



Witch: The True Story of Las Vegas' Most Notorious Female Killer

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Drawing on extensive interviews with the accused herself, here is the sordid, twisted, and surprising story of Brookey Lee West--a successful technical writer from Silicon Valley who went on a twenty year crime and killing spree.

Witch: The True Story of Las Vegas' Most Notorious Female Killer Details

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Kim Hampton says

The author really did his research and showed events from both viewpoints. The pictures included were shocking. Warning: it does contain foul language as direct quotes.

Deann F says

Glen Puit does a very thorough, very factual, recounting of the life and crimes of Brookey West, stemming from his time as a crime reporter in Las Vegas. Though documentary like it reads like a novel, but without the neat and tidy resolution. Child abuse, mental illness, racism, drug abuse and alcoholism all play a part in West's life.

The story begins with the discovery of a body in a rolling trash can in a storage unit. The police work and investigation is fascinating.

Lou says

If you like real life crimes - it is good. I remember hearing of this after it happened...now, it has nothing to do with witches (Brookey West's family delved into the occult), and that fact has nothing to do with Brookey's murders she committed....the author does have a small paragraph in the Author's Note - stating this is in no way connected to Wiccans in the U.S. or witches, who do not use the craft for evil....just felt it would have been better not to use Witches fr a title - not connected to the story in any major way....

Suzie Flohr says

great book

SouthWestZippy says

This is one strange and demented woman. Overdone on the detail for my taste in some parts but the story was so fascinating it keep my interest and was a good book. Quick read but not a easy read.

Gill says

I was hooked on this book from the first chapter. A really interesting well written book about an evil woman. A definite recommendation to those that like true crime stories.

Helen says

This was a fairly interesting and quick true-crime read. The writing style is somewhat sensationalist but to be expected with this type of book. I had expected, based on the title, some kind of occult influence on the crimes perpetrated by West, but there wasn't. She read tarot cards, thought she was psychic and had some books on the subject, this was just something the media could use to get more mileage out of the story. It's more useful as a tale that serves to illustrate how damaged, abusive people such as West's highly dysfunctional parents go on to produce damaged, messed-up children. Moreover, West probably attracted more opprobrium because she violated society's idealised mother-daughter relationship, it wasn't just that she was a *female* killer, but that she killed her own mother too, a woman who came across as deeply unlikable and inadequate, but we somehow expect motherhood status to offset almost everything else about a woman. Still, this was a thought-provoking case though more insight into West's psychology would have proved enlightening, as she was clearly an intelligent woman who likely had sociopathic tendencies/borderline personality as a result of her chaotic upbringing.

Gary Taylor says

Insertion of the femme fatale or wicked woman has served as an irresistible literary device back to the Garden of Eden, where Eve tried to blame it all on a snake. It's only been in the last generation, however, that we learned the fairer sex can actually be more than a fictional antagonist. True crime books and TV documentaries have heralded the emergence of the true-life femme fatale as a uniquely dangerous breed, and some of us just can't get enough.

So, I say thanks to newsman Glenn Puit for his cold-blooded introduction of Brookey Lee West through publication of *Witch*. Brookey clearly deserves a spot in anyone's Wicked Woman Hall of Fame. We meet her in the first chapter as the prize suspect in the gruesome "burial" of her own mother in a hermetically sealed barrel where the older woman had been left to rot and liquefy for several years inside a shed. After that eye-opener to begin the book, Puit takes the reader on a nostalgic trip back to Brookey's 1950s roots to learn that the acorn had not fallen too far from the tree. Then, he highlights the unsolved murder of Brookey's ex-husband and her fascination with the occult before recounting the basics of the trial in her mother's death that ultimately put her behind bars for life in Nevada.

The result is an intriguing but limited chronicle of violence and mystery that is quick and easy to read.

It is limited in a couple of ways. True crime succeeds only to the degree that the author can effectively infiltrate the mind of the criminal and plumb the development of their deviousness. With full access to a repentant transgressor, a skillful reporter can shake the skeletons out of their head and paint a clear picture of psychotic motivation. Although Puit had access, Brookey continues to deny her guilt, so he was unable to pop all the best questions. Nevertheless, he did an admirable job of assembling the pieces of her troubled background together into a fascinating puzzle that helps explain a lot.

I also must challenge Puit's decision to religiously employ newspaper reporting style for the book--describing all action through quotes of recollection rather than recreating the action as narrative to heighten suspense. At times, the story seems to be coming through a filter at arm's length from the action while also prompting confusion whenever he had to use quotations inside other quotations to reconstruct dialogue.

Still, if you want to get in touch with true crime's feminine side, I recommend a date with Brookey Lee West. Let Glenn Puit set you up!

Deanne says

The sort of neighbour who would make me contact my nearest estate agent. There are some people that just feel wrong, and Brookey West is one of them.

Laila Haycox says

I find it difficult to say I enjoyed this book due to the subject but I was interested enough to finish it.

♥ Marlene♥ says

on Sunday, June 15, 2008

Finished it last night. I quite liked this book to my surprise. It kept me enthralled from beginning till the end.

QueenBee says

Loved this book.. such an interesting but scary true story.. would recommend to all!!

Jaidee says

My review disappeared. Must be a witch involved !!!

Gosh darn it !

I will keep it short. An excellent true crime story regarding a family of criminals and the most sociopathic of women who almost gets away with several murders in Nevada and California.

Fascinating and dark !!

Read this with the light on !

Jeanette says

The first half was better than a 3 star, at least 4. And the autopsy process and the entire progression of procedures to get the victim to the autopsy was 5 star.

But the second half of the book was mostly straight transcript or neighbor witness "word for word".

This was a truly sick, sick family. And that the woman Brookey Lee West had continuous employment at one company in the technical writing field as long as she did for her mental condition? That's what I found nearly inexplicable.

And after all was finished within this book's reading, I was left with almost a single thought. That the little girl who was left at the Indian boarding school when she was 4 years old and never saw her mother or grandmother again was the luckiest person in this bloodline.

The photos are 5 star. It lost more than 1 full star for all the gratuitous language and foul extras that did not have to be so front and center for each and every Christine and Brookey life conversation.

I really did feel for those Fir Street tiny town neighbors! We had a couple in my youth that were bad, but not this bad. Presently there is an empty house by me now going on 3 years plus vacant- but all of the other 30 plus houses on our street prefer it that way. Rather than how it was before the extended group family owners let it get reclaimed by the bank while ravishing the entire structure and every movable part before then left it. It's truly a difficult problem when crazy is visible and coming in your back door without knocking while holding a stun gun.

Elizabeth says

Interesting story, poorly written book. Very frustrating.
