**SLUGGER O’TOOLE**

**3 September 2015**

**Desmond Curran brother of murdered Patricia Curran reported dead in South Africa…**



[korhomme](http://sluggerotoole.com/author/korhomme/) on 3 September 2015 , 11:18 am [60 Comments](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#disqus_thread) | 1,567 views

<http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/>

**De mortuis nil nisi bonum**



The Late Father Desmond Curran

In March this year I wrote a short piece about the murder in 1952 of Patricia Curran ([here](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/03/25/after-almost-70-years-the-murder-of-patricia-curran-casts-a-long-shadow/)). Patricia was the daughter of a judge, the police investigation of her death was thwarted by the judge, a ‘confession’ was obtained from an innocent man who, in a travesty of the legal process, was found ‘guilty but insane’ and incarcerated in a mental hospital for seven years.

This man was Iain Hay Gordon; no explanation was given for his release, though he was required to live under an assumed name. Only in 2000 was he acquitted on appeal.

When I wrote the piece, I noted that Patricia’s brother, Desmond, was then the only survivor and witness of this tragedy, and ended with an appeal for information. Desmond came from a staunchly protestant family, but some years after her death he converted to Catholicism, later taking holy orders. He became a missionary in South Africa.

I received an email today with a link to [a Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/melletpt/posts/10153152486912507%3A0). Desmond had remained in S Africa, and had recently died there. He was remembered with affection; and the author only discovered Desmond’s story after many years, confirming his view of Desmond, that he had a ‘past’, that he carried a ‘burden’.

A search found [another post](https://www.facebook.com/CatholicWelfareAndDevelopment), a short note dated 25 August 2015, noting Desmond’s death —scroll down to read it.

With Desmond’s death, it seems that we will never know what exactly happened to Patricia Curran.

*My thanks to Liz for the email and Facebook link, and to Brian O’Neill for technical help.*

 [Slater](https://disqus.com/by/Seepage/) • [11 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2236908658)

The family plainly followed the script of Murder on the Orient Express when every one of the passengers on the train participated in the killing.
As upper-class Protestants and Unionists, the Currans were uniquely capable of the most vicious crime it is possible to commit while the whole establishment, being grotesquely immoral, were at one in protecting them and framing an innocent man.
It's what you do.

[Croiteir](https://disqus.com/by/croiteir/) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235709096)

Reading this makes me wonder if there is an opening in the crystal ball market in Belfast

[CurlyShark](https://disqus.com/by/curlyshark/) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233560419)

I think it's fairly common knowledge that Patricia's mother was in fact the perpertrator and the whole thing was hushed up to protect her. Desmond probably couldn't live with the burden of this and removed himself and dedicated the rest of his life to missionary work. Tragedy.

[Korhomme](https://disqus.com/by/korhomme/) [CurlyShark](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233560419) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233895194)

"I think it's fairly common knowledge that Patricia's mother was in fact
the perpetrator and the whole thing was hushed up to protect her."

That is the commonly accepted version of the story, but it is only a theory—albeit one that fits the facts very well—rather than 'knowledge'.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [CurlyShark](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233560419) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233565654)

It looks like he spent the rest of his life trying to atone for what he did.

But sadly, that atonement did not stretch to a deathbed confession (or at least one that we know about). Which is surprising for a branch of Christianity that places so much store in the Confessional.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233565654) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233692363)

I think you are confusing the religious notion of 'sin' with the civil one of an illegal action. When 'thou shalt not bear false witness' clashes with 'honour thy father and mother', which path is one to take? The Catholic Church frequently conspires to place 'misadventure' on death certificates, when 'suicide' is the actual truth, and thinks nothing of it.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233692363) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233723604)

It's a very long time since the RC church were able to put the cause of death on a death certificate.

It surprises me - perhaps it shouldn't - that the church view on honouring your father and mother extends as far as concealing their involvement in serious wrongdoing.

[MalikHills](https://disqus.com/by/MalikHills/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233723604) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233737933)

"It surprises me - perhaps it shouldn't - that the church view on
honouring your father and mother extends as far as concealing their
involvement in serious wrongdoing."

It doesn't.

And even if it did, if this man did perjure himself in 1952 leading to an innocent man going to jail, when he did so he was a leading member of the Presbyterian faith.

Sorry, can't blame the papists for this one.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233737933) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233741071)

I am not sure that he was a witness in the trial, but either way, I wasn't blaming the "papists". An individuals choices in life are his own.

