

**REAL**

**"YOUR CHILDREN ARE NOT SAFE"**  
SNIPER TERROR AS WASHINGTON, DC IS HELD TO RANSOM

**SLENDERMAN  
SACRIFICE**

# CRIME™



**THE SUSPECTS**



**THE VICTIMS**



**THE MURDERS**

# WHO IS THE ZODIAC KILLER?



**KILLER  
CALL GIRL**

The \$1,000-a-night hooker who killed a Google boss

**CAN YOU CRACK THE  
CODE OF THE WORLD'S  
BIGGEST COLD CASE?**



**THE INVESTIGATION**

**\$500M HEIST**  
DUPED OUT OF 13  
PRICELESS WORKS OF ART

**UNDERBELLY**  
WHEN WILL MELBOURNE'S  
GANGLAND WAR END?



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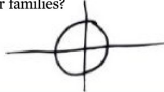
**PLUS SAILOR EXONERATED — SUICIDE FAKER — THREESOME STABBER — AND MORE**

# WELCOME

The definition of an 'unsolved' investigation into a crime varies depending on the agency that's investigating it. In the United States, at least, the National Institute of Justice deems this to be "any case whose probative investigative leads have been exhausted," which means a case that's just a few months old can be considered 'cold'. While these might be no less serious than longer-running cold cases, they don't rival the notoriety of San Francisco's mysterious Zodiac Killer. It's a case that has gestated in an amniotic soup of fear and media glorification over decades to become one of

the world's best-known unsolved crimes today. The heyday of the Zodiac Killer has long passed and the extra scrutiny from amateur sleuths can only help to identify a cold-blooded killer who has likely put their murdering days behind them, that's if they're not already six feet under. Theories and deathbed confessions by old jailbirds still pop up from time to time, but perhaps you could help bring closure to the victims and their families?

**BEN BIGGS**  
EDITOR



Zodiac made sure to mask his identity, though some victims lived long enough to describe him. Find out who he could be on page 14



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 /REALCRIMEMAG

#### CORRECTION

In issue 10 of *Real Crime*, we stated that Dr Park Dietz was Jeffrey Dahmer's psychiatrist, which has never been true. Dr Dietz was hired by the prosecution to evaluate Dahmer's sanity, but Dahmer was never his patient.

## CONTRIBUTORS



#### MARTYN CONTERIO

Freelance critic and crime writer Martyn is based in London, England. He has a long-standing obsession with the famous cold case crimes of Jack the Ripper and the Zodiac Killer.

Given his enthusiasm for the world's best-known cold case, Martyn has taken care of our Zodiac Killer cover feature this month on page 14.



#### EMILY WEBB

Melbourne-based journalist and crime writer Emily's first true crime book was *Murder In Suburbia* and she's just come out of a long stint of dedicated writing for her next novel.

A suitably Aussie-themed crime piece in the form of Melbourne's Bloody Gangland War on page 32 marks Emily's return to *Real Crime* magazine.



#### DR K CHARLIE OUGHTON

Charlie is a broadcaster, author, lecturer and journalist specialising in taboo (particularly serial killers), horror and gender studies. His feature on the murderous occult priestess Sara Maria Aldrete (page 78) is a disturbing combination of cartels, murder, black magic and kidnapping.



#### DAVID HUTT

British journalist and writer David is based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He reports on Southeast Asia's volatile political scene, as well as shedding light on the dark pasts of gangsters and criminals. He delves into the very murky fringes of Nairobi's quasi-religious gang scene in our Mungiki briefing feature, on page 64.



#### CHRISTIAN CIPPOLINI

Award-winning author Christian has been a freelance journalist, writer, organised crime researcher and designer for more than a decade. Chris has written about the fear that a sniper and his partner put Washington, DC through, on page 70.



#### TANITA MATTHEWS

Tanita has a background in reporting and newspaper journalism, and as *Real Crime*'s resident staffer, she's had a hand in multiple parts of the magazine. She's

penned one of our main features this issue, the controversial recent case of the \$1,000-a-night call girl who killed a Google boss, on page 24.



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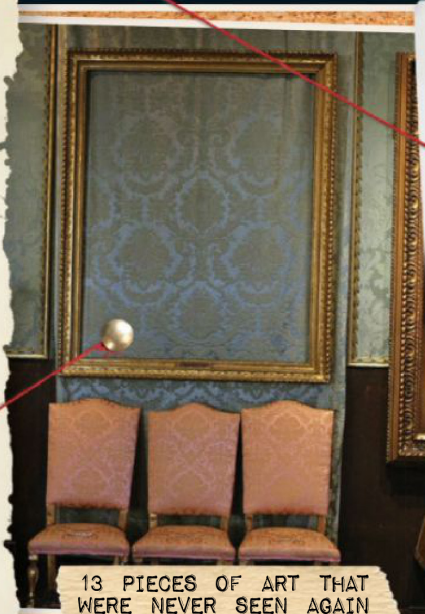
They believed in the myth of an online bogeyman so fervently that they had to sacrifice their friend to protect their families

## MINUTE BY MINUTE

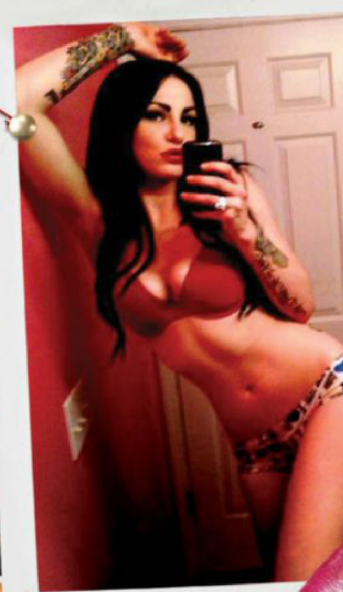
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How did a daring criminal duo pull off one of the biggest crime paydays of the 20th century?

