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McCartney murder book prejudices trial — accused

(Allison Morris, [Irish News](#))

The legal team acting for a man charged with the murder of Robert McCartney have made representations to Belfast Crown Court over the publication of a book about the killing.

Catherine McCartney, who has written about the aftermath of the 2005 killing of her brother, says she stands over the publication of the book just months ahead of the trial.

However, a key prosecution witness to the murder has also now voiced concern about details contained in the book.

Brendan Devine was badly injured in the attack in which the 33-year-old father-of-two lost his life.

Three men have been charged in connection with the events surrounding the killing. One man, Terence Davison, has been charged with murder.

Solicitor Kevin Winters who is representing Mr Davison said yesterday (Wednesday): "The publication of this book and its serialisation in a newspaper prejudices the trial process for everyone concerned.

"We have major concerns about this development and have notified all parties including the court.

"We expect the matter to be raised in open court within the next few days."

Also charged in connection with the fatal stabbing are James McCormick (38) and Joseph Fitzpatrick (46).

Mr Devine said claims contained in the book that he was due to meet the IRA in connection with drugs money the day after the brutal murder are untrue.

The north Belfast man added that he had been gagged by the legal process until after the trial, scheduled to take place early next year.

"Everyone knows I'm no angel but I've paid for my crimes and

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my past had nothing to do with Robert's murder," he said.

"I haven't refused to speak about what happened, I have made a full statement to the police and will be giving evidence in court.

"There are a lot of things that have been said about that night that are completely untrue and I'd like nothing better than to set the record straight.

"But I've been told I can't because it could prejudice the trial and that's the last thing I would want to do."

Robert McCartney was stabbed to death in the street close to Magennis's bar near the Markets area of south Belfast in January 2005.

His sisters launched a campaign in an effort to bring his killers to justice.

Ms McCartney said she did not think the contents of the book would affect the trial as it would not be heard in front of a jury.

"As far as we're concerned there is nothing in the book that hasn't already been in the public arena," she said.

"It is a Diplock trial and so there is no question of what is said in the book prejudicing that.

"The only hurdle we can see in preventing justice is the role played by Sinn Féin and the IRA.

"What the book has done is tell the truth about what we have been through for the past three years."

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