

Review of Pennsylvania Handwriting Analysis Forum

January 16, 2021

1. Member Cathy Ebert discussed a segment on TV wherein the grandson of a Boulder, Colorado, Detective reflected on the still-unsolved murder of Jon Benet Ramsey on Christmas 1996. With a handwritten ransom note and other items the crime has curiously never been solved. DNA found in the home did not match anyone in the house nor known predators in the community. That is the most personal of evidence pieces. The ransom note is the second one since handwriting provides specific markers of the writer.



2. Forum member Teresa Carroll presented a Breadstick about Elizabeth Smith Friedman, an American Cryptanalyst, while watching the PBS special "The Codebreaker." As in most PBS shows, there were old photos of documents, which she assumed showed Friedman's handwriting. It appeared moderate in size, and very pretty with loops and flourishes. They were not what she expected of someone who did such detail work. However, the program revealed that Friedman's background was in English literature. She started in code breaking by debunking a theory that there were hidden messages in the plays and sonnets of Shakespeare. Along with her husband William Friedman, she later decrypted messages during World War I and the messages of

bootleggers during Prohibition, and messages of other smuggling operations.

Her work helped indict what gangster during the 1930's?

Note: All answers can be found after the end of this Review.

She also decrypted items during World War II. ***What did that help the US to achieve?***



3. Teresa also provided another Breadstick that she ran across catching up on video historian Ken Burns's collection, especially the series on the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. There were many photos of the handwriting of Clinic founders William Worell Mayo, and his brother James Mayo, along with William's sons and a few others. Both Mayo Brothers were doctors. (They are depicted on the US stamp, left) Teresa saw quick glimpses of William Mayo and his sons and their handwriting showed them as emotionally responsive but very focused men, which supported the portrait painted of these men as compassionate. "Emotionally responsive" she saw in the strong forward slant of their strokes.

Where did Teresa see them as being "focused" in their handwriting?

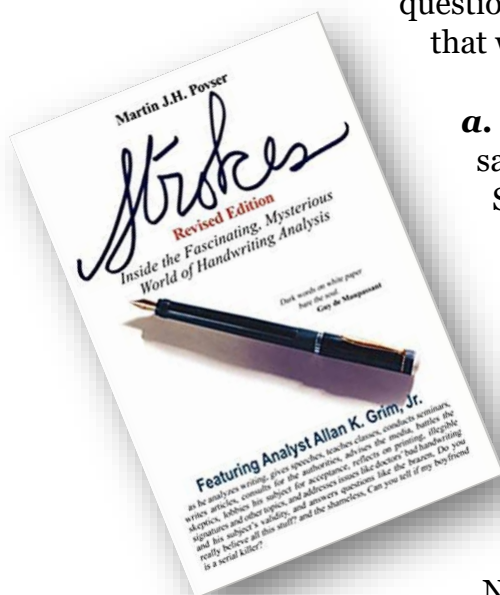
4. We analyzed the handwriting of non-member Joseph Schembri from Edison, New Jersey, who actually attended our Zoom meeting. None of us had ever met him. He listened while we conveyed to him his personality traits. He then informed us that he is a retired Health Inspector. He is also an artist that likes to paint dancers and musicians as subjects.

How accurate did he think our portrait of his personality was?

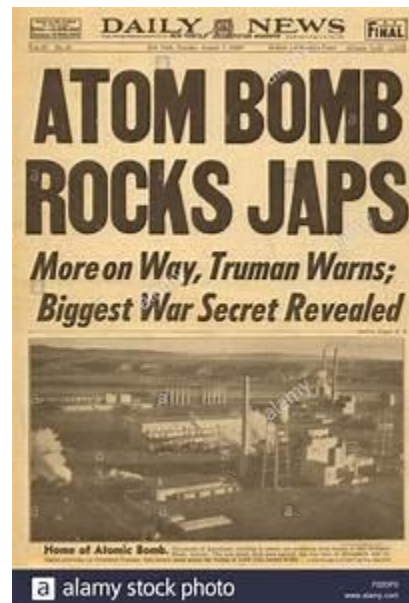
5. I announced that distinguished handwriting analyst Dr. Erika Karohs had died. (Shown here right.) None of us knew her but I have her very comprehensive course booklets, which I showed to the attendees. She had five levels in her courses and claims she had students and followers in 45 countries. She was very protective of her materials as they were open to copying since her teaching was mostly by distance learning. Each of her course booklets, which are thick and extensive, had a warning on the copyright page. I read it to the group. **What was its message?**



