



# ANALYZING THE BLACK DAHLIA MURDER PART 1

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# Introduction

- January 15, 1947, in Leimert Park area in LA, a mother with her daughter saw what she thought was two pieces of a store mannequin laying in a vacant lot.
- Shocked to discover that the mannequin was an actual nude body was dissected in half at the waist.
- The victim had black hair, and her skin was porcelain white (caused by complete blood loss).
- Because of her black hair she was given the name “Black Dahlia”.

# Lust Murder



- Although rare, murder-mutilation cases are by many forensics analysts to be crimes that lend themselves to psychological profiling.
- Lust murder involves fantasizing about, and deriving erotic pleasure from, killing in an intimate way sometimes during sex and not uncommonly followed by genital mutilation or evisceration of the victim.



# Common Features

- Posing of the body
- Consuming blood or tissue
- Keeping parts as trophies
- Frequently, the killer's actions escalate over time.
- Torturing the victims before death is typically part of the serial killer's fantasy; sometimes engaging in necrophilia



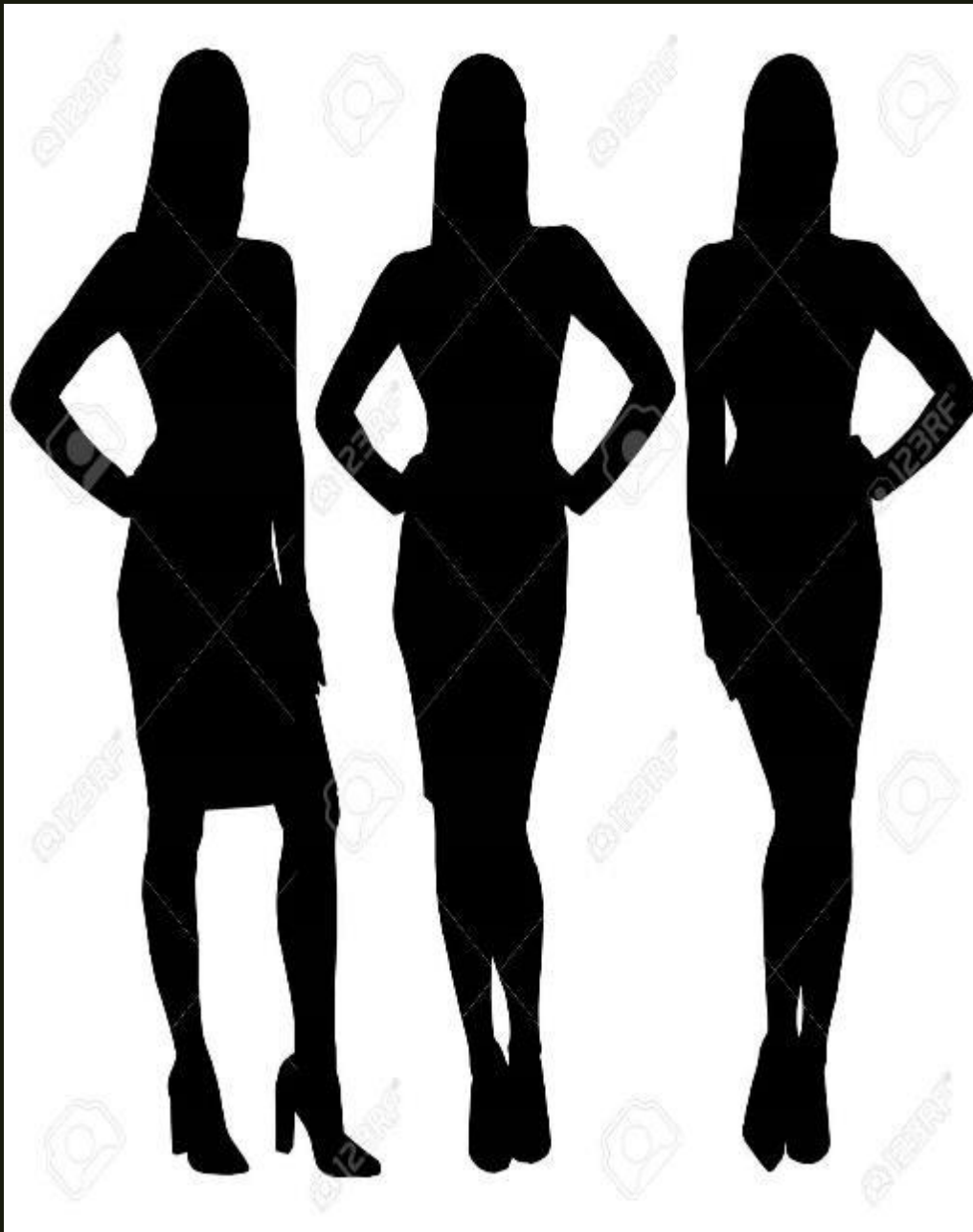
# The Details Behind Paraphilia

- Many psychologists believe that this type of paraphilia, or sexual deviance, relates to childhood trauma.
- The killings represent a way to retaliate against the person who harmed the perpetrator as a child.
- When the murders don't satisfy the killer's needs, they often lead to an increasing cycle of violence.



# The Profile

- The vast majority of lust murders are men, many who kill only women.
- Ted Bundy: Murdered more than 30 women in the 1970's
- Gary Ridgeway: Estimated to have killed at least 90 women in the 1980's and 90's
- Other serial lust killers prey on couples or males.
- Infrequently, couples commit lust murders together.



# Female Serial Killers

- Although there have been serial killers who are women, they typically do not fit the lust murder profile and are more likely to kill lovers or their own children or to become delusional “angels of mercy” killing the disabled.
- Exception: Aliene Wuornos: Killer 7 men in Florida between 1989-1990.

