

FAQ 4

4.1

Q: Could you provide some background information as to why you think the 1949 Mimi Boomhower murder, a Beverly Hills matron, was connected to the other crimes. You say you think it is a category I crime which you define as “extremely strong evidence”, but little is known about the murder. I don’t think the police ever thought it was connected.

The Boomhower crime and most of the known facts and linkage are summarized in BDA, so I won’t repeat it here. Anytime, you do not have a crime scene, it makes the criminal investigation extremely difficult. That was the case in three of the seven serial killings, I believe were committed by my father, George Hodel. In the Elizabeth Short murder, at least the officers had a body and a dump site to work with, which provided them some physical evidence. The bodies of Boomhower and Spangler were never found. Nevertheless, as summarized in my book, I believe the connections are strong in both those crimes.

In fact L.A.P.D. did believe the BOOMHOWER murder may have been connected to the rash of recent Hollywood killings of lone women. In a *Los Angeles Times* article dated, August 25, 1945, headlined below, detectives pulled the crime files and publicly voiced their belief that the Boomhower killer may be the same as the man who killed GLADYS KERN in Hollywood on February 14, 1948. An excerpt from that article reads:

WEALTHY WIDOW FEARED VICTIM OF KNIFE SLAYER

POLICE RECALL STILL UNSOLVED KERN KILLING

...

KERN RECORDS STUDIED

But, with no hint of her existence forthcoming despite her prominence, he glumly turned to records of the hunting-knife murder Feb. 16, 1948, of Mrs. Gladys Kern, 42, real estate woman robbed and murdered while showing a house at 4217 Cromwell Ave. to a prospective male buyer. Mrs. Kern’s killer never has been found.

***L.A. Times* 8/25/49**

...

Wealthy Widow Feared Victim of Knife Slayer



Police Recall Still Unsolved Kern Killing

Fear gripped police yesterday that Mrs. Mimi Boomhower, 48, wealthy Bel-Air widow who disappeared last Thursday in the midst of a series of real estate appointments, may have suffered the fate of another woman killed last year with a hunting knife while showing homes to prospects.

An all-points bulletin reporting the stocky Frenchwoman's disappearance and asking for clues to her whereabouts was issued by West Los Angeles police as the sixth day passed without a lead to her possible fate.

At first, Capt. Emmett E. Jones, head of the West Los Angeles detective bureau, had recourse to theories the gay, socially prominent and popular widow may have eloped with one of several of her recent escorts.

Kern Remède studied Blue, with no hint of her existence forthcoming despite her prominence, he glumly turned to records of the hunting-knife murder Feb. 18, 1948, of Mrs. Gladys Kern, 42, real estate woman robbed and murdered while showing a house at 4217 Cromwell Ave. to a prospective male buyer. Mrs. Kern's killer never has been found.

Mrs. Boomhower is the widow of Niles E. Boomhower, who with a brother invented and distributed the Congoleum rug, both amassing fortunes. The couple came here in 1931 and in 1933

MYSTERY—Fate of Mrs. Mimi Boomhower, wealthy Bel-Air widow, remained a mystery yesterday as the sixth day passed without a definite lead to her disappearance.

The following day her killer(s) leave her purse in a telephone booth with a written message to police: "POLICE DEPT-- WE FOUND THIS AT BEACH THURSDAY NIGHT"