Fr Curran chose not to reveal the truth, which is his choice, but one which I thought would have been at odds with his faith. Had he heard a layperson say that he helped to cover up a murder in the confessional, I've no doubt he would have encouraged that person to tell the truth.

[Korhomme](https://disqus.com/by/korhomme/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233741071) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233891702)

Desmond was a witness at the trial; but as I recall he only gave evidence about finding Patricia's body—and perhaps, thinking that she breathed.

The defence barrister took the brief on condition that he did not have to cross-examine any member of the Curran family.

[MalikHills](https://disqus.com/by/MalikHills/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233741071) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233771662)

"Fr Curran chose not to reveal the truth, which is his choice, but one which I thought would have been at odds with his faith."

It was also against the faith, and professional principals, of his father (who disowned his son when he converted) and the dozens of other leading legal figures and police officers who lied and framed an innocent man.

But let's concentrate on the faith of the brother who didn't actually convert to that faith until several years after the events in question, eh?

[Korhomme](https://disqus.com/by/korhomme/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233771662) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233900549)

Desmond's father, Lancelot, though an Orangeman, attended Desmond's ordination in Rome; hardly 'disowning'.

[1](https://disqus.com/embed/comments/?base=default&version=df9024841357efbcd5a729b3e405bd88&f=sluggerotoole&t_i=93356%20http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F%3Fp%3D93356&t_u=http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F2015%2F09%2F03%2Fdesmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african%2F&t_e=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&t_d=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%E2%80%A6&t_t=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&s_o=default&l=)

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233771662) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233773411)

Just in case you didn't notice. This is a discussion about Des Curran, the only person left who was in a position to reveal the truth about the murder.

You're asking me to change the subject to that of his father ?

Isn't Des Curran's faith a legitimate subject to bring up in the circumstances ?

[MalikHills](https://disqus.com/by/MalikHills/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233773411) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233779283)

And it has degenerated into a thinly veiled and entirely irrelevant attack on his adopted religion, rather than on the real culprits behind the tragedy in his life, and more importantly the life of an innocent man who was framed by people, none of whom were Catholics.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233779283) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233783585)

How is discussion Desmond Curran's faith at the time of his death "entirely irrelevant" ? It defined his life for over 50 years, from the point when he converted.

[MalikHills](https://disqus.com/by/MalikHills/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233783585) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233795526)

If (and none of us know for sure that he was) Father Curran was in some way involved in a heinous crime while he was a Presbyterian then it is to his credit that he sought redemption through good works for the rest of his life, it is also worth noting that he sought that redemption through the Catholic faith.

As opposed to those who made no effort to redeem themselves and who remained committed and no doubt devout protestants.

But hey let's stick the boot in to the papes, it's always their fault isn't it?

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233795526) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233831585)

You obviously have a few problems with rationality and proportion, and are seeing things that are not there. I'm not hostile to the Catholic faith. I was baptised, confirmed and educated in a Catholic grammar school until I was 18, although I stopped regularly attending mass and the confessional after I was around 13.

Asking questions about a priest and the nature of his faith is not "sticking the boot into the papes". Equally asking questions about his faith prior to his conversion is not sticking the boot into anyone either.

Having read the orbituaries quoted in the article, there is no question in my mind that Fr Des sacrificed everything he had, including a promising career that would almost certainly have ended up with a secure place among the judiciary, and lived a life in the service of the poor from the point when he converted. To me that is the definition of living in a Christlike way.

Of course nobody knows for sure what happened. But there's little in the way of serious doubt that the Currans covered up that murder and used their influence within the establishment at the time to do so. We know for a fact that the police investigation was severely compromised and that Lance Curran was central to this. We know that Lance Curran refused to allow police to enter the family home during the week following the murder. Desmond Curran would have known what took place in that house during that week.

The fact that Fr Curran devoted his life, almost certainly seeking redemption, does not extinguish the fact that he was almost certainly implicated in wrongdoing and did not act to reverse the sins he committed himself, particularly against Iain Hay Gordon whose life was utterly destroyed in order to protect Fr Curran and his parents.

[MalikHills](https://disqus.com/by/MalikHills/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233831585) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235082522)

There is the strongest possibility that Desmond Curran may well have been involved in the cover-up of a murder and the subsequent framing of an innocent young man.