# Examining the Crime Scene

- In both the Black Dalia and the Ripper murders, onlookers, the press and even the police themselves compromised crime scene evidence and its recovery.
- Historically, such contamination used to be very common at crime scene locations in populated areas or outdoors.
- Today, forensics has come a long way in our understanding of crime scene contamination and trace evidence.







# The Black Dahlia Case

- The lead detective was a senior LAPD officer that had written the book on protecting crime scenes and preserving evidence.
- However, significant contamination of the crime scene by photographers, press and onlookers occurred, bringing into the question about the validity of evidence identified.



# The Crime Scene

- No Blood was found on the ground near the victim
  - *Was this the primary crime scene?*
- The Black Dahlia had rope marks on her wrists, ankles, and neck, causing the police to suspect she had been tortured before being killed.
- The body appeared to be empty of blood.
- Police thought the perpetrator might have had some type of anatomical knowledge – Perhaps butcher, medical student, or physician



# Crime Scene Continued

- By comparing the amount of dew in the grass around the victim versus the amount beneath her, the investigators surmised that the body parts were deposited around 2:00AM on the day the body was discovered.
- Livor Mortis?
- Rigor Mortis?
- Algor Mortis?
- Examination of the Eyes (Increased Potassium Levels)?



# More On The Crime Scene

- Detectives believed that the perpetrator has carried the two body parts to the lot one at a time, suggesting a serial killer?
- Debris on the upper half of the body indicated that it the victim was originally face down but had been turned face up for display.
- The lower half of the body had been carried on an empty cement bag, which was found nearby with traces of watered-down blood on it. Police also saw a heal print, but it had been damaged by the tracks.



# Crime Scene Wrap Up

- Before the body parts were removed from the scene, detectives collected some trace evidence from them: tiny bits of a bristle-like material, which they thought could be broom straw or fibers from car floor mat.
- *Based on the crime scene evidence identified.....What might be the preliminary profile of the attacker?*

# THANK YOU

