

Coed Stabbed to Death on Riverside College Campus



Cheri Jo Bates

Slain on Way From Library, Police Believe

Exclusive to The Times from a Staff Writer

RIVERSIDE — The body of an attractive blonde freshman coed was found under a tree on the campus of Riverside City College Monday morning.

Detectives said Cheri Jo Bates, 18, had been stabbed, but she had not been sexually molested.

An autopsy indicated the girl put up a tremendous struggle with her assailant, Dep. Coroner Mike Reilly said.

Dr. F. Rene Modglin, autopsy pathologist, said the girl had been stabbed repeatedly in the lungs, arms throat and face.

Janitor Finds Body

A janitor found Miss Bates' body around 6 a.m. It was sprawled face down on a dirt driveway alongside a frame bungalow storage facility at the edge of the campus quad.

Her print blouse and salmon-colored capri pants were undisturbed but covered with blood.

The coed's yellow compact car was found parked on the street 100 yards away, its ignition key in place but the ignition wiring yanked loose. Three library books on American government lay on the front seat.

Police speculated that Miss Bates' killer disabled her car and waited for her to return from the City College library Sunday night, then sprang upon her when she tried to start the car.

Friend Cites Phone Call

A girl friend said Miss Bates had phoned her Sunday afternoon, saying she was going to the library that evening.

Her father, Joseph Bates, a machinist employed at the Corona Naval Ordnance Laboratory, filed a missing person report with police Sunday night.

An anonymous caller told police Monday she had heard "an awful scream" followed by a muffled scream and the sound of a car near the scene of the murder Sunday night, but had not thought enough of it then to report it.

Police Have No Clues

Detectives said they had no clues to go on.

Miss Bates lived with her father at 4195 Via San Jose. Her mother, who is separated from Bates, lives in Riverside, too. The girl also leaves a brother, who is in the Navy.

A spring graduate of Ramona High School in Riverside, Miss Bates was a cheerleader for the varsity football team there.

Fellow students who gathered somberly around the quad Monday morning described her as well-liked on campus and an average student.