6. As a regular feature, I take five passages from the book **Strokes** by Martin Povser and pose questions that readers of the book could answer. All the topics and the questions are not mere trivia. I believe they are important issues that we all should remember and apply in our practices.



- a. I read the interesting saga eminent analyst Shirley Spencer recited about the perils of businesses hiring dubious employees after we analysts have informed the business that they are asking for trouble if they hire them. Spencer had a handwriting analysis column in the New York *Daily News* from the 1930's to the 1950's and also



did employee screening. She told a lumber company about a sales applicant that his kind of handwriting meant that he over-indulged in sensual activities. They hired him anyway. **What was the result of his employment there? Anyway, what is pasty writing?**

- b. Povser describes the setting for a person writing the ideal sample of handwriting for an accurate analysis. **What is the setting he described?**



- c. In another chapter about skeptics and doubters of handwriting analysis, Povser lists several supposedly non-scientific groups that handwriting analysis is often lumped with to discredit its legitimacy. **What were the groups he cited?** (I will give you one here with the photo on the left)

- d. The founder of the International Graphoanalysis Society was Milton N. Bunker. He famously made the statement: “No handwriting stroke and its trait is positive or negative. It’s...” **How did he finish this declaration?**
- e. Povser also quotes Allan Grim for a statement he utters every once in a while at the Forum. It begins: “Too much of a good thing is...” **What is the rest of his statement? And what did he mean by it?**

7. I presented a column by David Brooks in *The New York Times* about prejudice. He points out that racial diversity training in the workplace works only in the short term. Short term interventions don't change people. Their stereotypes are activated, as training makes people complacent. Because they went through the program, they think their problem is solved. Since it's mandatory, whites become angry and resentful and less supportive. And fundamentally people don't like being told what to think. We discussed where we would find traits that show a **prejudiced** person in their handwriting. **Brooks concludes that real change in peoples' attitudes about race comes from what?**



8. We also analyzed the limited handwriting we had of Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi. All we had were signatures, but we had five of them. **What two shocking traits did we find in her samples?**
9. We took a look at another sample of Donald Trump's handwriting. But it wasn't from recent years. It was from 1987. **What was different about it from his current samples?**

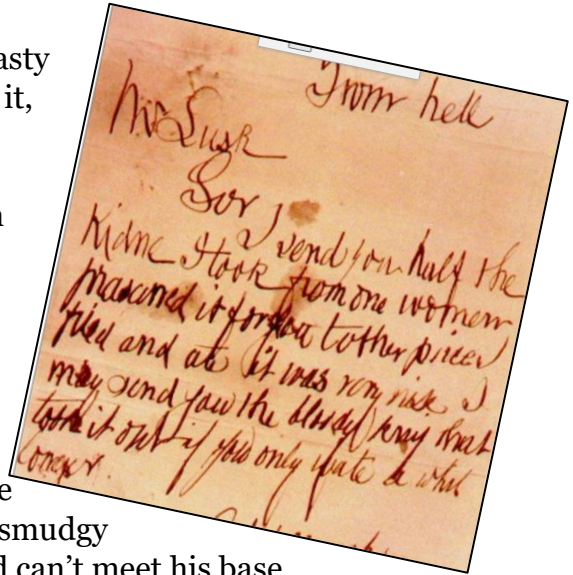
Answers to Questions raised in the Review



1. No question presented.
2. a. Al Capone (Shown here left)
b. She helped break the Axis powers efforts to form alliances in South America.
3. Being "focused" was in the consistently small writing of William and his two sons.
As Teresa declared, "There is a trove of handwriting in studying the events and people in history!"
4. He thought it captured him very well.