# WHO IS THE ZODIAC KILLER?



13 PIECES OF ART THAT WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN



Call me

515 527 9551

## UNSOLVED CASE

# WHO IS THE ZODIAC KILLER?

NOT SINCE JACK THE RIPPER HAD A KILLER CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF THE PUBLIC WITH HIS TERRIBLE DEEDS. LIKE HIS FELLOW MANIAC, ZODIAC WAS NEVER CAUGHT

WORDS MARTYN CONTERIO

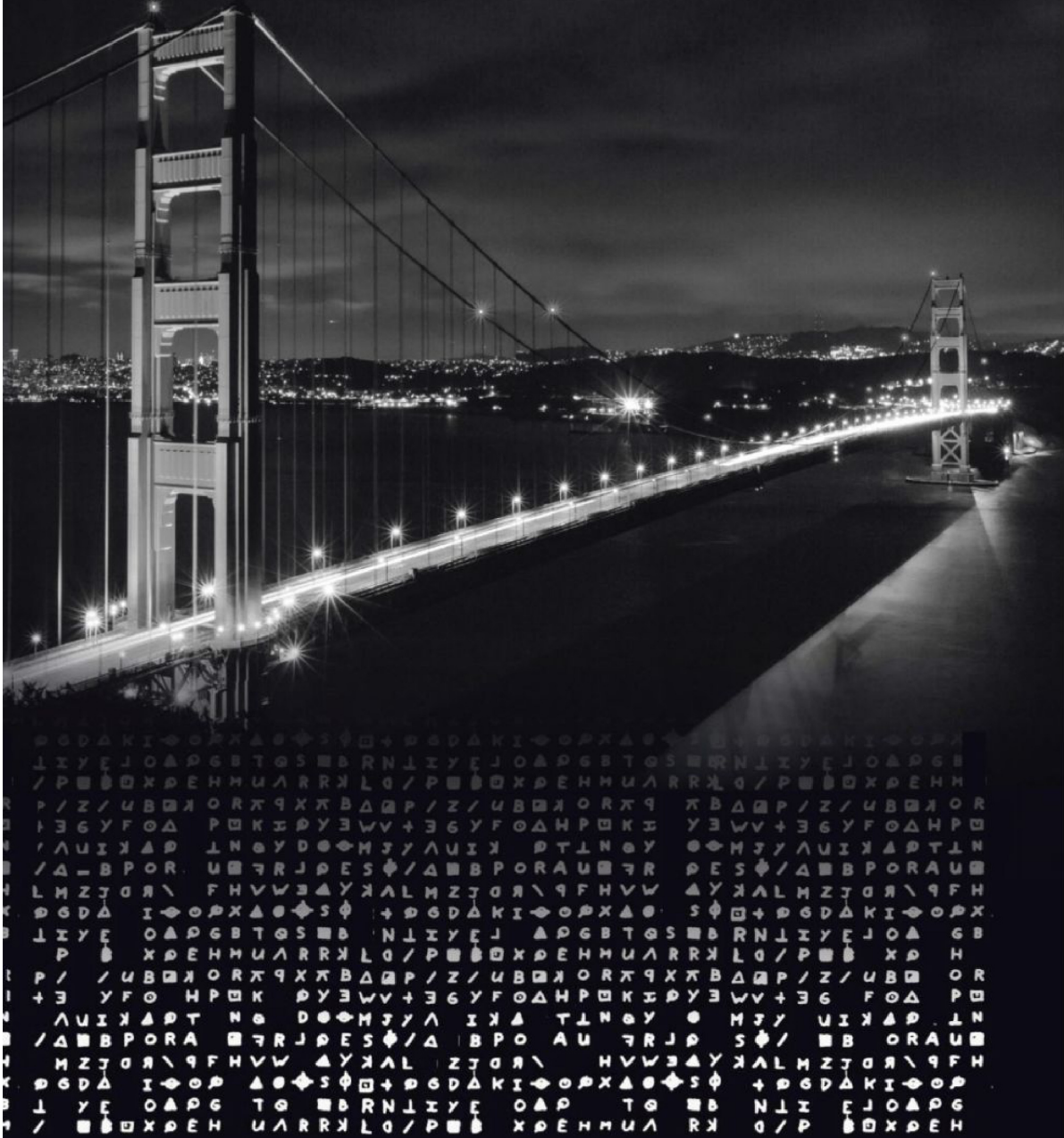
They were spooked. Was it a bored patrolman wanting to bust teens getting frisky? Like a police vehicle, the car, described later as either a light-brown Corvair or Ford Mustang, had rocked up and parked at an angle (to the left and rear of a Corvair driven by 22-year-old Darlene Ferrin), its headlights on full beam. Blue Rock Springs was well known as a lovers' lane in the Bay Area navy town of Vallejo, California. No doubt this jobsworth Officer Donuts would step out, amble over, ask them what they were up to at this late hour (as if he didn't know) and tell them to skedaddle on home. They might even know him. Ferrin was

a diner waitress popular with local enforcement officers. She was friendly with a lot of folk in town. Vallejo residents would later say she was too friendly, too trusting, and quite the flirt. She and her companion, 19-year-old Mike Mageau, were sat talking and listening to the radio on a sultry California night at the end of a long day of Independence Day celebrations. The cop would check their IDs and leave.

But that isn't what happened. The bulky shadow exited the vehicle and proceeded to walk over at a steady pace, a spotlight swinging its unnerving attention between the occupants. Ferrin and Mageau fished out their

RN I I Y E J O A P G B T S B B R N I I Y E J O A P G B T S B B R N I I Y E J O A P G  
P / P B X P E H M U A R R X L O / P B B X P E H M U A R R X L O / P B B X P E H  
M P / / U B X O R T X X B A M P / Z / U B X O R T X X B A M P / Z / U B X O  
V + E Y F O H P X K P Y E W V + E 6 Y F O A H P X K I P Y E W V + E 6 F O A P  
M J / A U I X A P T N G D O M J / A I X A T I N G Y O M J / U I X A P T I  
S / A B B P O R A M F R J P E S / A B P O A U F R J P S / B B O R A U  
X A M Z T O R \ 9 F H V W A Y X A L Z T O R \ H V W A Y X A L H Z T O R \ 9 F I  
Q + P O D A I O P A B S P Q + P O D A K I O P X A B S P Q + P O D A K I O P  
R N I Y E O A P G T S B B R N I I Y E O A P T S B B R N I I Y E J O A P G I  
L O / B B X P E H U A R R X L O / P B B X P E H M U A R R X L O / P B B X P E H







identification, ready to show. The window on Mageau's passenger side was wound down. Illuminated briefly by the interior light of Ferrin's car, Mageau caught a glimpse of a solidly built man with short, curly light-brown hair. Without any warning, this individual walked toward the passenger door, shone the light directly into Mageau's face and fired a gun into the car.

