

Shocking Theory In Zodiac Case

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Sacramento county Sheriff Don Strouppe believes the mass slayer called Zodiac has killed 30 to 40 young women in California and four other western states. It was disclosed yesterday.

The California total includes six in Sacramento county and four in San Francisco.

The sheriff scheduled a news conference in Santa Rosa for tomorrow to discuss in detail the startling theory he developed along with Detective Sergeant Kevin Carlsted.

When reports of the theory began circulating elsewhere yesterday, Strouppe indignantly denounced them as pornography. He said they "may well have jeopardized the assistance needed through the news media in solving more than 20 female homicides."

Meanwhile, Zodiac experts in San Francisco and other Bay Area police agencies discounted the existence of such a pattern, which Carlsted maintains dates back to the slaying of student Judy Williamson in Albany in 1955.

"It's a theory, pure and simple," said San Francisco Haightside Inspector William Armstrong, who has headed the Zodiac investigation there since 1969. "While we can't discard it totally, we do not see any striking similarities with our cases here."

The only similarity, he said, was that all were "motiless" killings.

"You could link Zodiac to theory with any unsolved murder in the state," said Armstrong's supervisor,

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Lieutenant Charles Ellis.

"We have no evidence to link Zodiac with any unsolved murders of women in San Francisco."

Detective Sergeant Leslie Lundblad of the Solano county sheriff's office has been involved in the Zodiac investigation since the cryptic slayer's first two known victims were killed in Benicia in December, 1968. He said Carlstedt has never discussed the theory with him.

Whether or not Zodiac was responsible, Carlstedt believes the same young man, obsessed with witchcraft and a need to possess his victims as slaves in the afterlife, murdered six young women in Sonoma county in 1972 and 1973. Others he killed, Carlstedt believes, were in San Francisco, Seattle, Salt Lake City, Santa Fe, N.M., and Colorado.

Carlstedt said a design of twigs and stones found at a remote site where three of the six Sonoma county victims were left is representative of an ancient English symbol meaning "to carry the souls away, to take them into paradise."

Carlstedt noted the following similarities among the victims: All were under 30, found nude in a different location from where they were slain, and the clothing of

many was never found. Almost all were strangled, but at least one was poisoned and another was drowned.

The San Francisco victims cited by Carlstedt are:

- Rosa Vasquez, 20, found nude and strangled in Golden Gate Park May 29, 1973.

- Yvonne Quilantang, 15, found in a vacant lot at the foot of Galvez street on June 10, 1973.

- Angela Thomas, 16, found in the playground at Ben Franklin Junior High School on July 2, 1973.

- Nancy Gidley, 24; found in the playground at George Washington High School on July 15, 1973. (Police said a woman has since used Miss Gidley's credit cards in Oakland and Berkeley.)

In Salt Lake City, Sheriff's Sergeant Riley B. Cannon said he accepts part of the theory advanced by the two Sonoma county law offices.

It is "very possible," he said, that such killings on the West Coast are connected with the slaying of two young women and the disappearance of two others in Utah last year, but the idea that Zodiac was involved is "remote."

Zodiac is known to have killed six persons in California between 1966 and 1969, but in his last message to The Chronicle in January, 1974, he claimed 37 victims.