I. A. Times 8/26/49

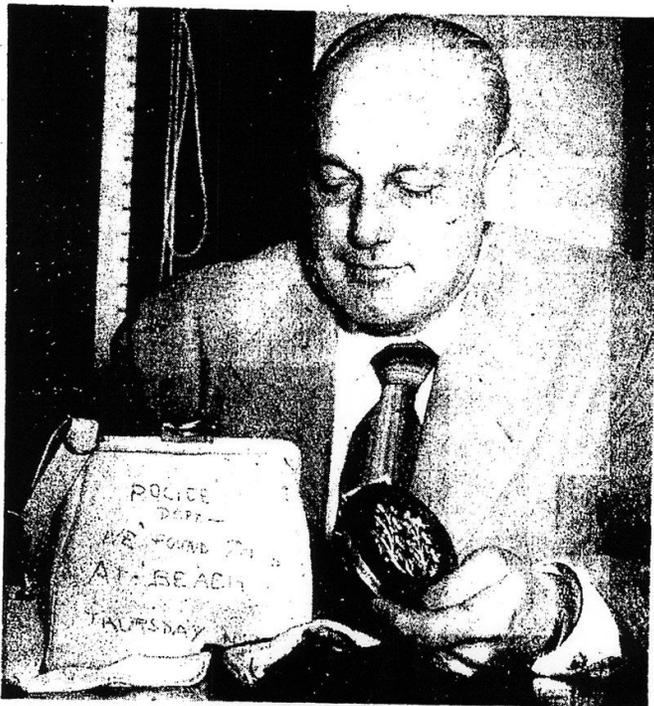
MISSING WIDOW'S PURSE SPURS HUNT

Gangster and Society Names Juggled as Police Receive Host of Clues by Phone

Names of wealthy society figures were juggled with those of notorious underworld characters yesterday as police struggled to solve the mysterious disappearance of vivacious Mrs. Mimi Boomhower.

Strange telephone calls swamped police switchboards in the City Hall and West Los Angeles. Every-

elopement. Some said she might be in a rest home, exhausted. Another theory was that she is a