Nine bullets did the job, in all. Several passed straight through Mageau and struck Ferrin, contributing to her fatal wounding. Ferrin, slumped over the steering wheel, was pretty much already a goner. Leaving momentarily, the killer about turned and blasted away four more times, two for each victim. Mageau attempted to get out of the line of fire and pushed his way into the rear of the car. With the execution over, the killer high-tailed it out of Blue Rock Springs. It was minutes after midnight. The witching hour had conjured a phantom whose deadly deeds and cosmic-sounding moniker (revealed to the world via the press in the following month) would haunt the annals of real crime history for decades to come.

**THE PHONE CALL**

At 12.40am on 5 July 1969, switchboard operator Nancy Slover received a call. By then, it was already known two kids had been attacked at Blue Rock Springs. Right after the shooting, a trio of teens out searching for a pal came across the gruesome scene. They'd noticed Ferrin's car and thought, at least for a second, it was their missing buddy. Mageau had by this time managed to crawl out of the Corvair and was lying in roaring agony on the ground. He informed the teens, through mouthfuls of streaming warm blood (a bullet entered his right cheek and exited the left, punching a hole in his jawbone and tongue), that he'd been shot and needed a doctor. It was the call at 12.40, however, that changed things significantly. Ferrin was barely alive; her soft moans sounded to Detective Sergeant John Lynch like "the wind". Ferrin was put in an ambulance and pronounced DOA (dead on arrival) at 12.38am.

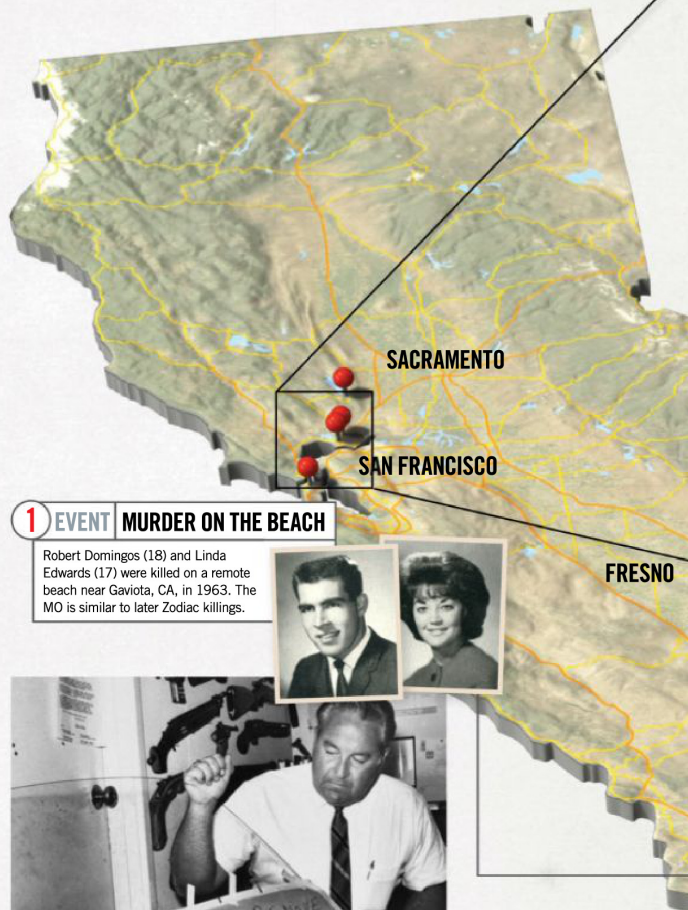
"I want to report a double murder. If you go one mile east on Columbus Parkway to the public park you'll find the kids in a brown car. They were shot with a 9mm luger. I also killed those kids last year. Goodbye."

The way he'd said "goodbye" gave Slover the creeps. It was described in a filed police report as "taunting". She also stated that the message was rattled off as if the caller was reading from a piece of paper or was memorising what he had set out to say. Any attempt by Slover to get further details caused the mystery caller to raise his voice, which was described in the report as "soft but forceful", and there was no hint of a local or regional accent.

Up until then, the double homicide on 20 December 1968 had left the police and townsfolk baffled. The murder rate at this end of the Bay Area was very low. And why would anybody want to kill two high school students out on their first date? It made no sense. The phone call to Vallejo PD potentially broke the case or gave them a new avenue of inquiry. They knew, too, if what the caller said was the truth, they had a maniac on the loose. Little did they realise what was about to come.

# SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC

EVEN WITH MULTIPLE SIGHTINGS AND CLUES LEFT BY THE PERPETRATOR HIMSELF, THE POLICE HAD VERY LITTLE TO GO ON



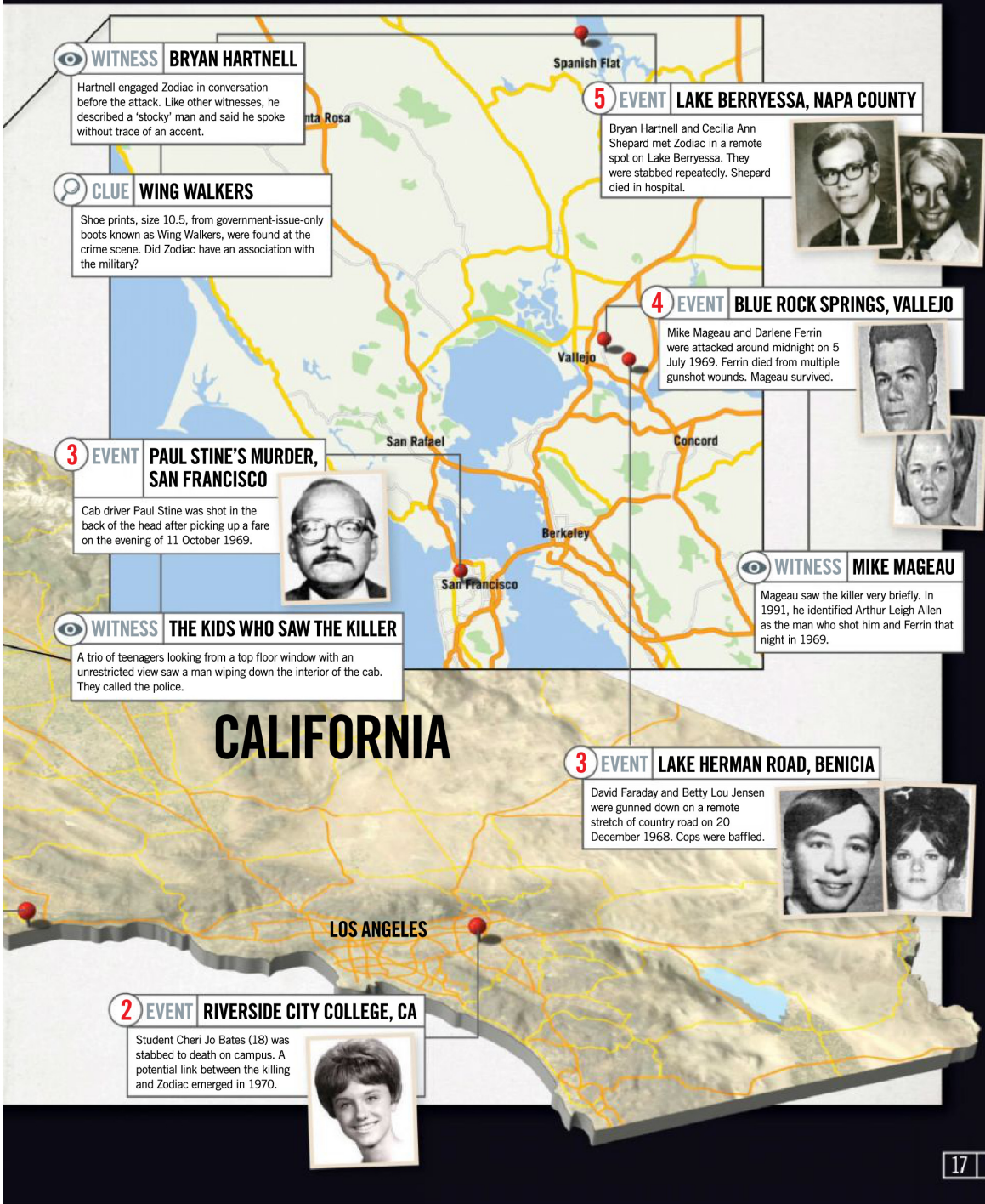
**1 EVENT MURDER ON THE BEACH**

Robert Domingos (18) and Linda Edwards (17) were killed on a remote beach near Gaviota, CA, in 1963. The MO is similar to later Zodiac killings.



LEFT Police preserved Zodiac's message on Hartnell's car door, and initially didn't release the whole message to the public





**WITNESS BRYAN HARTNELL**

Hartnell engaged Zodiac in conversation before the attack. Like other witnesses, he described a 'stocky' man and said he spoke without trace of an accent.

**5 EVENT LAKE BERRYESSA, NAPA COUNTY**

Bryan Hartnell and Cecilia Ann Shepard met Zodiac in a remote spot on Lake Berryessa. They were stabbed repeatedly. Shepard died in hospital.



**CLUE WING WALKERS**

Shoe prints, size 10.5, from government-issue-only boots known as Wing Walkers, were found at the crime scene. Did Zodiac have an association with the military?

**4 EVENT BLUE ROCK SPRINGS, VALLEJO**

Mike Mageau and Darlene Ferrin were attacked around midnight on 5 July 1969. Ferrin died from multiple gunshot wounds. Mageau survived.



**3 EVENT PAUL STINE'S MURDER, SAN FRANCISCO**

Cab driver Paul Stine was shot in the back of the head after picking up a fare on the evening of 11 October 1969.



**WITNESS MIKE MAGEAU**

Mageau saw the killer very briefly. In 1991, he identified Arthur Leigh Allen as the man who shot him and Ferrin that night in 1969.

**WITNESS THE KIDS WHO SAW THE KILLER**

A trio of teenagers looking from a top floor window with an unrestricted view saw a man wiping down the interior of the cab. They called the police.

**3 EVENT LAKE HERMAN ROAD, BENICIA**

David Faraday and Betty Lou Jensen were gunned down on a remote stretch of country road on 20 December 1968. Cops were baffled.



**2 EVENT RIVERSIDE CITY COLLEGE, CA**

Student Cheri Jo Bates (18) was stabbed to death on campus. A potential link between the killing and Zodiac emerged in 1970.





ABOVE Ferrin and Mageau thought they were being approached by a police officer until he shot at them

### THE LAKE HERMAN ROAD HOMICIDES

The Lake Herman Road double murder may be considered the outlier. Upon first look, the killing of cab driver Paul Stine, on 11 October 1969, appears to be the odd one out, but the deaths of high schoolers Betty Lou Jensen, 16, and David Faraday, 17, left no eyewitnesses. That's what makes it markedly different from all the other accredited slayings.

Unlike the attack at Blue Rock Springs, or the bizarre encounter at Lake Berryessa in September 1969 or the Stine episode, the Lake Herman Road crime scene was simply discovered, and there was very little to go on forensically. Two teenagers just went out on a date to a remote stretch of country road (another local lovers' lane) and never came back. They were found expired by passing driver Stella Borges, on her way into Benicia; the headlights of her car illuminated the bodies lying on the roadside at Gate 10, a short path leading to a pumping house station, about a mile east of Lake Herman Cottage.

Faraday had been shot at point blank range behind the left ear. When the police arrived he was, somehow, still breathing. Was this the last, faint flickers of life igniting reserves of energy and telling the body to hang in there, or the final, soft ebbing toward the kingdom of death? If there was a sign of life, there was hope. The ambulance raced hell for leather to Vallejo General

**“ ZODIAC WAS DRESSED LIKE A MEDIEVAL EXECUTIONER WITH A BLACK HOOD DOUBLED AS A TUNIC ”**



ABOVE Zodiac wore a strange costume when he attacked Hartnell and Shepard

Hospital, but it was not to be. Faraday was pronounced DOA at 12.05am. The bullet exploded part of his cranium and simply caused too much damage. Nothing could be done.

