

Black Dahlia Avenger/Zodiac M.O. Crime Signature Comparisons

<u>M.O.</u>	<u>Avenger</u>	<u>Zodiac</u>
1. Serial Killer	X	X
2. Created his own marketing/public relations campaign along with inventing and providing press with a “pseudonym” for them to use in headlining his crimes and his “reign of terror.” (“Black Dahlia Avenger” and “Zodiac.”)	X	X
3. Contacted and taunted <u>press by telephone</u> after crimes.	X	X
4. Contacted and taunted <u>police by telephone</u> after crimes.	X	X
5. Used press as his instrument to terrorize public promising, “There will be more”	X	X
6. Drew crude picture of knife dripping blood and mailed the drawing to press	X	X
7. Brought <u>pre-cut lengths of clothesline</u> and used them to bind and tie his victims during crimes.	X	X
8. Mailed more than a dozen notes and sent to police and press feigning illiteracy, using misspelled words and disguised his handwriting.	X	X
9. Mailed <u>“Cut-and-Paste”</u> notes to press and police.	X	X
10. Mailed <u>typewritten</u> letter describing his actions to police	X	X
11. Placed <u>excessive postage and multiple stamps</u> on the taunting notes he mailed to press/police	X	X
12. Addressed press mailings, “To the Editor”	X	X
13. Mailings sent on specific “anniversary dates” related to crimes.	X	X
14. Packaged and mailed personal items belonging to his murdered victims to the press to prove he was the killer.	X	X
15. Told victims and press he was “Going to Mexico.”	X	X
16. Used both a knife and a gun(s) in his separate crimes.	X	X
17. Included puns and word games in his mailings.	X	X
18. Killer continued to send in mailings to press and police months and years after original crimes.	X	X
19. Egomaniacal personality demanded constant media publicity and front-page coverage under threat of additional killings.	X	X
20. Identified himself as an “Avenger” claiming he was wronged by the female victim or claimed he was getting revenge for being spurned and ignored by victim. Informs public that the crime was “justified” or was “Divine Retribution.”	X	X
21. Several victims stabbed with a long-bladed jungle K-Bar or bayonet-style knife.	X	X
22. Wrote taunting message at scene either on bedroom wall, a nearby telephone post, a door panel of victim’s vehicle, or on victim’s body.	X	X

23.	Manually ripped away band from a man’s wristwatch and left both band and watch at separate crime scenes, on or near the victim’s body.	X	X
24.	Left man’s white handkerchief either at scene near body, or used it to wipe away his fingerprints from inside victim’s vehicle or from knife left at crime-scene.	X	X
25,	Geographically preselected crime-scene location by plotting coordinates on a map; then randomly murdered victim(s) who by happenstance entered his “killing zone,” or	X	X
26,	Geographically preselected crime-scene location by plotting coordinates on a map, then had unwitting victim(taxi-driver) drive him to that specific location, where victim is then shot and killed, or,	X	X
27.	Forcibly kidnaped female victim strangles her to death, and dismembers body with surgical skill and precision. Then poses body parts in public view at a specific location (street name) that provided taunting clue related to the crime or suspect.	X	X
28.	Brutal assault and overkill, particularly savage with his female victims.	X	X
29.	Telephoned and or sent sadistic note to victim’s parents after brutal murder of their daughter.	X	X

While a few of these twenty-nine M.O. crime signature patterns, if isolated, could be considered generic, *in combination they become exceedingly rare*. In my twenty-four years with the LAPD, I investigated more than three hundred separate homicides. *None of the murders included an MO where the suspect mailed in a taunting note to the press or police, or sent threats to the victim’s parents.*

In fact, I am unable to find a single modern-day serial killer prior to Zodiac’s 1966 Riverside killing, who has used the specific MO of taunting the police and press with letters containing obvious misspellings with only one exception—Dr. George Hill Hodel, in the 1940s, calling himself the “Black Dahlia Avenger.” (Prior to those crimes we have to go back another sixty-years to 1888 and London’s,—Jack-the-Ripper.)

In previous investigative summaries in *BDA*, *BDA II* and *MOST EVIL* I have addressed many additional specific links to handwriting characteristics, as well as the surrealist connections to art, literature music and film.

In 2010 a *California Department of Justice* handwriting expert examined George Hodel’s handwriting and compared it to known Zodiac letters and, while not being able to give a court certain identification, did state, “We are *unable to eliminate George Hodel as the writer/author of the Zodiac letters.*”

(DOJ at that time requested I provide them with additional lower-case writings of my father’s handwriting, which to date are unavailable. So far, I have been unable to locate any additional lower-case samples.)

As stated in *MOST EVIL*:

George Hodel was a prolific serial killer whose signature is visible not in any single method of murder, type of victim, or specific killing ground, but rather as a series of complex arrangements, installations, and obscure references to art, culture, and film that, taken together, reveal a chilling and never-before-documented variety of serial murder: murder as a fine art.

One new discovery (our thirtieth here listed) that is *specific* to both Avenger and Zodiac MO’s which has gone unrecognized by me until only recently, is the fact that both used the same unique signatory in one of their mailed taunts to the press—signing it, “**a friend.**”(Note that both Avenger and Zodiac signed it using a small letter –“a”.)

Mailed to newspaper editor
by "Black Dahlia Avenger" in 1947
signing it "a friend." (Small letter "a")

Black Dahlia Avenger 1947



Mailed to newspaper editor
by "Zodiac" in 1974, signing it
"a friend." (Small letter "a")

Zodiac February 14, 1974

Dear Mr. Editor,
Did you know that the
initials SLA (Symbionese
Liberation Army) spell "sla",
an old Norse word
meaning "kill".
a friend

Zodiac Mails SLA "a Friend" Note on Anniversary of Black Dahlia Avenger Murder

SKH Note- Zodiac's "a Friend" SLA Note was mailed by the suspect to the press on February 14, 1974 which was the 26th anniversary date of the Black Dahlia Avenger's murder of his Los Angeles victim, Gladys Kern, slain by him on February 14, 1948.

I agree with Michael Connelly's LAPD Detective III Harry Bosch, when it comes to murder investigations, "There are no coincidences."