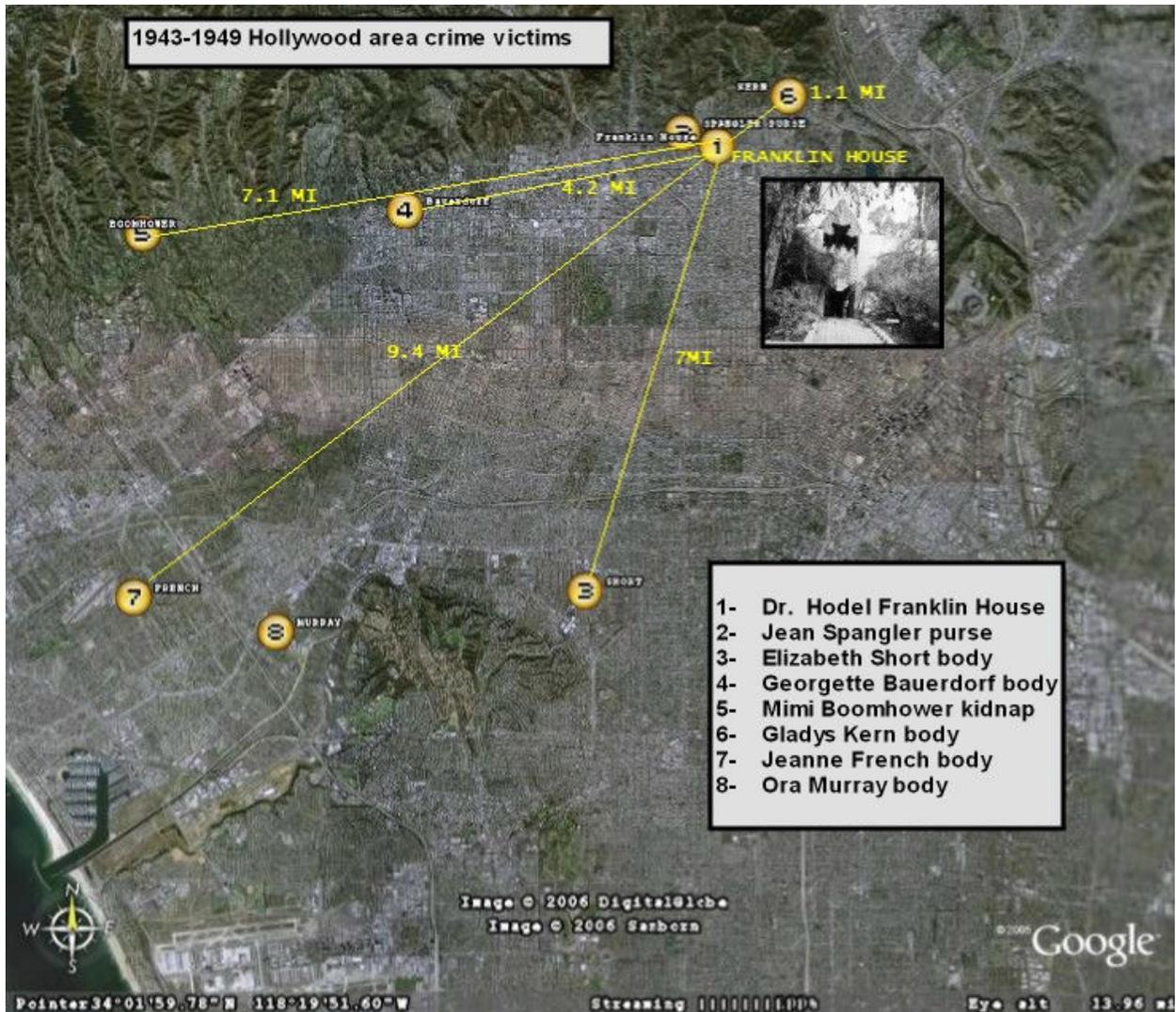


BEST CLUE—Capt. Emmett E. Jones examines purse and compact of Mrs. Mimi Boomhower, Bel-Air widow mysteriously missing, which were found in a telephone booth in Beverly Hills. Purse bore message: "Police Dept.—We found this at beach Thursday night."

Above hand printing analyzed by a court certified handwriting expert (Ms. Hannah McFarland) and her opinion was that it is "highly probable" that the handwriting on the purse was written by, Dr. George Hill Hodel. (NB: It has been 3+ years since Seattle handwriting expert, Hannah McFarland's findings were published. To date, NOT ONE handwriting expert has come forward to offer an opposing or alternate position—excluding George Hodel as the author of the Dahlia, Kern, Boomhower, and French handwritings, Ms. McFarland was provided twenty-six separate known samples of Dr. Hodel's handwriting for comparison, and studied them over a six-month period before rendering her opinion. A CBS handwriting expert, asked to make a comparison by that network for a 48 HOURS special on the investigation, was provided only four (4) known samples and given a week to analyze them. His opinion was "inconclusive." Based on the limited samples he was provided by the network, he stated in a on-camera interview that he was not able to either verify or eliminate George Hodel as the author. This amounted to NO OPINION.

The below map shows the location of Dr. George Hodel's residence (**NO. 1**) at 5121 Franklin Ave., as well as the areas to the south and west. Incredibly, all seven victims are within a 9 mile radius of the Franklin House, one victim (Gladys Kern) slain only one-mile away. Prior to buying the Franklin House in 1945, George Hodel resided just two-miles east of this location, so both the Murray and Bauerdorf killings would be an additional two miles distant from his then residence.)

- 8- Victim- Ora Murray 7/27/43- (pre-Franklin House) –9.0 miles
- 4- Victim-Georgette Bauerdorf- 10-12-44 (pre-Franklin House) – 4.2 miles
- 3- Victim-Elizabeth Short- 1-15-47 - Franklin House 7.7 miles from body
- 7- Victim-Jeanne French- 2/10/47- Franklin House 9.4 miles from body
- 6- Victim-Gladys Kern- 2/14/48- Franklin House 1.1 miles from body
- 5- Victim- Mimi Boomhower- 8/18/49- Franklin House 9.4 miles from abduction
- 2- Victim- Jean Spangler- 10-7-49- Franklin House 0.5 miles from where purse found.



Hollywood, California
1943-1949 HOLLYWOOD AREA CRIME VICTIMS
(Murray, Bauerdorf, Short, French, Kern, Boomhower, and Spangler)

In an independent study and analysis of the data, Dr. Evan R. Harrington, professor of psychology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, using “DRAGNET”, a geo-profile program determined that, “the Franklin House at 5121 Franklin Ave., was inside the area of highest probability for the offenders home to be located.”

To visually see the geographical closeness of the 1940s crimes each to the other and to the prime-suspect’s residence is striking, but there is even a stronger link, which is part of the suspect’s *MO*. It is literally and figuratively a part of his – *signature*.

During my twenty-four years as a homicide-detective with LAPD, which includes my personal investigation of over three-hundred murder investigations, NOT ONCE IN ANY MURDER, DID I HAVE A SUSPECT WHO WROTE A NOTE TO THE POLICE OR PRESS, OR INCLUDED IT AS PART OF HIS MO IN THE MURDER.

In questioning old partners, and a number of downtown homicide detectives over the past five-years, I have yet to find a single detective who personally investigated such a case. IT IS EXTREMELY RARE.