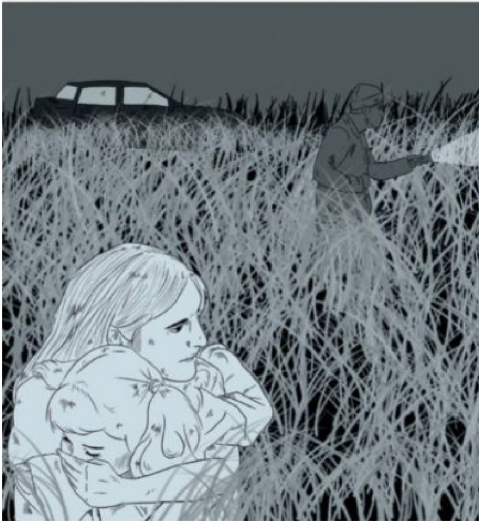
Jensen had made a plucky run for it, and was gunned down 8.5 metres from the rear of the two-tone Nash Rambler Station Wagon. Bullets had struck her upper torso and it looked very much like the work of an expert marksman; there was nothing but moonlight and headlights to go on out there in the sticks. The accuracy was eerie. Jensen was pronounced dead on scene. The police investigated the area and found no signs of a struggle and no tyre tracks from any other car. The hard winter ground had worked in Zodiac's favour. Police were only able to recover nine Super X copper-coated bullet casings fired from a .22 calibre weapon.

### LAKE BERRYESSA: ZODIAC STRIKES AGAIN

They weren't even supposed to be there. 20-year-old Bryan Hartnell and Cecilia Ann Shepard, 22, students at Pacific Union College, a liberal arts institute in Napa County, had intended to drive across the Bay Bridge into San Francisco for the day. The friends – soon to be parting ways, with Shepard moving down to Riverside, California – decided to spend the weekend together. (It should be noted that, like Jack the Ripper, Zodiac only struck at weekends.)

Deciding that it was too late to get there and back in sufficient time, they headed out to a local beauty spot: Lake Berryessa. A former reservoir with an unusual irregular shoreline, it wasn't entirely deserted on the early evening of 27 September, but it was very, very quiet. A few people were dotted here and there fishing on the lake, but that was all. At 38 kilometres in length and almost five kilometres wide, Berryessa is a big old place. The only thing folk would





ABOVE Kathleen Johns and her daughter hid from Zodiac in a Modesto field

usually need to look out for here, though, were western rattlesnakes, not psycho killers.

Parking on Knoxville Road and walking down 450 metres to a little island connected by a sand spit to a peninsula, Hartnell and Shepard laid down their blankets by the water and chatted about all sorts of things. Neither of them saw the peculiar figure lurking by the cluster of oak trees until it was too late. It was Shepard who first spied the stranger. Hartnell, however, dismissed the girl's mild concern and assumed that it was just a guy answering the call of nature, the oak trees used discreetly to cover up his action. Shepard saw the man disappear momentarily, but then he re-emerged, much closer now.

"He's got a gun, oh my god." Shepard's words startled her friend. He'd been stretched out facing toward the water, so hadn't seen the guy until he approached. What they saw was both comical and frightening. The bulky man approached wearing what looked like a homemade Halloween costume. Based on subsequent sketches, Zodiac was dressed like a Medieval executioner with a black hood doubled as a tunic. There was a ten-centimetre circle-and-crosshair symbol embroidered at the centre. He wore dark sunglasses over the eyeholes of the hood (Hartnell even suspected he was wearing two pairs of glasses), dark trousers, black boots, a utility belt with a gun holster (left hip), a sheath to hold a homemade knife (right hip) and pieces of cut plastic wire taken from a clothesline.

The man spun them a tale about how he was an escaped convict from Montana. He was on the lam and needed a car to drive down to Mexico. He also required the contents of Bryan's wallet. If this was so, Hartnell thought, the fella was out of luck. All he had on him was 75 cents. As a sociology student and not quite realising who he was dealing with, Hartnell asked Zodiac all kinds of questions, but answers were not forthcoming.

## ZODIAC'S MEDIA CIRCUS

The hoopla surrounding Zodiac brought out the crazies. Literally. The most famous example is the live broadcast on the USA's Channel 7's morning talk show, which featured host Jim Dunbar and Melvin Belli, a nationally famous attorney, chatting to a man purporting to be none other than the serial killer. This occurred on 22 October 1969, almost a fortnight after the murder of Stine. Police were cautious about prank calls and chasing leads that turned out to be pure bunkum, but neither could they take a chance. They agreed to give him airtime.

The man identified himself only as 'Sam' and would later be traced to a mental institute across the bay in Oakland. Yet on that morning in late October, he'd gripped the nation with his talk of skull-crushing headaches and the need to kill because it alleviated the pain. "If I kill I don't get them," he told Belli. Later on during the conversation, he screamed down the phone and feigned ignorance at having made a sound. "What was that?" Belli asked. "I did not say anything. That was my headache," came the freaky reply. 'Sam' also later yelled, "I'm going to kill them. I'm going to kill all those kids!" a direct reference to a letter written by

Zodiac, in which he threatened to blast away school children.

Three days after the Stine event, on 14 October, the *San Francisco Chronicle* had received their latest piece of correspondence from Zodiac. It contained a torn piece of the cab driver's bloodied grey-and-white checked shirt, as proof of authenticity. The letter began with the customary "This is the Zodiac speaking..." and the author claimed responsibility for the death. It finished with: "School children make nice targets, I think I shall wipe out a school bus some morning Just shoot out the front tire & then pick off the kiddies as they come bouncing out."

The news media went ape at this revelation, with a typical mixture of sensationalism and what would have been, for many, genuine concern. Plugging teenagers on lovers' lanes out in the sticks was one thing. Shooting a taxi driver point blank in the head was another. Threatening to snuff out children shifted the paradigm and upped the ante significantly. The whole of northern California placed school buses under heavy surveillance and undercover cops posed as bus drivers. Zodiac's threat remained a violent flight of fancy. It never came to pass.

