to the victim's body, which was buried in a remote, wooded area near Caro," Carson writes.

"Melvin Garza might still be at large today if his sister's lawyers had recognized the force of the immunity she was granted," Carson said. "But the misstep didn't affect the investigation, because only her rights, and not those of her suspect brother, had been violated." Garza is currently serving a life sentence at the Thumb Correctional Facility in Lapeer, Mich.

Murder in the Thumb takes the reader into a strange world of witchcraft, a Ouija board death prophecy and a suspected Satanist who taunted a clergyman called to rid a house of frightening sounds and visions. Several families with connections to the case were later struck by tragedy, some occurring



(more)

on strangely coincidental dates.

The exhaustive police investigation took strange turns as a rookie detective matched wits with his canny adversary and saw the insights of two psychics prove strikingly accurate.

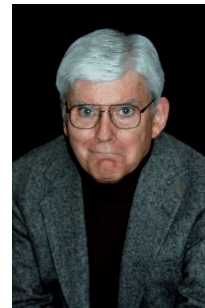
Carson's investigation of the case also revealed that:

- After a male friend of Nora Garza told police she had confessed to him about her role in the murder, he suffered a series of accidents that a medium he consulted blamed on black magic.
- Police suspected a forgery when Melvin Garza brought them a letter signed "Love, Robin" and which claimed that she had run away because he would not take her back. But several days before the letter arrived, Garza referred to it during a taped police interrogation. This apparent slip escaped notice for years.
- A former high school classmate of Melvin Garza's described in gripping detail an unexpected visit from him while she was alone with her two-year-old son. She said he was drunk, waving a pistol and warned her against telling police about his attempts to involve her in forging an alibi letter. This occurred the night before an expert witness testified at Garza's trial about the letter he had given police.
- A local radio deejay told police of a frightening encounter with Melvin Garza's sister whom he once dated but was trying to brush off. "Do you know about Robin Adams?" he quoted her as saying. "Well, I killed her and I'll kill you."

The author is available for telephone interviews, which can be arranged by e-mailing him at dcarson@columbus.rr.com or calling 614-473-1234.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Richard W. Carson was editorial page editor of *The Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch* before retiring in 2003 to work full time on this book. Prior to that, he attended Ferris State College and the University of Michigan and worked as a reporter and editor for the *Huron Daily Tribune*, where he received numerous awards for excellence in editorial, feature and news writing and for sports and feature photography. Carson, a widower, lives in Gahanna, Ohio, near his three grown children and six grandchildren.



ABOUT THE BOOK

Murder in the Thumb
By Richard W. Carson

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MARQUETTE BOOKS LLC

5915 S. Regal St., Suite 118B
Spokane, WA 99223
509-443-7057 (voice)
509-448-2191 (fax)
books@marquettebooks.com
www.MarquetteBooks.com