



Suspect David Berkowitz (above) and latest composite drawings of Son of Sam.



## It was simply a matter of time

Although a traffic ticket led to the arrest of a suspect in the 44-caliber murders, law enforcement officers in at least three Westchester agencies had begun closing in on him and his eventual arrest seemed inevitable.

The suspect, David Berkowitz, 24, of 35 Pine St., Yonkers, according to neighbors, didn't like dogs and had argued with one nearby family about their pet. On Oct. 9, 1976, a Molotov cocktail was thrown through the window of the pet-owner's business. Threatening letters were allegedly sent that resulted in an investigation of the incident by Yonkers Police, the Yonkers Fire Department's arson squad and the Westchester Sheriff's office.

Yonkers police and the arson squad were also investigating a fire that occurred last Saturday outside the apartment of a neighbor Berkowitz had feuded with over a television set playing at night. The fire, which authorities believe was set, contained 15 bullets, described a .22 caliber "long" rifle shells.

At least 10 Yonkers police officers had worked on cases involving Berkowitz's complaints with neighbors.



A relieved Mayor Abe Beame at press conference this morning

## A look back at the victims

During the year he terrorized New York City, the 44-caliber killer known as Son of Sam slew six people and wounded seven others.

- The victims:
- Donna Lauria, 18, of the Bronx, killed July 29 as she sat in a car parked in front of her home.
  - Jody Valenti, 19, of the Bronx, shot in the leg as she sat with Miss Lauria, since recovered.
  - Carl Denaro, 20, of Queens, shot in the head Oct. 23 as he sat in a parked car with a young woman, since recovered, but with a steel plate in his skull. The woman, Rosemary Keenan, was unharmed.
  - Joanne Lomino, 18, of Queens, shot in the head on Nov. 27 as she sat on her porch, paralyzed below the waist.
  - Donna DeMasi, 17, shot in the neck as she sat with Miss Lomino, since recovered.

- Christine Freund, 26, of Queens, killed Jan. 30 as she sat in a parked car with a man, John Diel, 30, who was unharmed.
- Virginia Voskerichian, 19, of Queens, killed as she walked home from the subway a half block from where Miss Freund died.
- Valentina Suriani, 18, of the Bronx, killed April 17 in a parked car in front of her home.
- Alexander Esau, 20, of the Bronx, killed as he sat with Miss Suriani.
- Judy Placido, 17, of the Bronx, shot in the head as she sat in a parked car in Queens, since recovered.
- Salvatore Lupo, 20, of Queens, shot in the arm as he sat with Miss Placido, since recovered.
- Stacy Moskowitz, 20, of Brooklyn, shot in the head fatally as she sat in a parked car in Brooklyn.
- Robert Violante, 20, of Brooklyn, shot in the head and blinded as he sat with Miss Moskowitz.

### Many views

## Composite drew heavy response

By KATHY HARRIS  
Staff Writer

Some thought the man in the new composite picture was a former Yonkers cop, fired because he was too quick to reach for his gun.

Others thought he looked like a former reporter from the Herald Statesman newspaper.

With the release Tuesday of the new composite picture of the killer who took six young lives with his deadly 44 caliber bullet revolver. The Herald Statesman received a new barrage of phone calls from readers who believed they recognized the man.

The calls began as soon as the composite hit the streets.

People with theories on the Son of Sam murders had been calling the Yonkers office regularly, as they had newspapers across the nation. But release of the new composite sparked a renewed interest.

