



MARISSA BOTTI / For The Times

Police tape blocks off scene of the shooting last year where actress Rebecca Schaeffer was killed.

## Fan Accused in Killing Feels 'Guilty'

■ **Crime:** 'My feelings for her were uncontrollable,' says man held in the shooting death of actress Rebecca Schaeffer one year ago.

From Times Wire Services

The man accused of gunning down actress Rebecca Schaeffer at her Los Angeles apartment house a year ago today said he feels guilty about her death, still loves her and wishes she were alive.

"I really feel kind of guilty about all that's happened. My feelings for her were uncontrollable," Robert John Bardo said. "I was a fan of hers and I may have carried it too far."

Interviews with the 20-year-old high school dropout from Tucson, Ariz., were published today in *The Oregonian*, in Portland, Ore. The interview is Bardo's first since his arrest shortly after the actress's death.

Bardo, who has pleaded innocent, told the newspaper that his obsession with her began in 1986 with a fan letter after seeing her co-star in the television comedy series, "My Sister Sam."

In several telephone conversations from his jail cell in the psychiatric ward of Los Angeles County Jail, Bardo made it clear that his infatuation with Schaeffer dominated his life.

He videotaped every episode of "My Sister Sam." He clipped and kept photographs of her. He wrote countless fan letters in scrawled handwriting. He composed musical lyrics about the fantasy relationship. But Bardo never met her.

Schaeffer died of a gunshot wound to the chest after she answered the security door at the entrance to her four-unit apartment building on July 16, 1989. She was 21.

For her parents, Danna and Benson Schaeffer of Portland, today marks the date their family became the innocent victims of what they call Bardo's "sick fantasy."



Rebecca Schaeffer

Robert John Bardo

In the year since their daughter's death, the Schaeffers have become active in campaigning against handguns and have given their support to legislation to protect addresses listed in official records.

Schaeffer's parents filed a wrongful death suit Tuesday in Los Angeles against Bardo's family, the private detective that Bardo paid \$250 to track her down and the Tucson gun shop that sold the murder weapon. Among other allegations, the suit said Bardo's parents knew that he had threatened to harm Schaeffer but failed to warn her or keep him from carrying out his threat.

The Schaeffers initially declined to participate in a story that involved an interview with Bardo and objected strenuously to *The Oregonian's* plans to publish the story. Eventually, with strong reservations, they agreed to be quoted.

"He feels sorry about it?" Danna Schaeffer asked. "The magnitude of the evil he committed against our family doesn't even match up to those tepid remarks. I think his comments are utterly meaningless."

Bardo was arrested the day after the shooting in Tucson as he ran in and out of traffic on an interstate highway in a suicide attempt. "I thought I owed it to Rebecca to kill myself after what had happened," Bardo said.

DEC 204 - Schaeffer



Clipped By:

KevinLion

Wed, Sep 13, 2017