

BIKE ROBBERIES UP IN CENTRAL PARK

131 Seized so Far in 1974,
Compared With 40 in 1973

By LINDA GREENHOUSE

Bicycle robberies in Central Park, like the attack there last week that led to the death of Roger Hane, a magazine illustrator, have more than tripled over the last year, the police said yesterday.

Now the police are debating whether the thefts are simply the latest form of mugging or whether they form part of a sophisticated black market in stolen bicycles.

So far this year, according to Lieut. Carl Jonasch of the Central Park Precinct, there have been 131 bicycle robberies in the park, 83 in June alone. At this time last year, there had been 40 bicycle robberies. Robbery means the forcible taking of the bicycle from its rider, as distinguished from stealing a bicycle from a stand.

'Supply and Demand'

"It's a supply and demand business—there are more bikes than ever, and people want them, said Lieut. James Gallagher, commanding officer of the Fourth Homicide Squad, where a six-day investigation led to the arrest Thursday of the six youths charged with Mr. Hane's murder. He was attacked on the East Drive near 85th Street.

"It's an easy crime: you go and take the bicycle, you have an immediate mode of transportation away from the crime, and there's a ready market right in the street," he said.

Lieutenant Gallagher said he had seen no evidence of organized bicycle-stealing rings at work in the city. "There's no Fagin," he said, referring to the character in Charles Dickens's "Oliver Twist" who trained young boys to steal.

Youngsters have little trouble finding customers willing to pay the going rate of \$30 to \$50 for stolen bicycles. Mr. Hane's new 10-speed Lejeune, which the police have not recovered, retails for about \$160.

Luis Colon and Ivan Gonzalez, both 16 years old, were arraigned in Manhattan Criminal Court yesterday and charged with Mr. Hane's murder. Four other youths, two aged 15, one 13, and one 12, have been referred to Family Court as juvenile offenders.

Suicide Watch

The two 16-year-olds were placed under an around-the-clock suicide watch at the Adolescent Remand Shelter on Rikers Island yesterday in what one detective described as an "unusual move taken only when a prisoner appears greatly upset. They were ordered held without bail.

At Intermediate School 29, Park Avenue and 94th Street, saddened teachers and guidance counselors who had known both boys for the last three years described them yesterday as "very disturbed" and "extremely immature."

"Luis couldn't make connections between what he did and the consequences of what he did," said Stuart Greenbaum, one of the school's two guidance counselors. Leathia Vanadore, who taught the Gonzalez youth in a special class for two years ago, described him as having a "tremendous, unbelievable need for attention and affection."

After the Gonzalez boy learned English, school officials tried to transfer him to regular classes. But he refused to leave, saying that if he could not be taught by Miss Vanadore he would not come to school. This year, as a ninth grader, he barely spent a month in class.

After the attack on Mr. Hane on June 13, the Central Park Precinct increased its plain-clothes patrols. So far this year, precinct officers has made 35 arrests for bicycle robberies, compared with two in 1973.