In five of the above seven murders, the suspect included a written note to the press and or police as part of his MO. In the remaining two crimes, a note could have been included and kept from the public, or put in the file by detectives who merely considered it "a prank." Without examining the actual case files, we cannot exclude the possibility that notes were involved in the remaining two crimes. Here are the five crimes which we know-- DID INCLUDE a note:

1. Georgette Bauerdorf- 10/12/44- Suspect typed a note taunting police and spread red- mercurochrome over the paper, pretending it was the victim's blood. Suspect claimed the murder was Divine retribution and promised to show up at the Hollywood Canteen on or before Oct 11th, 1945.
2. Elizabeth Short- 1-15-47- Suspect sent multiple notes/letters (12) taunting police and press. Mailed victim's personal property proving he was the actual killer. Block printing. Expert identified handwriting as belonging to Dr. George Hodel
3. Jeanne French- 2-10-47- Suspect wrote taunting obscenities on victim's body. "Fuck You. B.D." Block printing. Expert identified handwriting as belonging to Dr. George Hodel.
4. Gladys Kern- 2-14-48- Suspect wrote long, rambling note to press and police detailing stabbing murder of victim and claiming to be present when another suspect stabbed the victim. Block printing. Expert identified handwriting as belonging to Dr George Hodel.
5. Mimi Boomhower- 8-18-49- Suspect wrote note to police on victim's purse and left it in a phone booth. Block printing. Expert identified handwriting as belonging to Dr. George Hodel.

4.2

Q: Is it correct that the Los Angeles D.A. was investigating other crimes that he believed were connected to the Black Dahlia suspect back in 1947?

Yes, but the D.A.'s Office did not get involved in the investigation until October, 1949.

That office, (a completely separate law enforcement entity than the L.A.P.D.) at the direction of the 1949 grand jury, was ordered to reinvestigate the Black Dahlia murder.

The 1949 grand jury believed the investigation was either being covered-up or being totally mishandled. (This information came to them through sources inside the L.A.P.D.)

Lt. Frank Jemison was placed in charge of the reinvestigation. My review of the DA's, Bureau of Investigation documents, which had been locked in a vault for over fifty-years, showed much of the material (not all, many of the interviews were missing) remained in two large boxes, entitled: Black Dahlia & Hodel Files. My review of these DA files showed that beginning in late 1949, for slightly over one-year, Lt. Jemison, Lt. Sullivan,

D.A. investigator Walter Morgan, and others simultaneously were investigating four separate murders. Those being:

- 1) Elizabeth Short, "Black Dahlia".
- 2) Jeanne French, "Red Lipstick Murder"
- 3) Gladys Kern, "Hunting Knife Murder"
- 4) The murder of actress, Jean Spangler

(Without any knowledge that these four murders were being investigated by the D.A.'s Office, in 2002, I independently, came to the same conclusion that they were serially linked to each other.)

The following is a list of suspects in this investigation, most of whom have been eliminated.

1. Frank French	11. Gus Sealy
2. David Weather and wife Madge	12. Al Fahy
3. Robert Huser	13. Ernest A. King
4. Pete Thomas	14. Frank Glanton
5. David S. Thomas	15. Jack O'Hare
6. Fred Caransa	16. Cliff Schaffer
7. Facho Reyes	17. Fred Jones
8. John Herrera	18. Herman Hilf
9. Danny Garcia	19. Charles Silva
10. Mike Caransa	

The statements taken in connection with this investigation are alphabetically arranged and are from the following persons:

