



Written by [James Murphy](#) on December 8, 2017

The “Unsolved Mystery” Surrounding Joe Scarborough

A born pot-stirrer, President Trump again has taken out his wooden spoon and agitated the cauldron known as the mainstream news media. Joe Scarborough stew is currently on the menu, as the president referenced a death which occurred in the former congressman’s office.



Members of the media who might have expected President Trump to give up his habit of speaking directly to the American people via his Twitter account have been sorely disappointed. Never has this fact been more apparent than in his November 29 tweet about the firing of Matt Lauer and the potential terminations of MSNBC’s president Phil Griffin and talk-show host and nemesis Joe Scarborough (shown).

President Trump’s tweet read: “So now that Matt Lauer is gone when will the Fake News practitioners at NBC be terminating the contract of Phil Griffin. And when will they terminate low ratings Joe Scarborough based on the ‘unsolved mystery’ that took place in Florida years ago. Investigate!”

The president is clearly referencing the death of Lori Klausutis, a 28-year-old staffer in Scarborough’s Fort Walton Beach, Florida office. Klausutis was found dead on July 20, 2001 on the floor of Scarborough’s personal office. At the time, Scarborough, a Republican, was nine months into his third congressional term, and was considered and up and coming star in the GOP. He would resign on September, 5, 2001 “in order to spend more time with his children.”

The timing of the resignation turned out to be propitious for Scarborough, as the September 11 terrorist attacks would occur the next week, putting the Klausutis story on the back burner.

The circumstances surrounding the death of Klausutis are interesting, to say the least. Her body was found on July 20 by a couple who was there for an 8:00 a.m. appointment. The medical examiner determined that she had died on July 19 before the end of her work day, and that she must have passed out due to an abnormal heart rhythm, causing her to fall and hit her head on the desk in the office, causing her death.

According to the autopsy, Klausutis had an undiagnosed heart condition known as floppy mitral valve disease. The condition is rare and can be fatal in some cases. Symptoms, if they manifest, may include arrhythmia, dizziness, shortness of breath, and fatigue. This brings up more questions.

Klausutis was an avid runner, who regularly ran competitive races. She was a member of the Northwest Florida Track Club. Just before her death, she had competed in an 8K race. Her family denied that she was unhealthy in any way.

The autopsy was performed by Dr. Michael Berkland, whose past is checkered, to say the least. In 1998, the physician lost his medical license in Missouri because he had reported false information in an



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autopsy report. In 1999, he was suspended by the State of Florida for a similar infraction. Berkland was later fired in 2003 for not completing autopsy reports.

In addition to the medical examiner's questionable ethics, more gruesome discoveries were to come in 2012 when human remains were found in a public storage locker rented by Berkland. Authorities found human brains, hearts, lungs, and other organs crudely preserved in the storage unit. Berkland was charged with improper storage of hazardous waste, keeping a public nuisance, and driving with a suspended license.

None of this proves that Scarborough is a murderer. In fact, he was apparently in Washington at the time of the death of Klausutis, according to the *Pensacola News-Journal*. But there is a vague unsettled feeling to the case, owing to the unusual circumstances and the sketchy medical examiner.

Scarborough and his *Morning Joe* co-host Mika Brzezinski once enjoyed a friendly relationship with Trump, with the then-candidate often appearing on the talk show. Their pleasant rapport ended in May of 2016 when Scarborough penned an op-ed for the *Washington Post* which questioned the professionalism and the staying power of Trump's campaign. This ignited a feud which has gotten nastier over the past 18 months, with Trump making cracks about an alleged Brzezinski facelift and Scarborough openly questioning the president's sanity.

Photo of Joe Scarborough: AP Images



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