

Test Your Skill: Can You Find the “C” ?

This is a test of visual perception. “Can you find the ‘C’?” is one of several possible ways to test yourself to help you determine whether or not you have “the eye of a forensic document examiner.”

Speaking as one who has practiced this profession since 1992, I look for patterns when examining handwriting. Using my pattern recognition skill helps me ferret out a feature that interrupts the writer’s pattern, or one that stands out as being even a little bit different. Next, I attempt to find out what caused the break in the pattern by investigating more clues to determine if it was intentional or unintentional!

For example, back in 1995, the Portland *Oregonian* newspaper asked me to examine handwriting involved with the then unsolved Unabomber story. The suspicious evidence was found in a diary left behind on the table at the Anne Hughes Coffee Room at Powell’s Book Store. Uniquely, every circle-letter (a, b, d, g, o, p and q) was a box-shape instead of round. This unique feature was observed in the “Unabomber Manifesto.” Could the Unabomber have been in Portland?

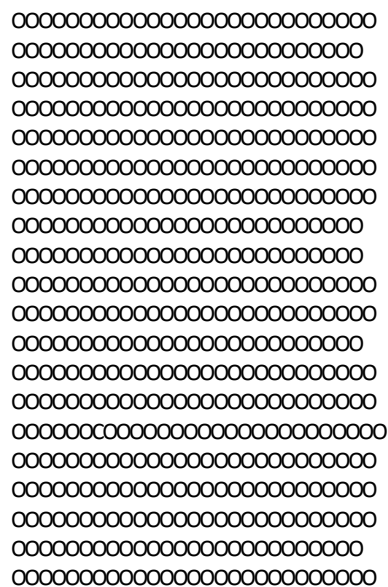
In forensically comparing the coffee shop diary to the FBI’s yet unidentified writer of the manifesto, I observed a single slip-up on the

writer’s part in forming just *one* of *hundreds* of boxy-shaped letters in both documents. This single letter had one side collapsing inward due to a loss of control and a slip of concentration while writing.

It was a forensically significant similarity. However, more importantly I observed significant differences which became the basis of my opinion of “inconclusive.” The FBI continued to pursue the trail of evidence which eventually led to the capture of Ted Kaczynski.

To read the entire story, visit my website at www.jjhandwriting.com

Can You Find the “C” ?



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