My point is that these things happened at a time when he was a committed and indeed evangelising member of a protestant religion. All the other actors in the dreadful crime of fitting up an innocent young man for murder were also protestants, to a man, many of them given the circumstances of the time were also probably members of the staunchly protestant and overtly anti-Catholic Orange Order.

Years later, whether racked by guilt we do not know, Desmond converted to the Catholic faith and devoted his life to self-sacrifice, charity and helping the poorest and most marginalised people on earth, tasks that he carried out humbly and in devotion to Christ.

It is significant and extremely telling that in your initial comments on Desmond Curran's life it was the subsequent and utterly blameless Catholic period of his life that you singled out for rather petty and irrelevant criticism.

[Cosmo](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_W9VFTNrEXz/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235082522) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235330639)

Another theory is that the sister was killed when she threatened to ( shame the family) and go public on Desmonds's sexual activities ( which were under the cover of his involvement in the crusading evangelising religious group, called Moral Rearmament). ( a movement based on Absolutes in purity, honesty, unselfishness and love....)
We can only hope that his subsequent activities with the vulnerable in Africa were closely supervised by the Catholic Church Authorities.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233831585) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233865891)

The imprisonment of I.H. Gordon did not protect Father Curran deceased. It was apparently contrived at by Fr Curran’s father, Judge Curran, with the complicity of the RUC and NI Judiciary, to protect the life and reputation of Father’s C.’s mother, a paranoid schizophrenic subsequently committed to a mental asylum.

I’m sorry, but the Catholic Church only allows you to confess what you yourself have done: there is no provision for vicarious confession. You cannot get absolution for saying “I’m German, and my grandparents were Nazis.” So we should not be surprised if Fr Curran did not leave behind a deathbed confession, however much this would gratify the curiosity of scandal-mongers.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2233865891) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234066228)

Paddy, the conviction and imprisonment of Gordon did protect Desmond Curran who at the very least probably committed an offence by not passing on everything he knew about the murder from the police. It's really splitting hairs to try to separate the question of protecting Judge Curran's wife from the question of protecting the family's interests as a whole.

Where did you hear that Doris Curran was committed to an asylum ? It's new to me, and I'm pretty familiar with the story.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234066228) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234072815)

I think you may have got the asylum story from an Eoin MacNamee story. MacNamee embellished the story of the Curran murder with some flourishes of his own, and I suspect this was one of them.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234072815) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234164139)

That is correct, all mentions of Doris Curran in an asylum can be traced to MacNamee. But where did he get the story?

*not passing on everything he knew about the murder from the police.* We are not obliged to give hearsay evidence.

[1](https://disqus.com/embed/comments/?base=default&version=df9024841357efbcd5a729b3e405bd88&f=sluggerotoole&t_i=93356%20http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F%3Fp%3D93356&t_u=http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F2015%2F09%2F03%2Fdesmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african%2F&t_e=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&t_d=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%E2%80%A6&t_t=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&s_o=default&l=)

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234164139) • [13 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234746385)

*That is correct, all mentions of Doris Curran in an asylum can be traced to MacNamee. But where did he get the story?*

Given that he is a fictional writer, I expect he imagined it.

*We are not obliged to give hearsay evidence.*

Strawman.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234746385) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235459147)

No, your entire post is based on the premise that someone is morally obliged to confess a sin they didn’t commit and civilly obliged to report a crime they didn’t witness.

What is clear is that the RUC was complicit in any cover-up that occurred, so reporting one’s suspicions to them was pointless.

I simply find the whole scenario unbelievable. Young women are not normally stabbed to death by their well-heeled fathers, mothers or brothers. Deferring to Curlyshark and Korhomme, I picked up on the insanity angle, as the only thing that could make a plausible story. But even then: I have heard of plenty of male lunatics who killed their mother, female ones who killed their lover, but never a female one who stabbed to death her grown daughter.

If a young woman is stabbed to death, it is invariably by a man with a sexual interest in her, supplemented either by perversion, jealousy or anger at rejection. The accused did fit the bill; if it wasn’t him, it would be someone like him.

I would suggest that the Currans wished to cover up the fact that she was ‘entertaining’ young men in their house and moved her body outside, and not that they were complicit in said murder.

1

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235459147) [11 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237626677)

*No, your entire post is based on the premise that someone is morally obliged to confess a sin they didn’t commit and civilly obliged to report a crime they didn’t witness.*

That's a lie.