Agnew, Jess V.	McCreary, Mary B.
Alberts, Dr. William N.	Nicholson, Barbara Ann
Alberts, William N.	O'Hare, John M.
Altpeper, Austin G.	Qw, Margaret
Benson, John T.	Pfiferkorn, Iva Rose
Benson, Marco D.	Provos, Joseph P.
Berlinghale, Gertrude	Randolph, Oma
Bossmeyer, Lee	Reyes, Bonafacio Facho
Burns, Rogers V.	Salvera, Fred
Caransa, Fred J.	Soussena, Haribee
Christiansen, E.	Schwankovsky, Charlona Axford
Dilline, Jones	Schaffer, Clifford M.
Dilline, Sally Ann	Schaffer, Alma A.
Edwards, Selma E.	Smith, Elizabeth M.
Eubanks, Julius F.	Smith, Robert I.
Fahy, Alfred P.	Stafford, Dean W.
French, Frank Frederick (3 Statements)	Stigo, Joseph
Garcia, Conrad D.	Subers, Walter, R.
Generotaky, Evelyn	Thomas, Edwin S.
Gonzales, Angel M.	Thomas, Peter F.
Hancock, Charles W.	Tilden, William C.
Herrera, Johnny B.	White, Glenn H.
Herrera, Teaquilla	White, Gloria C.
Hilf, Stella Florence (2 statements)	Wilson, Lorraine
Huntton, Estella P.	Wrasler, David (3 Statements)
Huntton, J. D.	Young, Sam I.
Jackson, Erwin W.	
Jones, Fred A.	
Jones, Teddy	
King, Edith	
Larson, Genevieve N.	
Licht, Paul A.	
Maler, Edward	
Manalatos, Pearl "Toni"	

30-1383 Lt. Frank B. Jemison November 15, 1950

Mrs. Oma Randolph

Jeanne French Murder

Charles Silva, Herman Hilf, Robert Huser, et al.

These are the movements of victim Jeanne French on Monday, February 22, 1950 at 10:30 P.M.

STATEMENT OF MRS. PEARL MANALATOS TAKEN AT 15341 EASTWOOD AVENUE, LAWDALE, CALIFORNIA, BY INVESTIGATORS FRANK B. JEMISON AND JAMES F. McGRATH ON SEPTEMBER 22, 1950 AT 1:30 P.M.

Present: Jemison and McGrath
Reported by: Thelma Swanson

File No. 30-1383
Charge: Murder
Title: Jean French
Deputy:

BY MR. JEMISON:
Q If you will state your full name.
A Mrs. Pearl Manalatos, M-A-N-A-L-A-T-O-S.

Q Your residence address?
A 15341 Eastwood Avenue.

Q What is your occupation?
A Housewife.

Q Where did you live before you moved here?
A West Imperial.

Q About four months ago when Investigator Jemison saw you and showed you 16 photographs, did you not?

D.A. FILES- JEANNE FRENCH "RED LIPSTICK MURDER" DOCUMENTS

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: LIEUTENANT FRANK B. JEMISON
 IN RE: NOTES TAKEN ON JEANNE FRENCH AND BLACK DAHLIA MURDERS
 FROM: INVESTIGATOR WALTER MORGAN
 DATE: AUGUST 30, 1950.

1-3-50, case #30-1268, checked prescriptions at Theo's Drugstore, 3326 West Victory Boulevard.

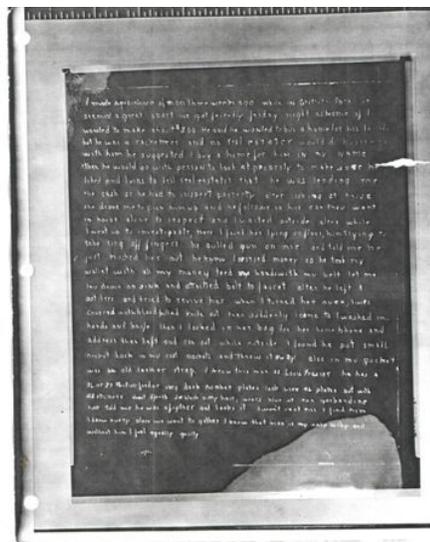
1-4-50, case #30-1268, checked prescriptions at drugstore located at 5561 Hollywood Boulevard.

1-5-50, case #30-1268, in re Spangler case:

- (1) Eldorado Scott, M. D., 7266 Sunset;
- (2) Mascott, Vet., 7131 Santa Monica Boulevard;
- (3) Doc Scott hangs out at bars on strip; 30 years, 6 ft., 165 pounds, sandy hair, blue eyes, light complexion, Southern drawl. 1948 Olds convertible, 98 series;
- (4) Edward Scott, Chiropractor, 245 Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, Crestview 1-3865;
- (5) Howard J. Scott, 30 years, 960 East Green Street, Pasadena, Suite 109;
- (6) Wesley J. Scott, 542 South Broadway, Suite 1115;
- (7) E. W. Scott, 7266 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood 9-5602;
- (8) Walter Scott, Abortionist, 5947 Hollywood Boulevard, Olympia 2802;
- (9) Dr. Morrell, 2618 Castle Heights Place.

