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Who Killed Betty Gail Brown? Murder, Mistrial, and Mystery

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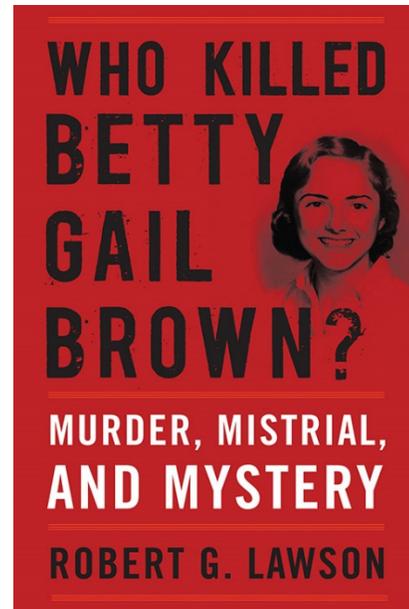
picture of the brandy milk punch. A color photograph of five scrumptious cuisine items commences the section Vishwesh Bhatt's Cocktail Bites (or, Never Drink on an Empty Stomach) including eleven delectable cooking recipes from Snackbar eatery in Oxford, Mississippi. A world class shrimp toast recipe from China and Vietnam is showcased.

An interesting color picture of tools to create the mixtures adds to a list of twenty cocktail tools and their descriptions. A part named Glassware supplies details on seven lovely types of glasses along with a pretty picture of the seven glasses. The Drink Categories section clarifies twelve terms related to cocktails such as collins, cobbler, crusta, daisy, fizz, flip, frappe, highball, julep, rickey, sour, and toddy. Fifteen thought-provoking divisions Sidebars are one to two page coverage of data about drinks. For example, Sidebar Church Lady Punch discusses drinks without alcohol such as freezing Tom Collins mix or combining sherbet with carbonated items. The part Techniques explains twenty-four methods to developing cocktails. Eight good quality color photographs of the techniques catch the attention of the readers reading about the techniques. Two accurate and useful indexes are Index of Names and Index of Drinks and Ingredients. The book provides twenty-seven good quality color photographs of the contributing authors with biographical descriptions. The Bibliography consists of eighty-one references divided by twenty-eight books, thirty-seven articles, and six multimedia items.

Recipes of legendary cocktails and the celebrated places that sell them are disclosed. A few unusual drinks are Charleston, South Carolina's natural blonde Bloody Mary using yellow tomatoes, Oregano Cobbler containing fresh oregano, Savannah Georgia's Chatham Artillery Punch, Ruby Slipper utilizing grapefruit juice, and Bitter Heart with artichoke amaro, Cynar. The brilliant detailed collection of cocktail instructions and histories is excellent for public and academic libraries and researchers of cocktails.

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Who Killed Betty Gail Brown? Murder, Mistrial, and Mystery. Robert G. Lawson. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2017. ISBN 978-0-8131-7462-4 (cloth); 978-0-8131-7464-8 (epub); 978-0-8131-7463-1 (epub). \$34.95. 216 p.



Who Killed Betty Gail Brown? Murder, Mistrial, and Mystery follows the final hours of life for Betty Gail Brown, the investigation into her death, and the trial that ensued. Brown was 19 and in her second year at Transylvania College when she disappeared on the evening of October 26, 1961. She was leaving a gathering at one of the dormitories on campus to go home but never made it home. Shortly after midnight, worried about her daughter and the lateness of the hour, Quincy Brown began a search for her around campus, and called police when she did not find her. Around 3:00 A.M., Betty Gail's body was found, strangled, in her car on campus only a few blocks from the dormitory where she had been earlier. She had an upstanding reputation; a young lady who was liked by everyone she knew, and very active religiously.

Forensics of the time determined that Betty Gail had died from "suffocation from strangulation by external force applied in such a manner as to produce abrasions about the neck with crushing and hemorrhage into the larynx." The murder weapon was determined to be the victim's bra, although, no rape seemed to have occurred and the rest of her clothes were intact. There was no obvious answer concerning why she was killed, or who may have been responsible. From more than one hundred interviews conducted, investigators learned very little that was considered relevant enough to be included in the police report. One thing they did learn, Betty Gail was very careful about locking the doors of her car and would not have opened them to a stranger. This made some investigators believe that the victim and killer were acquaintances.

During the following months, as frenzied newspapers printed many details of the murder (some of which were not public disclosure), numerous suspects arose. All of the suspects were dismissed for lack of evidence. Perhaps one of the most plausible suspects detained for the crime included a former student of Transylvania College who was found and arrested in a New York City park possessing several newspaper clippings about the girl's death. He claimed the clippings had been sent to him by a friend who was a student at the time of the murder. Both the man arrested, as well as the person who had sent him the newspaper clippings, were properly investigated and dismissed.

On January 16, 1965, a thirty three year old man named Alex Arnold Jr., was in Klamath Falls, Oregon. He had stopped in Klamath Falls amidst a cross country journey that he was taking after being released from prison in Kentucky. He had been born, and had lived most of his life in Lexington, with the exception of two years during the Korean War, and one year of incarceration in LaGrange, Kentucky. On this day, Arnold had become intoxicated and lost control of his behavior. He was arrested for disorderly conduct in a public place. Little did he know, this would be the end of his cross country trek, and land him as the major suspect in the murder of Betty Gail Brown, specifically because he confessed to the crime but was released after trial because of a deadlocked jury.

In telling the story of the brutal murder of a beautiful young woman and the hunt for closure, Lawson weaves together a combination of statements from the investigation, with firsthand knowledge and good research. It is interesting to view these events through the eyes of someone who was in law school at the University of Kentucky at the time of the murder, and who later served as an attorney for the defense of the man who confessed to committing the crime. At the time of the event, Lawson followed newspaper account of the killing for months, and found the story to be, in his own words, "sadly intriguing". Lawson says he never dreamed that he would enter the case as a player but when Arnold was arrested, he was asked to serve this post by a senior member of the firm. Like the jury that ended deadlocked, causing a mistrial, Lawson admits that he is not sure if Arnold was guilty or not. He states that he is not even sure if Arnold knew if he was guilty or innocent. Lawson's writing is interesting and compelling. He logically follows the course of events, coming to the conclusion that there is really no conclusion at all.

The question remains, who killed Betty Gail Brown? The mystery remains to this day, and an even more mysterious question that Lawson poses is, who would **want** to kill Betty Gail Brown?

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