

This section is recyclable Sunday, March 15, 1992 Austin American-Statesman A19

# DRESSED IN BLACK And feeling harassed

## 'The scene:' Startling looks thrive at night

Continued from A1  
men and took a polygraph test about two weeks ago. After that, he says, "They told me they were convinced I didn't do it."

Garvin Lance says he has been questioned by police and thinks they are trying to wear away the disaffected young people who form the harder edge of the downtown scene.

"I think police think they can end the scene," Lance said. "Little Devils hippies walking down the street, a poetry essay is spot."

Austin police, who have been joined in the investigation by FBI agents and investigators with the Texas Department of Public Safety, say they are not questioning FBIIs because of their appearance or attitude.

"There are a lot of strange-looking people in Austin that we haven't questioned," said Lt. Andrew Waters, head of the homicide division. "We have not overheard investigating anyone who has been given to us by name. There was good reason for us to investigate them."

Waters said "they are not prime suspects" and added that investigators "were pretty much finished with that entire crowd as of Tuesday."

Scenes close to the investigation say police are making progress and have interviewed 10 suspects, although an arrest is expected soon.

The scenes also say that, while the questioning of FBIIs did not produce a breakthrough in the murder case, it did produce unrelated charges.

During the questioning, police developed information that led to the highly publicized search for human remains in a University of Texas area home the night of Feb. 28.

Police arrested Claire Layton, 38, and started J. Crocker, 56, on charges of burglary of a mannequin broken into in November. The remains of two people were stolen.

Investigators also confiscated hundreds of bones, which turned out to have come from animals, and more than 130 books, many dealing with occult topics.

Earlier that week, police had charged UT student Laura Green with felony theft in connection with a 200-pound tombstone stolen earlier that month from an Austin store.

Although their arrests were triggered by the homicide investigation, police are emphatic in stating that Layton, Crocker and Green are not suspected in the young-street murders.

Despite the police assertion that the questioning is necessary, many of the young people interviewed say they are being harassed.

Most of them are alienated young people who dress in black and affect an appearance that is clearly disturbing on the street. They were not considered suspects in the murders but knew people associated with the group who were suspects.

None of the young people questioned by police admitted to knowing the victims of the slayings. Most deny involvement in satanic activity, say they barely know most of the suspects and claim they were being questioned and harassed because of their appearance and sexual activities of their friends.

Some say that when they told police they were Christians, investigators disbelieved that and criticized their lifestyles and choice of friends.

"I'm fully Christian, and they kept telling me I wasn't," said McCaughey. "We got accused of being Satans worshippers because we were black."

McCaughey says she was questioned about a friend's sexual proclivities and added, "It's not that we have anything to hide, but I don't have any privacy anymore."

Cory Christmas says police asked her about another person's sexual inclinations. "This can't be going on like this. They're breaking out, our friends don't even want to call us anymore."

Liberty Liercke, 19, says she was questioned for two hours and asked about everything from drug use by friends to the personal lives of suspects. She says she was offended by the questioning and "by the way she saw as police trying to 'save' her."

"The cops asked my why I was hanging out with these kinds of people when I have such a good head on my shoulders," Liercke says.

Sixteen-year-old Shannon Beaman, who is Fuller's girlfriend, says she has been taken to police stations twice for questioning. She says homicide investigators have called several times asking for items such as letters from suspects.

"This is ruining my life," she says. "Everything I do, every time I turn around, it's murder, murder, murder. And the way they're questioning us, that has nothing to do with murder. They're trying to shut the whole downtown scene down."

Her mother, Linda Beaman, says she is tired of fighting with police and is considering filing a lawsuit. "At first I was amazed by the whole thing, but the more I think about it, it's a violation of my rights and it's a violation of my daughter's rights."

"The police have been harassing my daughter for three months," Linda Beaman says. "I'm a galley of a lot of things, like most of us, but not this. I know him."

