

The Ghosts of Gorman

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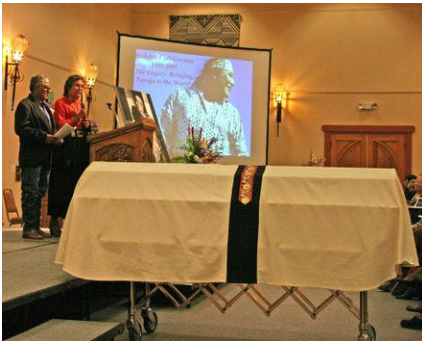
May, 2006



The Governor of New Mexico called him a giant in the arts and a giant human being. I saw those words of Bill Richardson at RC Gorman's funeral last year and wondered if the Democratic Governor had been hiding under a rock, or which rock for that matter. Richardson, however, admitted that he spent many nights as a guest in the Gorman house, so I assume he was just abiding by the old adage of "not speaking ill of the dead."

I will, and I have.

But, I also spoke ill of him when he was still alive, so I am not just harping about someone who can't talk back. He could've then, but never did. That was his choice and I respect that, but it's also my choice to believe what I discovered and not shy away from my feelings, which have not changed, nor will change, at the sight of a blanket-draped coffin.



I was surprised by the seemingly lackadaisical response to the [series of radio reports](#) I produced and aired on [770 KKOZ](#) about pedophile allegations against the "noted" southwest Indian artist. I got fired from my radio job, but it had nothing to do with my information or how it was presented (no one has come forward to challenge the facts, because they are correct). Maybe the higher-ups were scared, but I pressed on.

I fielded the normal and expected questions about the series: "How did you first hear about the pedophile allegations? How

did you first start compiling the story? What has been the reaction?" Those and other questions I attempt to answer through the Internet, more specifically, my website at www.vernbeachy.com.

I pulled a fundamental no-no in journalism circles: I revealed my source of the information and her connection with RC Gorman, and, more specifically: why. I explain in detail on my website, but the bottom line is this: I did it to help the victims. In fact, that is the only reason I did the series in the first place.

Did I want him to pay? Well, that wasn't up to me and there is something called a statute of limitations. Be that as it may, I wanted to give power to the powerless: the victims. A voice to the voiceless, and all the other stuff that goes along with that.

I cannot understand what they, the victims, have been through, and continue to go through to this day. I can sympathize, but can never truly understand, and I thank God for that.

I have spoken with more victims since I outlined the story on the radio and on the web. Some are victims of Gorman, and some are victims of abuse at the hands of Catholic Priests.

The cases are connected.

A recent vigil on Good Friday in Chicago sought to bring victims together, and tell the world the story of the abuse at the altar and at the hands of Cardinal George. Cardinal George has not been accused of actual physical abuse. However, his inactions, poor decisions and apparent lack of concern for victims over priests, allowed more children to be abused by Fr. McCormack. This after George's own Diocesan Review Board recommended McCormack be removed because of reports of sexual abuse.

In the pages of court documents, letters from lawyers, victim interviews and police reports I assembled as a result of the Gorman series, another name weaves throughout the pages: Father Conran Runnebaum.

The correspondence indicates he, too, was a pedophile.

I talked with one victim and his story is not pretty. It's not intended to be, nor can it ever be. I got an email from a person who read the information and court papers and she wrote: "Thank you so much for the information. It seems like you and only you can continue this story about R C Gorman and Father Conran."

I couldn't do it without victims.

I wish I couldn't do it at all.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to do it. The original sources in the investigation are not helping the victims. I know both sources stand by, and completely support, the allegations and stories of abuse, but at least one is worried my site is negative towards her.

I think the only negative information in my investigation and on my website concerns RC Gorman, Father Conran Runnebaum and other principals in the Gorman camp. But I could be wrong.

But, she said, "Gorman's art is now selling at reduced prices."

At least it was until his death.

That's a business decision and I understand that (I am a capitalist like almost everyone else), but I still wouldn't want the equivalent of a clown painting by John Wayne Gacy gracing my wall.

At the end of my radio reports I said there will be many more chapters of the Gorman story in the future.

One of the victim's is helping me with the transcript and, thankfully, I am only a ghostwriter.