



News



Karyn Kupcinet 1963 death still unsolved

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On Thanksgiving Day 1963, as the nation still was reeling from the [assassination of President John F. Kennedy](#), a 22-year-old woman was killed in Hollywood. Her naked body wasn't discovered by neighbors for three days. Though still a struggling, little-known actress, her death was banner-headline news in Chicago. Her name was Karyn Kupcinet.

The daughter of longtime [Chicago Sun-Times](#) columnist Irv Kupcinet and his wife, Essee, Karyn had been working in Los Angeles for a while but was looking for the break that would catapult her to stardom.

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The Tribune story on Sunday, Dec. 1, was a mess. It got her age wrong and quoted anonymous police sources "considering the possibility that the death was a suicide." Later in the story an identified detective called her death a murder and said, "The apartment was all torn up. There must've been a tremendous struggle."

Very little about the case would prove simple.



been strangled. Prine said he had talked with her twice by phone on Wednesday, trying to patch up a "lovers' quarrel." Two of the men, who knew her through Prine, said they visited her apartment Wednesday evening and left when she turned in for the night.

Police then revealed that Prine and Kupcinet had been the target of anonymous death threats, the words written in letters cut out of magazines, as if in a pulp novel. But even that didn't lead anywhere. Two days later, the Tribune reported that police found Kupcinet's fingerprints on the sticky side of a piece of tape used to make the threatening letters. She apparently had been sending the notes to herself and Prine with the hope it would bring them back together.

Because of its proximity to Kennedy's assassination, Kupcinet's death got wrapped up in one of the more far-fetched conspiracy theories that had her trying to warn officials that the president was in danger.

More than 1,500 people attended services at Temple Shalom on North Lake Shore Drive, including Gov. [Otto Kerner](#) and Mayor Richard J. Daley.

The eulogist described her as a beautiful person with a warm heart who "moved across the stage of life too quickly."

The slaying remains unsolved.

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