Fuller says he understands why police would question him — "It's satanic here" — but does not understand why police have questioned many people who don't know him well and are not involved in occult activity.

Continued from A1  
many of them, predominantly white and for the most part distanced from family who cannot or will not accept them for what they have become. Their appearance can cause even frightens, and for some of them, that may be the intent. Most consider them just like the color.

"I don't get out to parties," said Cole Ricketson, 18, who wears a red and black metal, including a ring through his nose and leather bands from wrist to elbow. Research the hardy veteran, though, Ricketson seems fragile, like a porcelain vase. Up close, there is no making a seemingly wounded plea in his eyes. "Life would be so much easier if I didn't startle people," he says, looking away from the color.

Nighttime nourishes these young people in black, sheltering them like a cocoon from the invading glare of daylight. Daylight brings condemnation and ostracism, but there is safety in the shadows and comfort in communion.

In recent weeks, however, the sanctity of this scene has been shattered by questions and rumors. Friends have turned against friends as the police have investigated the FBIIs about what they might know, or might have heard, about the yogurt shop murders.

Satan worship has been at the heart of the questioning, and police have demanded names, the FBIIs say.

Some say the police questioning amounts to a sort of liquidation intended to destroy the FBIIs scene. Others compare it to a Salem witch trial.

"Does Satanism exist in Austin? Absolutely," says Garvin Lance, an ambassador of sorts to the FBIIs scene. "The extent of it is, though, with these kids, is burning black candles, listening to certain records, sitting in a circle and watching movies starting 'Red Legend'."

The young people admit they know a few who profess to worship the devil but say it's not for them. Most profess to be agnostic — toward both Christianity and Satanism.

Black spider sculptures, medieval figurines, bondage racks and tombstones that some keep, they say, are playthings — teen-agers toys. Wearing spider webs and pentagram pendants is not meant to be satanic, they say. It's just a part of the look.

"There is a whole society of people in this town with tombstones and bones and things like that," said Lance. "There are a great number of sex societies. There's a vampire bondage club in Austin."

"This is not a satanic scene, although certainly it would appear so," he said. The FBIIs scene, in particular, he said, "is all about being pretty in a David Bowie/Donald O'Connor sense."

The clubs offer the venues for this would-be pretty scene.

The FBIIs scene has flourished in Austin for about eight years but has gone virtually unnoticed by the mainstream. Live music is nurtured, promoted and funded by the Chamber of Commerce. Dance clubs, with their DJs and technological music, are ignored by almost everyone but the participants.

The attractions, said Lance, is a sophistication and creativity that is absent in the live-music scene. "Austin is a town that worships heroes. But there is no hero-worshipping at the dance clubs. There's nothing to put on a pedestal, except yourself."

At places like The Underground and RfM, the club-goers, not the bands, are the stars. It's a scene that encourages flirt in dress and style. Aside from club profiles, the economy has benefited. Avant-garde hair salons, boutiques and record stores have profited. From the clubs have evolved artists and models working coast to coast and designers working in Paris and Manhattan.

Ask the teen-agers what attracts them to the scene and they say much what kids told Dick Clark and his American Bandstand for decades.

"The music's good. I come here to dance," says Kelly McCaughey, who says she's been a part of the scene for four years — starting at Chit Curfew — now Mirage.

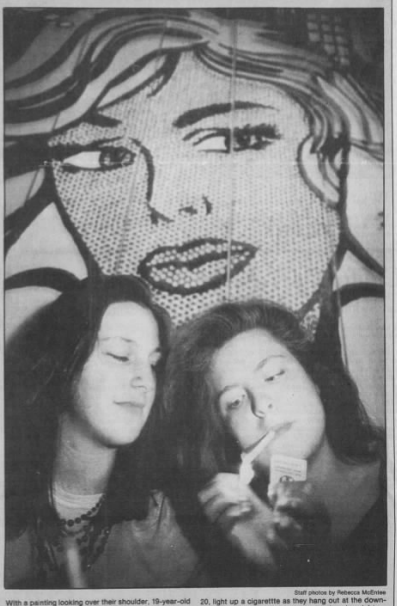
The music cue up by the DJs borrows heavily from early '70s dance standards, but one club in particular caters to the more esoteric industrial-techno trend.

