



Conviction: Solving the Moxley Murder: A Reporter and a Detective's Twenty-Year Search for Justice

By Leonard Levitt

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On October 30, 1975, fifteen-year-old Martha Moxley headed home from Halloween Eve antics with her Greenwich, Connecticut, neighbors Tommy and Michael Skakel. She never made it. Her brutal murder with a golf club in her own backyard made national headlines. But for years no one was arrested, despite troubling clues pointing to the Skakels, a rich and powerful family related to the Kennedys. After the police department's first unsuccessful attempts to catch the killer, the case lay dormant, and the culprit remained free.

Enter Leonard Levitt. In 1982, the *Stamford Advocate* and *Greenwich Time* newspapers asked investigative reporter Levitt to look into the murder and the undying rumors of a cover-up. Levitt soon uncovered groundbreaking information about how the police had bungled the investigation, and he learned that Tommy and Michael had lied about their activities on the night of the murder. But Levitt's articles about his findings -- and the haunting questions they raised -- almost never saw the light of day. For years, Levitt's superiors mysteriously refused to publish the stories. Convinced that the Moxley family deserved the peace and closure they had so long been denied, Levitt fought desperately to keep his discoveries alive. Finally, after Levitt's first article appeared, the case was reopened.

Enter Frank Garr. As the newly appointed investigator on the Moxley case, the seasoned Greenwich detective doggedly pursued unexplored leads and became increasingly convinced that for over a decade, his colleagues had been pursuing the wrong suspects. At first mistrustful of one another, as reporters and detectives often are, Levitt and Garr became friends, encouraging each other in their quest for the truth as the obstacles against them piled up.

In 2002, more than twenty-five years after Moxley's death, a shocked world watched as Michael Skakel was convicted of the murder, thanks largely to the evidence Garr alone had marshaled against him.

Now, for the first time, Leonard Levitt tells the amazing true story of Garr's fight

to solve the case and of how their friendship with each other, and with Martha Moxley's mother, Dorothy, sustained them over the years. A riveting, suspenseful drama that unfolds like a mystery novel, this incredible memoir also reveals how a police officer and a reporter refused to give up, and how they helped justice to prevail, against all odds.

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By Leonard Levitt **Bibliography**

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Veteran *Newsday* police reporter Levitt offers his personal perspective on the long trail from the 1975 murder of teenager Martha Moxley to the 2002 conviction of Michael Skakel, but fails to make his presentation compelling. Levitt's tale includes his struggle with his editor to get his stories published and his bond with Martha's mother, Dorothy, and detective Frank Garr, whom he credits with solving the case. Although his point of view differs from those of others who have written on the crime, such as Mark Fuhrman and Timothy Dumas, Levitt treads over familiar ground. Aside from his bias against the whole Skakel family, perhaps the book's greatest deficiency is Levitt's failure to seriously confront and refute the logical arguments made by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Skakel's cousin, in a 2003 *Atlantic Monthly* essay, which contends that the evidence at trial was insufficient and notes that other suspects, including the Skakel family tutor, were more likely to have committed the vicious slaying. One such suspect, the Skakel gardener, who had boasted of a history of sexual assaults, is not even mentioned here. While Levitt deserves credit for his dogged pursuit of the truth, which led to a reopening of the moribund investigation in 1991, he has fallen short of his goal to tell the complete story. B&w photos.

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Review

“A bombshell new book.” (Sunday Mirror)

“It’s the true-to-life whodunit about a reporter who wouldn’t let go.” (New York Post)

About the Author

Leonard Levitt writes "One Police Plaza," a column for *Newsday*. He previously held the position of Investigations Editor at the *New York Post*, and his work has appeared in *Time*, *Harper's*, the *New York Times Magazine*, and *Esquire*. The recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation Humanities grant, he also served in the Peace Corps in Africa. He lives in Stamford, Connecticut.

Users Review

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