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Contact:

Barbara Briggs (603) 448-1533, ext. 233  
barbara.briggs@dartmouth.edu

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## New Book Reveals Nazi Spy Ring Link to One of the Biggest Unsolved Murder Mysteries in the American West

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### Fetch the Devil *The Sierra Diablo Murders and Nazi Espionage in America*

Clint Richmond

Publication date:  
June 3, 2014

384 pp., 18 b&w  
illus., 6 x 9"

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Author Clint Richmond's historical true crime/espionage thriller, *Fetch the Devil: The Sierra Diablo Murders and Nazi Espionage in America*, provides evidence that a German spy ring was linked to the unsolved murders of a California socialite and her beautiful, sorority-president daughter in the Texas desert near El Paso on the eve of World War II. Details of the family's chance encounter with the vicious Nazi spy ring, operating from the West Coast to Latin America, is revealed in the book for the first time.

The epic story unfolds across a broad panorama, from the West Coast through the desert Southwest and into Mexico, as Hazel and Nancy Frome set out alone on a motor trip from their Bay Area home for a visit to the East Coast. Stranded by car trouble at a luxury hotel in intrigue-ridden El Paso, the intrepid women encounter a number of shadowy characters on both sides of the border. After they go missing for five days, the women's near-nude bodies are found by searchers near a hamlet at the base of the Sierra Diablo Mountains. They were tortured and shot in the head at close range, execution-style.

Sensationalized in national headlines for months, the investigation is quickly subsumed by a turf war between a modernizing Texas sheriff and Texas Rangers clinging to the last vestiges of Old West-style law enforcement. The sweeping investigation is ultimately overshadowed, as J. Edgar Hoover's fledgling FBI desperately tries to counter the insidious

Axis espionage threat to American security. The book details previously little-known Nazi spy activities targeting American industries throughout the western states in the years leading up to World War II.

The story elaborates on the dogged efforts of Sheriff Chris Fox, who came closest to discovering the Nazi link to the grisly murders. A wily Russian impostor and abortionist is the prime suspect among the more than one thousand people arrested in Texas and throughout the Rockies to the West Coast. All were released, but the sheriff's probes opened uncomfortable secrets of clandestine affairs of war profiteers, German diplomat-spies, and Hollywood celebrities. The victims' family patriarch, a powerful executive at Atlas Powder Company with his own secrets to hide, oddly uses his political clout to derail the investigation.

Citing extensive evidence—much of it gleaned from recently declassified FBI files on pre-war Nazi espionage on the West Coast and U.S.-Mexico border, and the author's discovery of the original cold-case file in archives in El Paso—the book offers circumstantial evidence that finally provides answers to this decades-old mystery. The author concludes that the women were likely murdered in a bungled operation by the Axis spy ring operating from the German consulate in San Francisco, with a portal to South America run by a Nazi agent posing as a local doctor in El Paso.