5. She said that each book is coded and can be traced to the buyer and she would pay \$500.00 to someone who can discover illegal copies of a volume. Also, she will pay a \$5,000 reward for information leading to arrest and conviction for unauthorized use of a volume.

6. a. He left after a short time and was found holed up in a hotel with a young lady. Pasty writing, or pastose or pastiose, as analysts call it, is thick and often smudgy with extra ink in several places. But it's not from accidentally brushing over fresh ink. With the fountain pen you would see it more frequently than now because modern pens supply a cleaner, thinner stroke on the paper. It occurs often when the writer pauses briefly, mostly unintentionally, and maybe unconsciously. This draws more ink from inside the nib to the area of the delay in moving forward. Where the writing is more than merely thick but also smudgy



in spots, it suggests the writer is frustrated and can't meet his base, sensual needs. It's not a good sign. Too many people who have done terrible deeds have this kind of writing. Above right to this summary is the handwriting of one of the suspected "Jack the Rippers" from 19th Century England.

b. Someone sitting at their familiar desk on a rainy Sunday afternoon and writing a social letter after putting a child to a nap and having a husband who could come by with a special request in a short while. You are relaxed and comfortable but you will proceed with dispatch as you realize that family duties could intervene soon.



c. We've been tarred with guilt-by-association by linking us with psychics, mediums, tarot card readers, fortune tellers, phrenologists, ESPers, astrologers, mystics, magicians, parapsychologists, witches, sheep entrail readers, palm readers, and numerologists. In fact, Povser titled the chapter as "Handwriting Analysis, Member in Good Standing of National Guilt-By-Association."

d. *"It's...how you use it."*

e. *"a bad thing."* This means that aspects of life that are doing well operate within the bounds of moderate, temperate behavior or patterns. Extreme strokes in handwriting are evidence of a person who is having trouble

coping. They resort to radical conduct to try to get by and have their needs met.

7. He puts it this way: “Real change seems to involve putting bodies from different groups in the same room, on the same team, and in the same

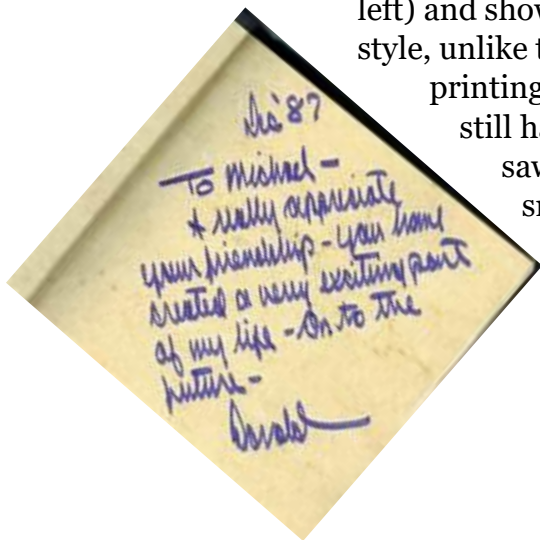


neighborhood. That’s national service programs. That’s residential integration programs across all lines of difference. That’s workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion— permanent physical integration, not training.”

8. All we had were these five signatures of Speaker Pelosi. They showed a loner stroke in the lower extender of her small y and the slight backslanting revealed someone whose true emotions are held mostly tight.



9. It was from 1987 (Shown here left) and showed a cursive style, unlike today’s block printing style. But it still had that buzz



saw look that was solid throughout revealing someone smart but unbending in dealings with others and unemotional and unsympathetic in temperament.