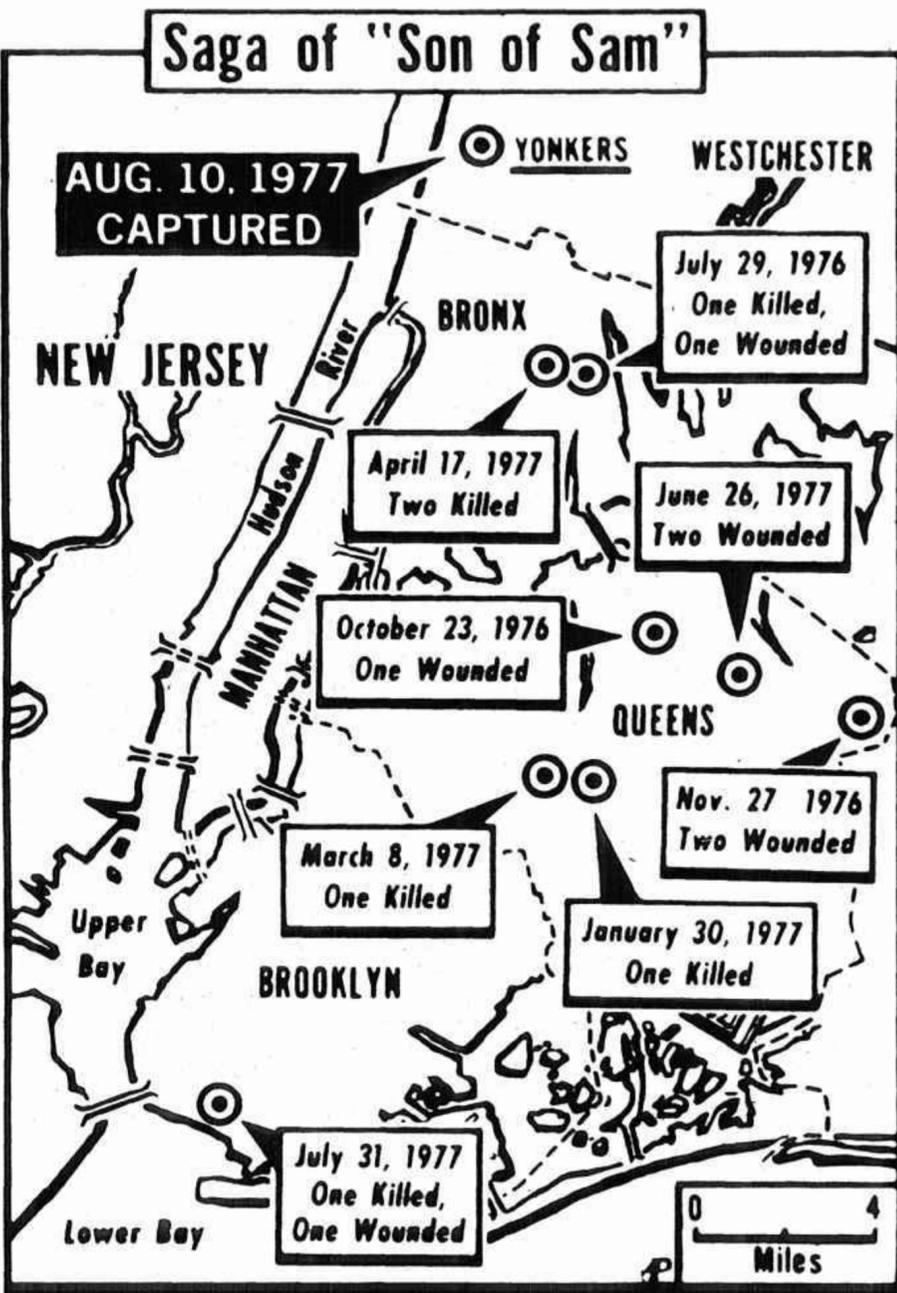
A number reported the appearance of the composite face at several area night spots, several of which police had checked out earlier with no results.

One reversed the letters in Son of Sam and came up with "Manson" — referring to convicted mass murderer Charles Manson, who the caller theorized had controlled the 44 caliber killer from his California prison cell. "To find the Son of Sam you first have to find Sam," he said.

Yet another reversed the words Son of Sam to "mass-fonos" which he linked to Greek for "mass murderer." "Fonos" means slaughter. "Mas," however, means nothing in Greek, but it could be a misspelling or shortening of the English word "mass."

One caller linked Son of Sam to Victor Mature, the actor. "He (the killer) is a Samponophile," he said. "Victor Mature played in the movie and he's Greek. And the blonde victim is explained by the fact that Delilah had a blonde sister who was killed by Samson accidentally."

Others said the lyrics of songs, ranging from those of the late Jimmi Hendrix to the Rolling Stones, might yield clues.



Detectives examining Berkowitz' car

## Rumors pegged another suspect

Just hours before postal employee David Berkowitz was arrested as a suspect in the 44 caliber murders, word had spread through Yonkers that a former Yonkers police officer was being sought as a prime suspect.

The former officer, who was dismissed from the force several years ago after a scrape with the law, fitted the description of the suspect and the latest composite sketch released by New York City Police.

Acting on one of several theories that the 44 caliber killer may have been a former policeman, Yonkers police sent information a month ago to the New York City Police task force working on the shootings.

Task force investigators said early today they had checked out the former officer and deleted his name from the list of suspects when it turned out he had moved from the area and could not have been involved.

## Detectives close the door on Son of Sam

By DAVID COPITHORNE  
Staff Writer

Capt. Edward Jones slammed the door to the detective bureau at Yonkers police headquarters and headed down the steps to his car and home.

It was shortly after 12:30 this morning, and Capt. Jones had just locked up the bureau for the time being after a suspect had been arrested in the "Son of Sam" slayings.

"It's in the hands of the New York City police now," he said. David Berkowitz, 24, arrested

as the suspect, had just been taken to New York City police headquarters in Manhattan. The detective division was locked up tight.

Earlier in the evening, however, it had been a different story. Dozens of New York City and Yonkers detectives involved in coordinating and planning the arrest had turned Yonkers headquarters into a sea of constant motion climaxed by the booking of Berkowitz, a postal employee who lived 35 Pine St.

One Yonkers patrolman not involved in the arrest happened to be at headquarters working

on another case when Berkowitz was brought in. He said the prisoner was "extremely calm and smiling." Berkowitz was "nodding his head and once said 'Yeah, you got me,'" the patrolman said.

Capt. Jones said the Yonkers charge against Berkowitz was criminal possession of a weapon after police said they found guns in his cream-colored car outside his apartment.

In New York City he was booked on homicide charges, capping the largest manhunt in the history of the New York City police department.

