

John Paul Carroll Joel Brodsky

Peterson attorney faces discipline

2007 murder trial focus of agency complaint

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A member of Drew Peterson's legal team is in trouble with the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Committee for allegedly holding out on his clients in a murder case after prosecutors offered them a plea deal.

The Aug. 20 complaint accuses attorney **John Paul Carroll** of violating the rules of professional conduct by failing to reveal the plea deal until after his two clients were convicted on all charges.

John Paul Carroll is part of Drew Peterson's defense team. An attorneys group accuses him of violating the rules of professional conduct for his actions in a 2007 Kane County murder case.

Carroll was representing brothers Jaime and Edgar Castro in a 2007 Kane County murder case. The Castros were charged with killing Julio Gurrola, who attempted to steal a pound of marijuana from them at gunpoint.

According to reports, Gurrola pulled a gun during a drug deal with the Castros. But Edgar Castro allegedly beat Gurrola to the punch, drawing his own pistol and firing.

During the ensuing shootout, Gurrola was killed and Edgar Castro was wounded.

The Castros were charged with first-degree murder, armed violence, concealment of a homicidal death and possession of cannabis with intent to deliver.

A prosecutor offered to allow the Castros to plead to a single count each of armed violence in exchange for a 15-year prison sentence, according to the complaint, but **Carroll** failed to relay the deal. A jury later found them guilty on all counts.

Carroll claims he forgot to mention the prosecutor's offer to the Castros but then remembered after his clients were convicted. He says he was conflicted about what to do and realized he might be punished if he came clean about the plea.

"I know if I don't say anything, nobody knows," **Carroll** said. "I say to myself, 'Do I beef myself off?'"

New trial

Carroll did just this, he said, informing the Castros of the plea offer and admitting to the court he neglected to do so before the trial.

According to the complaint, he filed a motion for a new trial on the grounds he "had not informed (the Castros) of the state's plea offer and had 'merely rejected the offer out of hand.'"

Circuit Court Judge Timothy Sheldon appointed a new attorney for the Castros and allowed them to take the original plea deal for 15 years. If judge had not done so, Carroll said, Edgar Castro would have been sentenced to 45 years and Jaime Castro would have gotten 35 years.

"I said to myself, 'I'll be dead and they'll still be in prison,'" **Carroll** said of his decision to reveal the plea deal.

Carroll appeared in court to represent Peterson in Dec. 2007 when the accused wife-killer was seeking the return of his guns and vehicles from the state police.

After Peterson's May arrest on murder charges in connection with the death of his third wife, Kathleen Savio, another of his attorneys, **Joel Brodsky**, said **Carroll** would be joining the defense team for this case as well. **Carroll** has yet to file his appearance.

Brodsky, who ran into trouble of his own with the ARDC in 2004 when his law license was suspended for three months for signing a dead man's name in order to cash a \$23,000 check, failed to return calls for comment.

Carroll, a former Chicago police detective and Cook County assistant state's attorney, said he is cooperating with the ARDC but does not know what the organization plans to do with him.

"Maybe they'll drum me out of the corps," he said.