Dear Editor

This is the murderer of the  
2 teenagers last Christmas  
at Lake Herman & the girl  
on the 4th of July near  
the golf course in Vallejo  
To prove I killed them I  
shall state some facts which  
only I & the police know.  
Christmas  
1 Brand name of ammo  
Super X  
2 10 shots were fired  
3 the boy was on his back  
with his feet to the east  
4 the girl was on her right  
side feet to the west  
4th July

1 girl was wearing patterned  
slacks  
2 The boy was also shot in  
the back

In page one and page two of the Zodiac  
Killer's 31 July 1969 letter to the *San  
Francisco Chronicle*, *San Francisco Examiner*  
and *Vallejo Times*, Zodiac described details of  
the murders only he would know

Here is part of a cipher - the  
other 2 parts of this cipher are  
being mailed to the editors of  
the Vallejo Times & SF Exam-  
iner.

I want you to print this cipher  
on the front page of your  
paper. In this cipher is my  
identity.

If you do not print this cipher  
by the afternoon of Fri. 1st of  
Aug 69, I will go on a Kill ram-  
page Fri. night. I will cruise  
around all weekend killing lone  
people in the night then move  
on to kill again until I end  
up with a dozen people over  
the weekends





## THE INVESTIGATION

ZODIAC MOCKED THE POLICE IN THEIR EFFORTS TO CATCH HIM AND CREATED A JURISDICTIONAL HEADACHE FOR THEM

"I like killing people because it is so much fun it is more fun than killing wild game in the forrest because man is the most dangeroue anamal of all to kill something gives me the most thrilling experence it is even better than getting your rocks off with a girl the best part of its thae when they die I will be reborn in paradice and thei have killed will become my slaves I will not give my name because will you try to sloi me down or atop my collectiog of slaves for my afterlife ebeorietemethpiti"

The message by Zodiac was encoded in a three-part 408 cipher sent to three Bay Area newspapers – *Vallejo Times Herald*, *The San Francisco Chronicle* and *The San Francisco Examiner* – on 1 August 1969. If it was solved, he informed the editors in an accompanying letter, then his identity would be revealed. If they failed to publish the three-part cryptogram, more people would end up dead, he threatened.

After the Blue Rock Springs attack, Zodiac began the next phase of his game plan: taunt the police, the media and, through those channels, the wider population. Editorial staff debated whether this was an elaborate hoax by a loon attempting to jump on the bandwagon. The ciphers were printed but one newspaper included quotes from Vallejo Police Chief, Jack Stiltz, in which he demanded more info from the killer... only things he would know and that hadn't yet been made public. Zodiac dutifully replied with information pertaining to the crime that only he would know. This was for real. As he wrote on 7 August 1969, "This is the Zodiac speaking..." It really was.

The three-part cryptogram stumped near enough everyone. It would be solved not by FBI experts or naval intelligence, but by a high school teacher and his wife. Donald and Betty Harden, of Salinas, California, worked the code obsessively, in one day. Zodiac's use of coded messages is unique in the annals of real crime history. There is nothing else like it. Other ciphers sent by Zodiac have never been solved.

When Stine was executed on the San Francisco police department's home turf and Zodiac took credit for the slaying, the investigation became a massive affair. Homicide Inspectors Bill Armstrong and Dave Toschi – a cop whose unusual upsidedown gun holster was copied by Steve McQueen in the San Francisco-set movie *Bullit* (1968) – were assigned to lead the multiple homicide investigation.

But Zodiac was a very crafty individual. By virtue of choosing different locations across the Bay Area, in different counties, he created a jurisdictional headache. Not only that, the various offices weren't so hot on sharing information, leads or suspects. The guys from Vallejo and Napa thought Toschi and Armstrong were muscling in, trying to dominate and generally acting like Big Time Charlies. Meetings between SFPD, Napa County and Vallejo were fraught with misunderstandings and petty grievances grew into, on occasion, outright hostility. Zodiac would have loved it. It took major efforts to agree on anything and there was plenty of to-ing and fro-ing going on. The wheels of justice turn slowly, but in the Zodiac case, which was



ABOVE This letter from Zodiac to attorney Melvin Belli contained a torn piece of Paul Stine's shirt

massively complex, the wheels ground to a halt and only budged in fits and starts.

A lack of cohesion, camaraderie and mutual respect between investigators only helped Zodiac remain at large. Police, too, were inundated with tip-offs about potential suspects. Toschi would share Robert Graysmith's conviction that Arthur Leigh Allen was Zodiac. He became a local suspect ten days after the Blue Rock Springs incident, when Detective Sergeant John Lynch, Vallejo PD, questioned him about his whereabouts. A couple of years later, in August 1971, his name cropping up again, Armstrong and Toschi interviewed him at his work place at the Pinola oil refinery, where Allen was employed as a chemist. Yet the list of suspects grew and grew into the thousands. Every single one could be him, and so had to be followed up. Cranks and false leads ruled the days, the months and years.

## PRIME SUSPECT: ARTHUR LEIGH ALLEN

Many individuals involved or interested in Zodiac want Arthur Leigh Allen to be the killer so badly that it hurts. Pinning the murders on him definitively would bring about a closing chapter, as well as allow surviving victims to know the name and face of their attacker.

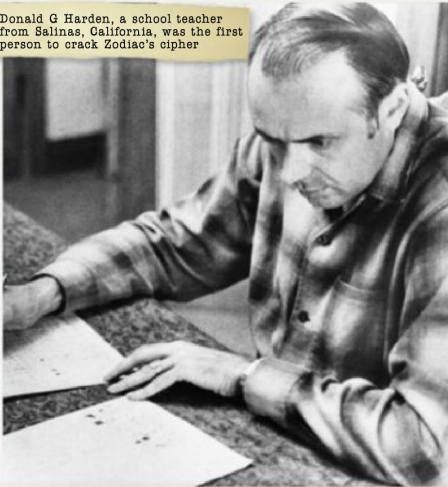


Based on witness testimonies, this sketch of the Zodiac killer was drawn up

Robert Graysmith, former San Francisco Chronicle cartoonist and amateur sleuth, was utterly convinced he had his man. Two books he wrote – *Zodiac: The Shocking True Story Of America's Most Elusive Serial Killer* (1986) and its sequel, *Zodiac Unmasked: The Identity Of America's Most Elusive Serial Killer Revealed* (2002) – built a very compelling case against Allen. In the first book, the suspect is known as Robert Hall Star (due to legal issues). So much surrounding Allen is purely circumstantial, but there does become a point when it stops looking circumstantial and like something more profoundly sinister. As a reader, you grow to share Graysmith's conviction. But Arthur Leigh Allen is not Zodiac.