Ziggy Garcia, a promoter, said original industrial music was recordings of banging on pipes and engines roaring. Techno music brought in the synthesizing and sampling of a voice.

On weekends, the club, located on East Seventh Street in what was once a garage, serves up the cutting edge music of groups like The Roots, Style Wave, Human Resource and L.A. Style.

The FBIIs are so devoted to bones that they bring gifts such as candles and incense. "It's kind of like religion to them, about," said business manager Hena Gubary.

Sarah Armstrong, dance music specialist at Warner Records, said, the market is good in Austin.



With a pensive looking over her shoulder, 19-year-old Molly Magnathopoulos, left, watches pal Lisa Thornhill.



Julie Hunkamp, a UT psychology major, sports tattoos at the club Mirage, where she works as a waitress.

for techno, industrial and the newest rave music fads. Few of the artists push a message.

"There's a big group called Kick Like A Mole, and this one song repeats over and over a sampled German accent: 'Your name's not on the list. You're not getting in.' Your name's not on the list. You're not getting in."

This music, seldom played on radio and produced almost exclusively by smaller independent labels, has found a devoted following in Austin.

Asked why she thought police were concentrating on her friends, Christmas says "They want people to look at us and say we're bad. I think normal society will be happy with people from our scene going down for this."

Waters said police are simply following every lead they are given in the yogurt murders. He did concede frustration in the case but said it has not made investigators desperate.

The lieutenant also said that while police have said the crime scene does not have evidence of any satanic ties to the murders, much of the scene was destroyed by fire.

"I wouldn't really say (a satanic tie) is still in our mind, but so far as absolutely ruling it out, I wouldn't say that," Waters said.

He also said that 100 to 200 people have been questioned in the case and that those who have complained are a small percentage of that number.



Just across by Renee McGraw's downtown dance club Santarium on a Wednesday night.

Jim Ramsey, an independent rock promoter, brought Front 242, a top industrial dance band to town last September and sold out the Opera House, now known as the Terrace. The Austin performance pulled the largest crowd on the U.S. tour except for Los Angeles.

And KNNC-FM 107.7 went on the air last Halloween, catering to an audience hungry for that style of music.

Moody Ell-ell, owner of Mirage, said that when he opened Chit Curfew in the '80s "there was nothing like that on the streets. The whole thing was the people lining the sidewalks in black. They were waiting for us. It's the same with the radio station. They were waiting for it."

"This scene is definitely really cool," says Chris "Just Chris" — who says he recently served in the Army. "It's just really groovy."

"I listen to this music 'cause it gets the frustration out, the anger and the energy. We're just into the music," he said. "And, yeah, we do a lot of stuff 'cause it shocks. But I'm not into the death rock scene. I don't understand the fascination with the machine, the provocation and stuff."

There are the pretenses, of course, those who dress the part of vampire on club night because it's trendy, but the true FBIIs live the part.

Garcia said: "Some of the dress in black thing is like the South sea — I wear black on the outside 'cause I feel black on the inside. Like, hey, I'm manic-depressive. Then, there's the death look. The death aspect. It's just cool in a lot of ways."

Hester Mitchell, who attended Westlake High School, said her parents sent her to a boarding school in East Texas last year "and everybody thought I was a vampire for three weeks."

"It's like we're not like everybody else," she said. "It's like we're not like everybody else. But it's not that we're not like everybody else. 'Cause we don't," she said. "It's just the way we want to be."

Her friend, Russell White, has an even simpler answer for why the FBIIs always wear black. "It's easy to match," he said.

He struggles to explain. "People look at us and don't know what to think."

"We look at each other and don't know what to think."