1-6-50, case #30-1268, Wood, Dr. J. P. or J. S. rented

D.A. FILES JEAN SPANGLER MURDER (1949)



D.A. FILES GLADYS KERN MURDER (1948)

Above documents on the Jeanne French investigation shows that Lt. Jemison used and incorporated the original (old) L.A.P.D 1947 investigation into his November, 1950 summary. (Refer to FAQ I pgs 5 & 15 for additional observations re. investigation.)

Above document on the Jean Spangler investigation shows that D.A. investigator Walter Morgan was pursuing the "Dr. Scott" connections and attempting to locate and identify him through checking prescriptions in the Hollywood area.

Above document from the Gladys Kern murder is the handwritten note mailed by the suspect before the body was found. This note was mailed two-blocks from my father's downtown medical office at 7th & Flower, from the same mailbox used to mail one of the Black Dahlia notes. I have identified it as being my father's handwriting. (printing)

The important point in discovering these separate documents is that in 1949-50 the D.A. investigators were actively investigating four of the seven murders I attribute as being connected (SHORT, FRENCH, KERN, SPANGLER) to the same suspect—Dr. George Hill Hodel.

4.3

Q: I read in the 1950 D.A. reports prepared by Captain Jemison that he interviewed a model by the name of Mattie Comfort and they had a nude photo of her with your father. Did she say that she also knew Elizabeth Short?

Frank Jemison was a lieutenant, not a captain, but since he did such a remarkable job, lets give him the posthumous promotion to Captain.

Excellent question! As more and more pieces of the puzzle fall into place, Mattie Comfort, a.k.a. Mady Comfort, has become an increasingly important witness, and it appears she could well have been the *femme fatale* that was the cause of George Hodel's sudden departure from L.A. (We know he was about to leave, but the *Mattie Comfort factor* could well have caused him to make an even faster start out of the gate. As we shall see, she became, Mattie DISCOMFORT.

Based on D.A. investigator Jemison's interviews and written reports, along with separate supporting facts, here is how I believe it played out:

- 1) We know that sometime in January or early February, 1950, Joe Barrett (a roomer/tenant at the Franklin House) was picked up at his work place by Lieutenants Sullivan and Jemison, and taken to the D.A.'s office, for interrogation. They informed him of their suspicions that George Hodel was the Black Dahlia killer, and got Barrett to agree to help them. He was to be their "mole", their eyes and ears at the Franklin House. They told Barrett to bring them some photos of Dr. Hodel from the house, which he agreed to do, and in fact did do. (3). Below is an actual scan of the relevant portion of Lt. Jemison's report dated, 2/20/51:

Camarillo. Joe Barratt, a roomer at the Hodel residence cooperated as an informant. A photograph of the suspect in the nude with a nude identified colored model was secured from his personal effects. Under-signed identified this model as Mattie Comfort, 3423-1/2 South Arlington, Republic 4953. She said that she was with Doctor Hodel sometime prior to the murder and that she knew about his being associated with victim.

Note that the original 1951 typewritten report reads, "She [Mattie Comfort] said that she was with Doctor Hodel sometime prior to the murder and that she knew about his being associated with victim [Elizabeth Short.]"

It appears obvious that some unknown writer, on an unknown date and time (possibly even decades later) inserted the word "nothing" into this report, in what looks like an attempt to try and reverse the meaning of what Mattie Comfort told the original investigators. Her statement that Elizabeth knew George Hodel is too important, and too damning, not to have been originally and immediately corrected in the typed version by Lt. Jemison, before submitting it to his bureau captain. Since it was in file and not changed, it appears that Jemison's statement was altered by another, possibly at a much later period in time. (We have Jemison's unrelated statement in another document [below] confirming that there were multiple witnesses (not just Lillian Lenorak) connecting Hodel & Short and placing her at the Franklin House before the murder.)

- 2) On March 22, 1950, Lt. Jemison, accompanied by a stenographer, goes to Dorothy Hodel's residence on Santa Monica pier, and conducts an interview. Dorothy stonewalls him, basically denying she made statements to Tamar, connecting George Hodel to Elizabeth Short, and a statement where George, intoxicated and coming home several days after the Black Dahlia murder, said to Dorothy, "They will never be able to prove I committed that murder." Dorothy tells Jemison she never said that to Tamar.

