

Common questions asked of the author:

Q: When did you first believe “DB Cooper” survived the parachute jump?

A: When the skyjacking occurred in 1971. I noticed then, no one witnessed his exit from the Boeing 727, no one watched his descent and no one saw him land. It was at that time I thought the government was placing all their eggs in one basket, when searching the woods in southern Washington state and the northern Oregon border area.

Q: When did you put together this “OP PLAN” and how long did it take?

A: I put the plan together in early 2012 and it took less than 30 minutes.

Q: Why didn’t you present this scenario when you were still an FBI Special Agent?

A: There are two reasons why. First, the investigation was a cold case when I became a Special Agent during the 1980’s. In the 20+ years I served with the FBI, I never recalled a Bureau-wide request to all FBI Agents seeking assistance in solving this matter. Second, with the hundreds of investigators who worked this matter during the 1970’s, I was certain that at least one investigator had the knowledge and military parachutist experience I had and shared this with the others.

Q: Does your old employer, the FBI, know about this article?

A: Yes, as an active or retired FBI Special Agent, I’m required to submit for pre-publication review by the FBI, any information that will be published. The purpose for this is to allow the FBI the opportunity to prevent any sensitive techniques or classified information from being revealed. This article does not contain any classified information or techniques from the decades old investigation. I have gone through this review process twice before; once when I had a WWII historical novel published; again prior to my appearing as a WWII military historian on The History Channel. Both instances occurred while I was still an FBI Special Agent, before retirement.

Q: What do you expect to accomplish now, so many years after the skyjacking occurred?

A: Simple, to identify “DB Cooper” and close the case.

Q: How would you try to solve this case, especially if he may now be dead?

A: For starters, there has been partial DNA obtained from the tie he wore and left in the aircraft. It's possible his DNA is on the tie. Should this article generate any credible leads as to the identity of "DB Cooper", DNA could be obtained from living biological family members to see if there is a match with that DNA found on the tie. One word of caution, we can't become target fixated on his DNA being on the tie. The DNA may belong to the sales clerk who sold/handled the tie; or, the stock person who placed the tie out for display; possibly an employee with the tie manufacturer, or even another customer who may have tried on the tie but didn't purchase it. The absence of a person's DNA from the tie should not necessarily eliminate that person as possibly being "DB Cooper". Conversely, should a "DB Cooper" candidate's DNA be on the tie, that link would be extremely solid in helping identify who "DB Cooper" is.

Q: What other ways can his identity be made?

A: Through a collection of circumstantial evidence. There are too many ways to list all of them here. One angle would be to review the military records of the strong "DB Cooper" candidates and determine where they were stationed during 1971, when the hijacking occurred. Also, there may be Northwest (Orient) Airline employment application records still available that can be reviewed to see if any "DB Cooper" candidates applied with the airline and not hired. This might determine the skyjacker's motivation in targeting the victim airline.

Q: What if this article results in hundreds of responses with names?

A: That would be fine. If I was still an active duty investigator, I would put together a simple database, such as an Excel spreadsheet and separately enter each name with other descriptive information. Then, I would routinely sort through the names and focus on those few names that show up repeatedly.

Q: What if someone confesses?

A: Certainly I would look at that person but I would also be very guarded. There have already been multiple deathbed confessions of being "DB Cooper" and they all couldn't have been him. There would need to be some very compelling information and evidence to go with the confession.

Q: What about the Reno, Nevada airport connection?

A: There are a number of investigative leads that could be covered in Reno. One would be a public appeal made through the Reno media outlets, asking residents if any abandoned parachute equipment had been found in the woods, north of Reno, since 1971. I believe "DB Cooper" parachuted from the Boeing 727, during its approach from the north to the Reno airport. After his parachute landing, he most likely "rigger-rolled" his parachute and stashed it in the woods after landing. Then, he likely walked a short distance to a highway and "thumbed" a ride.

Q: How can members of the Vietnam Veterans of America help?

A: I wish to request of fellow VVA members of all branches, to give this some deep thought. Specifically, do you recall any of your fellow service members ever commenting they know who "DB Cooper" was? I believe "DB Cooper" committed the crime by himself but provided "veiled" clues of his involvement over the years. Also, should you respond, please provide a contact number / e-mail address and as much detail as possible regarding why you think "so and so" may have been "DB Cooper".

Q: Do you have any "candidates" for being "DB Cooper"?

A: Yes, one. He has passed, so I will have to go through public records to find his living relatives. I do not know if they would be willing to discuss the possibility of their deceased family member being "DB Cooper". If I was a betting person, I would place the odds at 1 in 1,000 of this person being "DB Cooper". But, that's better than 1 in 12 million plus, which is the number of veterans who served during the Vietnam-era, between 1959 - 1975.

Q: Are you "DB Cooper", hiding in plain sight?

A: No.