The premise that I am working to is very obviously that Desmond Curran did commit both sins, and crimes. I've never suggested that someone should be accountable for a crime they did not commit.

Now, it's fair to say that there is no evidence to prove that Curran committed a crime. But you can't say that Curran did not commit a crime. Most people think that he and his parents did. Why else would they have interfered with a police investigation, and how else can the series of inconsistent phonecalls made by Judge Curran and his wife on that evening be explained ?

*What is clear is that the RUC was complicit in any cover-up that occurred, so reporting one’s suspicions to them was pointless.*

I can't believe that someone would be so ignorant.

You know full well who gave the RUC their orders - the Unionist regime at Stormont of which Judge Curran was an integral and highly-regarded part. As Attorney General he would have been an appointee of the Home Affairs department just as was the RUC Chief Constable.

It was Judge Curran who made the decision to interfere with the crime scene, and Judge Curran prevented the RUC from properly examining family home. Clearly, the RUC themselves were in fear of standing up to Curran and insisting that they carry out their investigation. That doesn't mean that this is all pinned on the police.

Who made the decision to remove the RUC, when the senior police officer overseeing the investigation began to make noises - which were recorded at the time but were not heard in court - to the effect that the "unthinkable" notion that the Currans were complicit would have to be considered ?

Judge Curran worked with his friends to ensure that whoever committed this murder covered it up.

*I simply find the whole scenario unbelievable. Young women are not normally stabbed to death by their well-heeled fathers, mothers or brothers.*

That's part of the reason why this story fascinates so many people well over 60 years later. It doesn't mean that we can simply discount the fact that Curran, the authorities and the police acted to block a proper investigation of the crime scene, and to fit up an innocent man.

*I would suggest that the Currans wished to cover up the fact that she was ‘entertaining’ young men in their house and moved her body outside, and not that they were complicit in said murder.*

It is preposterous to suggest that Judge Curran tolerated an army of his daughter's lovers coming to and from the family home, and even more preposterous that the murderer was inside the family home and committed the act without any of the three family members being aware of who it was.

[Slater](https://disqus.com/by/Seepage/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237626677) • [11 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237988066)

It is true you can't prove Curran did not commit the crime. Indeed as you can never prove a negative that is a deceitful (and pointless) remark.
Secondly if the RUC was involved in an organised cover-up (never easy when a case is to go into open court) why did the Scotland Yard detective get appointed to assist and was he then party to the conspiracy?
Remember there is no evidence implicating any of the family, only inconsistencies and speculation about odd behaviour but when your relative has just been butchered you don't always do things by the book.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Slater](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237988066) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238897853)

You're misreading me (this seems to be happening a lot).

[and actually, you can prove a negative. I can prove that I wasn't holidaying in Torquay yesterday. But anyway .. ]

There is a subtle difference here. I said "you cannot say that Curran did not commit the crime". I didn't refer to proof. The statement "Curran did not commit the crime" is an assertion that cannot be easily defended. of course, this is something would not and should not stand up in a court of law.

the point I am making is that it is ridiculous to say, given the facts that the body was moved, that the Curran family interfered with the crime scene, and that the Curran family refused to allow the police to search their house, that Desmond Curran had no knowledge of what happened on the night of the murder.

*Secondly if the RUC was involved in an organised cover-up (never easy when a case is to go into open court) why did the Scotland Yard detective get appointed to assist and was he then party to the conspiracy?*

I don't think the RUC were ordered to go easy on Curran. But it's likely that the RUC deliberately avoided lines of inquiry that could cause careers to come to an end. The RUC hierarchy were directly answerable to Curran's friends.

I think the RUC were taken off the case because they were reaching the point when they would finger Curran, but were hesitating. Capstick was appointed to secure the conviction and was clearly briefed to pin it on Iain Hay Gordon as we now know from examination of the confessions, from Gordon's testimony about the way interviews were conducted etc.

*Remember there is no evidence implicating any of the family, only inconsistencies and speculation about odd behaviour but when your relative has just been butchered you don't always do things by the book.*

I agree that no evidence exists to prove that the family did anything wrong. But had Judge Curran been a regular member of the public, rather than a senior judge and politician, I suspect things would have had a very different outcome.