Donald G Harden, a school teacher from Salinas, California, was the first person to crack Zodiac's cipher



## CRYPTOGRAPHER ANALYSIS

JOHN CLARK, PROFESSOR OF CRITICAL SYSTEMS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK, TOLD US ABOUT ZODIAC'S CIPHERS

"Of the four Zodiac ciphers, only one has been broken (Z408, consisting of 408 characters), two (Z13 and Z32, with 13 and 32 characters respectively) seem destined to remain unsolved without specific private knowledge, and one (Z320) has remained the focus of a great deal of investigative effort."

### WHAT SORT OF CIPHER IS Z320?

"Strictly we do not know! But the Zodiac killer was plausibly adept. Many 'simple substitution ciphers' applied to a few hundred characters can usually be broken by frequency analysis. Frequencies of ciphertext characters are assumed to largely mirror those of their corresponding plaintext characters (for example, if Q occurs most frequently in the ciphertext, it likely encodes for the most frequently occurring plaintext character, which is normally E in English). Corresponding analyses can be informed by considering occurrence frequencies of bigrams and trigrams (for example, in English, 'the' is very common, 'zqt' is not). Zodiac's (broken) 408 cipher is what is generally known as a homophonic substitution cipher. Each plaintext character can be represented by several different ciphertext characters. This can be done in such a way as to play havoc with many simple frequency analyses for short messages. Zodiac clearly knew this, and Z408's

solvers took a punt on the likely repeated occurrence of the word 'kill' to solve it. Many assume Z320 follows a similar pattern, though this is not certain.

Solving the Z320 may not prove possible. It is not even certain the text is to be read from left to right and top to bottom, though this is perhaps the dominant and plausible assumption in most work. Zodiac was also rather sloppy. From the Z408 we can see that he made spelling mistakes and sometimes he enciphered characters wrongly (though erroneous symbols were typically very similar to the ones he should have used). Zodiac could follow any convention he liked.

The Z320 is of a size that leads many to believe it 'should' be solvable. That's why they spend their time trying to solve it. But we may have to live with the possibility that it will never be solved."



### THE MASTER PLAN

Allen was a smart but very troubled guy. The son of an air force pilot, his mother, who Allen seemed to love and hate in equal measure, spoiled him rotten, even as an adult. A friend of his, Don Cheney, was once so weirded out by one conversation he had with Allen that he approached the cops and told them a strange story. Out hunting on New Year's Day 1969, the old college buddies got to talking. Things turned macabre when Allen detailed to Cheney, under the guise of writing a novel, how he would randomly shoot couples and call himself the Zodiac. It seemed important to note Allen owned a Zodiac-branded watch. Did this conversation really take place? Why would a murderer reveal his master plan?

### THE WANTED POSTER

Allen was a stocky guy with short balding hair, but he didn't look like the person identified by the teenagers who saw a man wiping down Paul Stine's cab on Washington and Cherry, or as described by the cops who saw the same individual moments later, walking down nearby Jackson Street.

### DNA

In 2002, there was a great deal of excitement surrounding the case and Allen's position as prime suspect. DNA extracted from an authenticated Zodiac letter would be compared to Allen's DNA. If they matched, it would be something of a small, but still crucially important, victory. Allen passed away in 1992,

but at least the world would finally have an answer. However, DNA results came back negative. No match.

### PROFILE

Allen enjoyed, to a point, being seen as a key figure in the Zodiac investigation. But does his psychological profile point towards him being a killer? Allen was a sexual sadist and convicted child molester. He once told Vallejo cop George Bawart how he enjoyed listening to the screams of a child being beaten. Zodiac was not a sexual sadist. While the Lake Berryessa attack does bear elements of sexual sadism, others do not. Neither did he torture his victims. The thrill he derived was from the act of killing. He even wrote in his three-part cipher, "It is even better than getting your rocks off with a girl."



ABOVE Witnesses saw a man wipe down the taxi after Paul Stine was shot

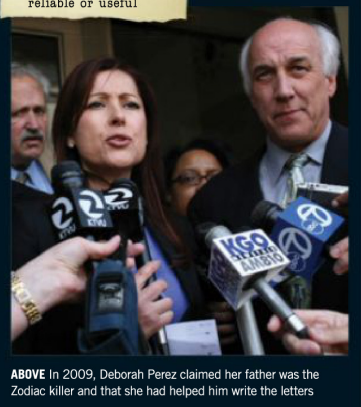
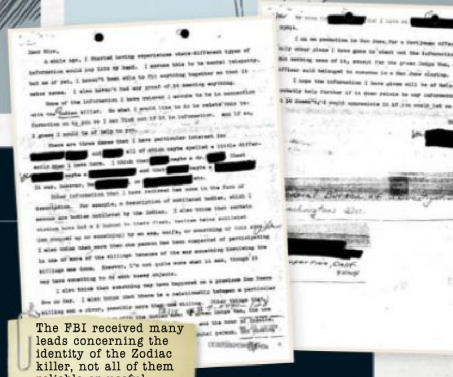
## OTHER THEORIES

All sorts of theories abound. At one point, cops were willing to question Ted Bundy, then on death row, to see if he had anything to do with it. More recently, Gary L. Stewart penned *The Most Dangerous Animal Of All* (2014). He detailed the journey from seeking out his birth father and uncovering – to his horror – that daddy was the Zodiac. If he's misguided and grasping at straws, it's nothing compared to the outré behaviour of Deborah Perez. In 2009, she declared that her father, Guy Ward Hendrickson, was the Zodiac. In a press conference outside the *San Francisco Chronicle*, she said she was in possession of cab driver Paul Stine's glasses. The provenance of the eyeglasses turned out to be false. Perez was another wacko attention-seeker in a long line of them.

