



DARING life as a private detective has inspired former college professor Josiah Thompson to write a book about his adventures.

Bored Prof Quits College & Becomes A Private Eye

Bored with his quiet life as a college philosophy professor, Josiah Thompson took an astonishing giant leap to a life of adventure — as a private eye!

"My life had become too routine and too familiar," Thompson told The ENQUIRER.

"I was itching for a taste of the real world, where life is noisy, dangerous and exciting — and I got it!"

Thompson quit his job as a professor at Haverford College, near Philadelphia, in April 1976. He packed up his wife and two children and moved to San Francisco.

He'd planned to settle down and write a book. But then he bumped into a successful private investigator who took Thompson under his wing and gave him a job.

"I took to being a private eye like a duck takes to water," he said.

After three years, Thompson got his own license. Since then he's risked death at the hands of street gangs while gathering evidence to spring an innocent man from jail, and risked a long prison

sentence to smuggle a kidnapped child out of a foreign country.

One of his most celebrated cases involved a Korean man unjustly accused of a gang murder in San Francisco's Chinatown.

"Here's what happened. A man was gunned down in broad daylight in an execution-style hit on a street in Chinatown. The police came up with a handful of eyewitnesses. Two of them picked out a mug shot of a Korean street kid named Lee," Thompson recalled.

"Although Lee swore he

was innocent, he was tried and convicted of murder in 1973 and began serving a lengthy sentence."

Several years later, a neighborhood group hired a lawyer to work on freeing Lee and the lawyer hired Thompson to do the legwork.

To his surprise, in an old police file Thompson found the name of an eyewitness to the shooting who hadn't even been mentioned at Lee's trial. The file paper was so faded that only a few letters of the name were legible and there was only a partial address.

Despite that, Thompson tracked the man down in Los Angeles. At first the investi-

gator thought he'd struck out because the man insisted the victim was shot in the chest, while newspaper re-

ports said he'd been shot in the back.

"Then I checked the autopsy report — and lo and

behold, it listed an entry wound on the chest. This made our eyewitness as good as gold, because he couldn't have picked up this information from the press reports, which were wrong."

The eyewitness fingered another man as the murderer, helping to establish Lee's innocence. The murderer was never caught.

"Cases like that certainly beat the boring, uneventful life I led on the college campus," said Thompson, who chronicles his exploits in his book, "Gumshoe."

"On campus, I knew what I was going to do every day. Now I never know what my next case will be like — and I prefer it that way!"

— JIM MITTEAGER

Bakker's dozen: Thirteen tubes of mascara.

— Shelby Friedman

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