[Cosmo](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_W9VFTNrEXz/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235459147) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235643724)

How's about.... the brother did it? And the Establishment cover up went into action.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Cosmo](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235643724) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235665094)

In real life, respectable people with evangelical preoccupations do not commit sanguinary murders with the same savage abandon that they do in fiction.

Stabbing to death is a very extreme way of killing a woman. Whoever did it was either

1) insane,
2) high on drugs (not really a possibility in 1952)
3) frenzied through lust or love which had turned to hate.

I don’t see that that could be a family member unless egregiously off their rocker.

* + [2](https://disqus.com/embed/comments/?base=default&version=df9024841357efbcd5a729b3e405bd88&f=sluggerotoole&t_i=93356%20http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F%3Fp%3D93356&t_u=http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F2015%2F09%2F03%2Fdesmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african%2F&t_e=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&t_d=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%E2%80%A6&t_t=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&s_o=default&l=)

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235665094) • [11 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237628932)

*In real life, respectable people with evangelical preoccupations do not commit sanguinary murders with the same savage abandon that they do in fiction.*
Do they put cameras in toilets and make videos of people using the facilities ?

* + - [1](https://disqus.com/embed/comments/?base=default&version=df9024841357efbcd5a729b3e405bd88&f=sluggerotoole&t_i=93356%20http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F%3Fp%3D93356&t_u=http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F2015%2F09%2F03%2Fdesmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african%2F&t_e=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&t_d=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%E2%80%A6&t_t=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&s_o=default&l=)

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237628932) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238185027)

Yes of course. Respectable Evangelical folk are frequently arch-hypocrites, perverts and monetary frauds. But I don’t see them as knife murderers.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237628932) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238149927)

removed.

[Cosmo](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_W9VFTNrEXz/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235665094) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235811182)

But, why would there be such a determined family cover- up, if it wasn't a member of the family who did the deed?
Don't you find 'Respectable' people with evangelical preoccupations, are full of emotional energy, particularly because they can't live up to 'absolute' and fundamentalist standards?
I just hope there was some supervision on his activities with the vulnerable, in Africa.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Cosmo](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2235811182) • [12 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2236239074)

Murders and other similar crimes, when they happen, invariably come at a very inconvenient moment. Concerned family members will always have the temptation to interfere with the crime-scene to make it more presentable.

If someone tries to break in to my house, I am always tempted to do the dishes and pick up the magazines before calling the police. When a close family member is murdered there may be many embarrassing details that a ‘respectable’ family of judicial bent will want to rectify: to make sure the deceased is decently dressed, and not in a pink tutu, to remove all signs of pornography, whips and handcuffs, to destroy incriminating diaries, etc etc.

Unfortunately outsiders frequently mistake an embarrassed concern for propriety for proof of criminal involvement.

* + - * [2](https://disqus.com/embed/comments/?base=default&version=df9024841357efbcd5a729b3e405bd88&f=sluggerotoole&t_i=93356%20http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F%3Fp%3D93356&t_u=http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F2015%2F09%2F03%2Fdesmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african%2F&t_e=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&t_d=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%E2%80%A6&t_t=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&s_o=default&l=)

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2236239074) • [11 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237633266)

Yeah but why would it take Judge Curran a full week to make the house presentable before allowing police to enter ?

You're clutching at straws here. I appreciate you are trying to play the devil's advocate but the explanation that his mad wife murdered her daughter in a fit of pique is far more convincing than the idea that Judge Curran tolerated some sort of harem.

.. especially given that we know, as a matter of fact, that the murder probably occurred within around one hour of the time Patricia Curran alighted from her bus in Whiteabbey and arrived home.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237633266) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238199555)

Nobody said he was tolerating a harem. I suggested the deceased might have 'entertained' a young man under his roof, presumably when he wasn't there. In the spacious homes of the well-heeled, it might even be possible to do so when he was present, without him being aware.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237633266) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238193618)

It is, I admit, mysterious, and mysterious it will remain.

But the explanation I feel is something more plausible and explicable in terms of family life in Northern Ireland in the 50s, rather than a cross between Hitchcock’s Psycho and Aeschylus’s Agamemnon.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237633266) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238157500)

removed.