Below is the actual scanned section of the transcript which relates to Jemison's attempts to identify the black nude model with George Hodel. [Apparently, in March, 1950, they had not yet identified her as Mattie Comfort, and again Dorothy stonewalls and frustrates their efforts. [NB: I know for a fact my mother was lying to investigators as to not knowing Mattie Comfort, as circa 1972, she had me drive her to Mattie's apartment on Sunset Boulevard, and then introduced her to me as, "my old friend Mattie." That was the first and last time I met Mattie Comfort, who some twenty years later, remained an exceptionally beautiful woman. A face you don't forget!]

Lt. Jemison's interview of Dorothy Hodel on 3/22/50, page 5:

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1 Q Now in view of the fact that the District Attorney's office
 2 is interested in contacting all persons that might know something
 3 about whether or not Dr. Hodel had anything to do with this
 4 murder, I now show you a photograph of a nude girl and ask
 5 you if you recognize who that girl is. In other words,
 6 we want to know her name and where we can contact her?
 7 A There is something familiar about her face. I think she may
 8 have been some model or something.

9 Q Would you say she is a colored girl or half Indian, do you
 10 know?
 11 A No.

12 Q Would you know who the photographer might be in connection
 13 with this picture?
 14 A No.

15 Q I show you another photograph of the same girl with a
 16 man. Do you recognize that man in that photograph?
 17 A I would say that was Dr. Hodel.

18 Q Do you know the person who owns the cat that they are holding
 19 between them?
 20 A No, I don't.

21 Q Q In other words, I am sincerely interested in contacting
 22 this girl for information.
 23 A No, I don't know her. I have seen her face. I have seen
 24 photographs that George has of her.

25 Q Would you have any idea where we could find her?
 26 A No.

27 Q I show you the third picture. Dr. Hodel and the colored
 28 girl. You still can't place any person that might know where
 29 I can find her?
 30 A No, I don't know. I can't think.

- 3) Obviously, sometime after this interview with Dorothy Hodel, and before the report was written a year later, the DA investigators identified her as Mattie Comfort, and interviewed her regarding the intimate nude photographs of her with Dr. George Hodel, along with, what appears to be her identification of Elizabeth Short being acquainted with George Hodel prior to the murder. [Investigators already had the identification of Elizabeth Short as being a girlfriend of Hodel from “informant”, Lillian Lenorak.] On the bottom of page 5 of the Dorothy Hodel interview Lt. Jemison tells my mother,, ...”Let me advise you that we do have information that he [George Hodel] did associate with Beth Short ...”
- 4) From the DA bugging transcriptions timeline, we know that Dorothy Hodel met with George Hodel that very day, and obviously informed him of Jemison’s questions and the fact that he had the photos of Mattie Comfort and if they didn’t already have the connection, they were likely to soon make it.

George Hodel, just three days later is recorded talking to Baron Herringer at the Franklin House. The conversation is jumbled, and investigators record only parts, but it is enough. Hodel say’s:

“They are probably watching me. Do you think we could hire some girls to find out what they are doing?”...” I’m in trouble. “ .. “Black Dahlia” ...”passport”....” “F.B.I.”...”...police have picture of me and...I thought I had destroyed all of them.”...

The following day George Hodel is gone, in the wind, and the DA investigators stakeout comes to an unexpected and abrupt halt. All they can do is collect their equipment and close down the surveillance.

What ever happened to Mattie (Madi) Comfort? She went on to become a singer and actress and I recently discovered her playing a bit-part as a night club singer, in the 1955 film-noir classic--- *KISS ME DEADLY*. She must have done a lot more work than the one film, as I also found the below publicity photographs of her, with some very well-known actors of her day.



Bar scene with Mattie Comfort from KISS ME DEADLY

In the noir-thriller, KISS ME DEADLY Mattie sings to the bar patrons, I'D RATHER HAVE THE BLUES THAN WHAT I'VE GOT:

The night is mighty chilly, and conversation seems pretty silly
I feel so mean and wrought. I'd rather have the blues than what I've got.
The room is dark and gloomy, you don't know what you're doing to me
The way it has got me caught, I'd rather have the blues than what I've got.

