ELIZABETH'S BODY IS FOUND

0. ELIZABETH'S BODY IS FOUND - Story Preface

1. WHO WAS SHE?

2. LOS ANGELES in the 40s

3. DEATH OF A DREAM

4. LAST SEEN AT THE BILTMORE

5. ELIZABETH'S BODY IS FOUND

6. POLICE and PRESS COOPERATE

7. THE SUSPECTS

8. A COLD CASE



Elizabeth Short's body was found in the Leimert Park area of Los Angeles. This image depicts some of the homes in that area of LA as they appeared circa 1940, about seven years before the murder. Image online via the LA Public Library.

CAUTION: THIS CHAPTER CONTAINS LINKS TO CRIME-SCENE PHOTOS YOU MAY WANT TO AVOID

On the morning of January 15, 1947, Betty Bersinger was pushing her three-year-old daughter in a Taylor Tot stroller. Living on Norton Street, in the Leimert Park area of Los Angeles, mother and child were on their way to a shoe-repair shop.

Walking past several vacant lots in the vicinity of Norton and 39th Street, Betty saw something near the sidewalk. At first, she thought it was a discarded mannequin which appeared broken in half.

On closer inspection, however, Betty realized she had discovered the grisly remains of a human being so mutilated that the public was not allowed to see actual pictures for years and press photos had to be "doctored."

After Mrs. Bersinger rang the police, from a nearby home, reporters quickly arrived at the scene. The shocking condition of the body would ensure sensationalist reporting.

Before police officers could even begin their investigation, members of the press had trampled on the site. At the time, Los Angeles had five daily newspapers - all competing with each other.

Because of profound facial injuries, the body would be difficult to identify. Perhaps a good set of fingerprints would help?

Meanwhile, as reflected in the FBI file on the case, a sketch artist from the *Los Angeles Examiner* did the best he could to render a likeness of the victim.

Harry Hansen and Finis Brown were the lead LAPD detectives on what became known as "the Dahlia case." They would soon learn the name of the victim when the FBI matched fingerprints of the body with those of a teenaged girl once arrested, in Santa Barbara, for underage drinking.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ELIZABETH-S-BODY-IS-FOUND-Black-Dahlia

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/ELIZABETH-S-BODY-IS-FOUND-Black-Dahlia

Media Stream

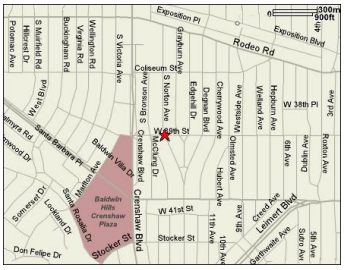


Betty Bersinger Discovers a Body

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Betty-Bersinger-Discovers-a-Body



Aerial Street Map of Norton and 39th

Image online, courtesy the Crime Library website.

View this asset at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Aerial-Street-Map-of-Norton-and-39th



Altered Press Photos - Elizabeth Short

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public LIbrary website.

PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Altered-Press-Photos-Elizabeth-Short



Mrs. Bersinger Phoned the Police

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.

PD

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Mrs.-Bersinger-Phoned-the-Police



Lacerations on the Victim's Face - Elizabeth Short

Image online, courtesy the Crime Library website.

PD

View this asset at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lacerations-on-the-Victim-s-Face-Elizabeth-Short



The Victim - Artist Rendition of Elizabeth Short Before ID

Image online, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library website.
PD
View this asset at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/The-Victim-Artist-Rendition-of-Elizabeth-Short-Before-ID



Speculation over a Crime - Creates Media Frenzy

Image online, courtesy the fbi.gov website.
PD
View this asset at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Speculation-over-a-Crime-Creates-Media-Frenzy



Harry Hansen and Finis Brown: Lead Detectives

Image online, courtesy the FBI.gov website.
PD
View this asset at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Harry-Hansen-and-Finis-Brown-Lead-Detectives



ELIZABETH'S BODY IS FOUND

View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/