[Cosmo](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_W9VFTNrEXz/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2237633266) • [11 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238023153)

aside from the savage murder, then the sheer callous wickedness of manoeuvering vulnerable Gordon to 'take the fall'..... the Father, (a Judge!). the brother, the mother, and even the younger brother.....and seemingly never doubt or sorrow leaked out by any of them about Gordon in their long lives - or a deathbed confession - phew, what a 'respectable' bunch.
i picked up somewhere the mother used to holiday in Port Bradden in a cottage owned by the younger son, Michael.
Rather than mere pique on mother's behalf, it is just feasible the fervent religious firstborn son/protective mother did it, because the daughter was threatening to reveal some socially unacceptable behaviour in his private life.
maybe the son thought that by conversion and a penitential lifestyle helping the poor, he could somehow 'balance the books' with God ?

[Slater](https://disqus.com/by/Seepage/) [Cosmo](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238023153) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238185259)

Desmond Curran was already in Moral Rearmament (MRA) at the time of the murder and heading down the path he finally took toward the priesthood. There was a history of conversion already in the family as the grandfather had been a Roman Catholic.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Slater](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238185259) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238298046)

How is that possible? Judge Curran would not be admitted to the OO if his father was a Catholic.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238298046) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238899190)

I'm not sure this is true Paddy. You have to be a Protestant, but they don't look at your lineage as far as I know.

AFAIK it's the Black Preceptory who require that you were Protestant from birth.

[Slater](https://disqus.com/by/Seepage/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238298046) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238749003)

The rule so far as I know is that you have to be a Protestant to be a member. Many thousands of Orangemen over the centuries would have had recent Catholic ancestry. Just look at the surnames.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Cosmo](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238023153) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238180875)

*the fervent religious firstborn son/protective mother did it, because the daughter was threatening to reveal some socially unacceptable behaviour in his private life.*

This is the Agatha Christie plot. In real life, we all manage to put up with tittle-tattlers without committing murder, because the consequences of being exposed as a sinner are small (denial is always an option) compared those of being found out to be a murderer. In 1952, especially.

The circumstances here remind me of the case of Helen Smith: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/...](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helen_Smith_%28nurse%29).

Miss Smith attended an illegal alcohol party given by one Doctor Arnot in a flat on the 6th floor and proceeded to make love with a Dutchman on the parapet of the balcony (the danger heightening the sexual pleasure.) They both fell and were impaled on the railings six floors below.

The Foreign Office had a terrible job covering this up and squaring it with the Saudis, and getting all survivors out of Saudi. But Miss Smith’s poor deluded father concluded that because there had been a cover-up, there had been a murder, and it all had to brought out in an inquest in England.

You are working on the same principle: anyone who wants to cover up the exact circumstances of a death must be a murderer. It doesn’t follow.

Stabbing a woman to death is an insane act which would only be committed by a lunatic or an outraged lover. It is not the method or weapon of choice for settling family disputes.

[MalikHills](https://disqus.com/by/MalikHills/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238180875) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238739207)

You make a very convincing series of points Paddy, particularly regarding the method of murder.

The nature of the murder of Patricia does not accord with an attack carried out by a woman. And certainly not a middle-aged woman, suffering from psychological illness or not, on her adult daughter.

The nature of the attack points to a man and a man suffering severe personality disorders and the "cover-up" does indeed indicate an attempt to hide the embarrassing details of the daughter's last moments rather than a deliberate attempt to throw the blame off a family member and on to a particular individual.

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238739207) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238900181)

except throwing the blame onto a particular individual, who they had welcomed into their circle, was exactly what they did.

[Cosmo](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_W9VFTNrEXz/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238739207) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238757009)

Ref stab-wounds (frenzied or otherwise), I think I read she was killed with the 4th wound - so were the other 27 plus, definitely done at that time? She also had a broken rib.
Yes, its completely feasible that this spirited 19 year old, who had already shown indications of breaking the rules of her class, could have been entertaining in secret at home.
If a deranged lover was the murderer - however, don't you think the family would have moved heaven and earth to try to find the real perpetrator? If not at that time, later, when Gordon was released from mental hospital??

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Cosmo](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238757009) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238901948)

No, the doctor who did the examination identified many serious wounds and said that any one of them would have been fatal. I don't think there is a way to tell exactly which order the wounds were inflicted in.

The fact that the family were singularly disinterested in discovering who really killed their daughter is more evidence in my mind that they had something to do with it.