Former California highway patrolman Lyndon Lafferty penned *The Zodiac Killer Cover-Up: The Silenced Badge* in 2012. His suspect was a 91-year-old Solano County resident, whose name and guilt had been known to law enforcement agencies since 1971. But guess what? Corruption and office politicking had not obscured the truth. Chalk it down as more baloney.

Among the cockamamie fictions, one individual does warrant further investigation: Richard Gaikowski. The former newspaperman lived in Vallejo at the time of the killings and looked like the guy on the wanted poster. In the late 1980s, a former colleague of his, known only as 'Goldcatcher', told investigators about conversations they'd had on the topic of Zodiac and how richly detailed they were. Goldcatcher made audio recordings of Gaikowski, and when Nancy Slover, the radio dispatcher, was given a sample of his voice, she was convinced it was Zodiac's.

In one of the unsolved ciphers, the name 'Gyke' appears, a shortening of his last name. Bob Loomis, another former colleague of Gaikowski's, who is sceptical of 'Gaikowski as Zodiac', confirmed he did use this nickname in correspondence, but showed it was spelled "Gaik". 'Touch' DNA work was done on Gaikowski's letters to Loomis, written in 1968. A partial profile from an envelope was extracted. It is yet to be contrasted with the partial DNA profile pulled from an authenticated Zodiac letter in 2003. SFPD refused a request to test it.



ABOVE In 2009, Deborah Perez claimed her father was the Zodiac killer and that she had helped him write the letters





ABOVE Although police may have stopped Zodiac in the aftermath of Stine's death, he did not look like the man they were searching for

The pair were hog-tied with the pieces of clothesline the man had brought with him especially for the task. Hartnell asked the man if the gun was really loaded. The man obliged him, pulling out the clip. This was for real. Yet the gun was never used. It was a tool to inspire fear and the promise of a dreadful situation. Zodiac began stabbing Hartnell in the back with the 30-centimetre bayonet-like knife. He was stabbed six times. Shepard, reacting on pure survival instinct, attempted to roll away. Zodiac walked over and stabbed her repeatedly, too. Job done, he headed back up to Knoxville Road.

"I want to report a murder, no, a double murder." Officer David Slaight, who was covering for a colleague on a break, took the message. When he attempted to get further information regarding the homicide, the caller simply stated: "I'm the one that did it." He dropped the receiver and left it dangling.

The phone call had come in from a phone booth in the city of Napa, 43 kilometres from the crime scene. The biggest surprise, however, was left for the cops to find along with Hartnell and Shepard. Written on Hartnell's white 1956 Karmann Ghia Coupé with a black marker pen was a message and a score to date:

**Vallejo**  
**12-20-68**  
**7-4-69**  
**Sept 27-69-6:30**  
**by knife**

#### THE FINAL VICTIM:

#### PAUL STINE

How Zodiac entered Paul Stine's cab is a mystery and quite possibly down to nothing more than random selection and sheer bad luck (for the victim). What is known, based on the cab logbook, is that 29-year-old Stine picked up his murderer at Mason and Geary and drove to Maple Street before continuing on a block or so to Washington and Cherry. Was Maple Street too well-lit and busy for Zodiac to plug the guy?

W&C was a quiet residential area in an affluent neighbourhood. The lack of adequate street lighting made the situation almost perfect. Zodiac asked Stine to park up, then he placed a gun against the driver's head and pulled the trigger.

In the vicinity of W&C, Officers Foukes and Zelms stopped a gentleman out walking. They asked if he'd seen anything suspicious. Thanks to a bizarre (and to this day unaccountable) blunder by the radio dispatcher, they were on the lookout for an NMA (Negro Male Adult). The stocky Caucasian guy that they stopped, who they described as 'lumbering' up Jackson Street, replied he'd seen a guy waving a gun around on Washington Street. Foukes and Zelms cannot be blamed for their error. They were responding to what was then currently relayed about the murderer of Paul Stine.

“ ZODIAC BEGAN THE NEXT PHASE OF HIS GAME PLAN: TAUNT THE POLICE, THE MEDIA AND THE WIDER POPULATION ”

## THE AFTERMATH

### AFTER THE KILLING OF PAUL STINE, ZODIAC CEASED HIS CAMPAIGN. WHY?

Stine's assassination marked the end of the canonical murders. The official tally is: five dead from seven targeted. Until we know otherwise, that's the definitive score. Zodiac's rampage lasted barely a year.

So, why did he stop? There is only speculation. Zodiac fully intended to kill Mike Mageau and Bryan Hartnell, but the men survived. That wasn't in the script. Although he bragged to the press, about how he'd laughed at police incompetence in apprehending him on the night of the Stine murder (he claimed he was hiding in bushes in the Presidio), was Zodiac genuinely frightened by the prospect of getting pinched?

The investigation amplified and the media's coverage remained at fever pitch for a good while after. Zodiac never killed again, but he wrote to newspaper editors with his latest threats and reflections upon the state-wide panic he had orchestrated single-handedly like a master of puppets. Bay Area police had tens of thousands of suspects to sift through, but nothing would ever stick. Each developed a favourite suspect, but they all lacked the vital piece of evidence to clinch the deal. Years went by and there were long silences, which then became complete silence. The phantom finally vanished into the air like a mid-morning fog rolling in off the bay and the world moved on.

The last authenticated letter was received in January 1974. In it, Zodiac praised William Friedkin's *The Exorcist* as the "best satirical comedy I have ever seen." Zodiac signed off with the tally "Me - 37 SFPD - 0". Had Zodiac really killed 37 people? We don't know, but it seems unlikely. Detectives leafed through old cold cases for potential links to Zodiac, but nothing solid turned up. It was another joke at the expense of the police, the killer enjoying the uncertainty he weaved by mere suggestion.

Other letters pertaining to be from the maniac turned up once in a while, but experts dismissed them as hoaxes. The current layout of the case is this: SFPD closed their files in 2004 but reopened it in 2007, the same year David Fincher's masterpiece examination of the case was released worldwide, a film that painstakingly recreated the murders, after new info came in. SFPD remained resolutely tight-lipped on recent developments, however. Maybe it was just more hokey and not worth getting excited about. In Napa County and Riverside, the search for Zodiac is still on. It's doubtful now, though, there will be ever be an arrest made. Zodiac will remain one of the greatest fiends never caught.