All night, I walk the city, watching the people go by.
I try to sing a little ditty, but all that comes out is a sigh.
The street looks very frightening, the rain begins and then comes lightning.
It seems love's gone to pot. I'd rather have the blues than what I've got...

MATTIE (MADI) COMFORT WITH SOME HEAVYWEIGHTS.



The following additional information and excerpt on Mattie Comfort were recently sent to me from a friend, familiar with the L.A. music scene of the 1950s. They give us a fascinating look into that time, and only increase our curiosity on what the Mattie Comfort/George Hodel connections could have been! (Mattie was born the same year as Elizabeth Short. We know the nude photograph of her and George Hodel was taken pre-1950, so it's likely she would have been about the same age (22) in the picture-

ACCORDING TO LAPD AND THE DA'S OFFICE, THE NUDE AND OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS OF MATTIE COMFORT AND GEORGE HODEL HAVE ALL "DISAPPEARED"

From MF:

"According to the book excerpt I'm attaching, Mattie and Joe {Joe Comfort, a well-known bass player in L.A. in the 40s and 50s) were married. Joe Comfort worked with Lionel Hampton, Nat Cole (three years)), and played on many of the classic Sinatra/Nelson Riddle records Capitol made in the 1950s.

The excerpt is from a book about Charlie Mingus, another bass player. The incident about Mattie apparently took place around 1960. "Knepper" in the book is Jimmy Knepper, who was Mingus's trombonist.

From: MYSELF WHEN I AM REAL: THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF CHARLES MINGUS by Gene Santoro (2001 Oxford University Press):

One night during the Hollywood gig, Mingus started riding Knepper onstage in front of women friends. One of them was one of Duke Ellington's girlfriends, Mattie Comfort, wife of Mingus's Watts friend and fellow bassist Joe Comfort. Mattie looked like Lena Horne, and was sitting with Pat Willard, a white Duke fan, in the front row.

Mattie called out, "Hey, Mingus, leave that white boy alone, he loves you." He rasped, "You're not black enough to talk to me like that." She said coolly, "You're lighter than I am, Mingus."

...Mingus spotted Knepper with the women in the lobby. When Mattie left to get her car, he followed her into the parking lot, then took out a thick pen filled with a charge to shoot pepper. He had no pepper, just charges. He had taken to firing it off in the club during his shows, but now he shot it off in her face.

Mattie was still shaking when she picked up the other two. In the rearview mirror, she watched Mingus follow them up Sunset Boulevard in the Cadillac. She turned right on Vine, right on Hollywood, and headed for the police station. No cops, no cop cars, and Mingus was right behind them. So she made a right on N. Bronson and ran a red light at Sunset, where a police cruiser parked there stopped them.

To the puzzled cop, Mattie explained that Knepper worked for Charles Mingus, who was chasing them. When the cop looked up, the limo wheeled into a u-turn and sped off. The cop shrugged, and let Mattie off with a warning. Relieved, they drove to Pat Willard's house and listened to Ellington records.

Mattie Comfort was “The Satin Doll” for whom Duke Ellington, wrote his 1956 hit song. (lyrics below)

Satin Doll

By, Duke Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, and Johnny Mercer

Cigarette holder which wigs me

Over her shoulder, she digs me.

Out caddin’ that satin doll.

Baby, shall we go out skippin’?

Careful, amigo, you’re flippin’.

Speaks Latin that satin doll.

She’s nobody’s fool, so I’m playing it cool as can be.

I’ll give it a whirl but I ain’t for no girl catching me,

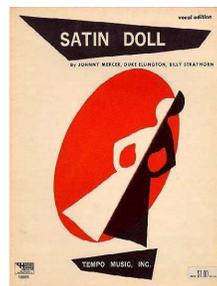
switch-e-rooney!

Telephone numbers well you know,

Doin’ my rhumbas with uno

And that ‘n my Satin Doll.

I found the following Obit with her picture, posted on the Web. Ironically, she died in June, 2003, just eight-weeks after the publishing of my book. What an interview that would have been!



Singer, dancer and actress, known for performing with Duke Ellington’s band in the early 50’s, who appeared in the 1955 film “Kiss Me Deadly” with Ellington, and for whom the 1956 hit song “Satin Doll” was written, died June 20 ,2003 of a heart attack in Whittier, CA at age 79.

Rest In Peace, pretty Mattie Comfort!