* [1](https://disqus.com/embed/comments/?base=default&version=df9024841357efbcd5a729b3e405bd88&f=sluggerotoole&t_i=93356%20http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F%3Fp%3D93356&t_u=http%3A%2F%2Fsluggerotoole.com%2F2015%2F09%2F03%2Fdesmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african%2F&t_e=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&t_d=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%E2%80%A6&t_t=Desmond%20Curran%20brother%20of%20murdered%20Patricia%20Curran%20reported%20dead%20in%20South%20Africa%26%238230%3B&s_o=default&l=)

[Cosmo](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_W9VFTNrEXz/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238901948) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238955472)

On an 'Establishment' point.
Is it kind of 'posh' to actually get ordained in Rome??

[Cosmo](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_W9VFTNrEXz/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238901948) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238937149)

The 'fit up'(if that is what they did) is breathtakingly cruel, and not enough has been said here about what a sociopath this would make Judge Lancelot Curran. Mind you, as far as legally trained Minds operate and calculate , there was a precedent with the Scots case of Oscar Slater and Alexander Ure, the Procurator General.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238739207) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238755972)

Thank you, that is exactly what I am trying to say.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234072815) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238779933)

A little extra googling indicates that the insane mother story was first presented by Gordon's defence team, to suggest an alternative theory which would exonerate their client

[Catcher in the Rye](https://disqus.com/by/disqus_PAxgSjblB1/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238779933) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238902917)

First I heard of that.

Gordon's defence team didn't make a serious effort to get him off. They didn't, for example, challenge any aspect of his clearly forced confession.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238902917) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2239152203)

However it was the defence team for Gordon's appeal who came up with the insane mother theory, not those for the original trial.

[MalikHills](https://disqus.com/by/MalikHills/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238779933) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238806469)

Could it be - is it possible - that whatever the shortfalls in the police investigation, and they were huge and sufficient to annul the murder conviction against Gordon, that in fact, incompetent though the investigation was, they did get the right man?

I ask in a genuine spirit of curiosity, I don't know enough about the case.

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [MalikHills](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238806469) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2239068930)

When an attractive young woman is found stabbed to death, I would expect that the assailant would be

1) Male;
2) Stronger and from a lower social stratum than the deceased;
3) Having a genuine or imagined sexual connection to the deceased;
4) Probably mentally unhinged.

This may not always be the case. Julie Chimes was stabbed nearly to death by an assailant who was female, mad as a box of frogs and newly off her medication, and jealous of Chimes’s boyfriend. But the pattern is similar.

The reason for the lower social stratum specification is that this sort of crime has the effect of rectifying the imbalance when a strong man is toyed with by a weak woman from a higher social class.

With regard to Iain Hay Gordon, I could only say that if it wasn’t him, it was someone like him. There was a lot of shell shock still around in 1952. Given the corpse of Patricia Curran and its 37 stab wounds I would be looking for a soldier with PTSD, who believed rightly or wrongly that she had ‘come on’ to him and then spurned him, possibly from one of these groups that Desmond Curran was organising.

Iain Hay Gordon’s conviction was adjudged unsafe: the Currans had tampered with the crime scene and the RUC had forced a confession out of him. That they did so by threatening to reveal a homosexual relationship he had had makes his guilt more unlikely.

Patricia Curran, according to the BBC, had had affairs with older men. I would suspect one of them first.

[Slater](https://disqus.com/by/Seepage/) [Paddy Reilly](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2239068930) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2239179996)

According to Father Curran, Patricia was a virgin at death. This was noted during the post mortem so she wasn't that much of a run around.
Her sexual behaviour, if even an issue, was certainly not sufficient for her family to have required her murder in some sort of honour crime.
Unless they were all unhinged and evil beyond belief which being upper class unionists...

[Paddy Reilly](https://disqus.com/by/paddyreilly/) [Slater](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2239179996) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2239233620)

Sexual frustration at being refused full sexual intercourse is perhaps a plausible motive.

Patricia Curran was a fairly ordinary person by the standards of today. She worked for a year with a construction firm and travelled home by bus. She was not so rich and powerful as to have reached the level of depravity found in the children of Saddam Hussein.

As to Upper Class Unionists, I find their commitment to civic equity and electoral probity is suspect, but I don't believe them prone to honour killing or sanguinary assassination of family members.

[Slater](https://disqus.com/by/Seepage/) [Catcher in the Rye](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2234072815) • [10 days ago](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/09/03/desmond-curran-brother-of-murdered-patricia-curran-reported-dead-in-south-african/#comment-2238750795)

Are you correcting yourself?