



HISTORY &
CULTURE
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Geena Davis



Susan Atkins

Murderer (1948–2009)

Susan Atkins was a member of Charles Manson's "Family" and was convicted of the group's infamous 1969 murder of Sharon Tate, which was orchestrated by Manson.

Synopsis

In late 1967, Susan Atkins met Charles Manson and his "Family," went on the road with them briefly, and then moved onto their ranch. On August 8, 1969, Atkins and others, under Manson's orders, burst into the house shared by director Roman Polanski and actress Sharon Tate and murdered Tate and four other people. Atkins was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death. Her sentence was commuted to life in prison when California banned the death penalty. Atkins died in prison in 2009.

Early Life

Susan Denise Atkins was born on May 7, 1948, in San Gabriel, California. She was the second of three children born to alcoholic parents, and grew up in Northern California. After she dropped out of high school to support herself (her mother died when Atkins was 15 and her father abandoned the family), Atkins moved by herself to San Francisco.

NAME

Susan Atkins

OCCUPATION

Murderer

BIRTH DATE

May 7, 1948

DEATH DATE

September 24, 2009

PLACE OF BIRTH

San Gabriel, California

PLACE OF DEATH

Chowchilla, California

AKA

Susan Atkins

FULL NAME

Susan Denise Atkins

The Manson 'Family'

In early 1967, while staying with friends, Susan Atkins met [Charles Manson](#), and by summer she was on a road trip with Manson and his group. Atkins settled with the Manson "Family" at their Southern California ranch, where she gave birth to a son, whom Manson named Zezozose Zadfrack Glutz (he had previously dubbed Atkins "Sadie Mae Glutz").

By July 1969, Atkins was a trusted member of Manson's inner circle, and he took her and two others with him to shake down a man named Gary Hinman for money. When Hinman wouldn't comply, Manson slashed his face with a sword and left, and the remaining trio later beat and killed him.

By this point, Manson's visions of a race war were propelling his every move, and he had a bizarre plan to instigate it by murdering people in their homes and blaming it on Black Panthers. On August 8, Manson sent four of his followers, including Atkins, to the house of director [Roman Polanski](#) and the pregnant [Sharon Tate](#). By the end of the night, Tate and four others in the house were dead. Atkins later admitted to holding Tate down while [Charles "Tex" Watson](#) stabbed her to death (although later still, she recanted and said that she was merely a bystander to the scene).

Conviction and Death

In October 1969, the entire Manson Family was arrested, and they were later tried for the murders. The series of trials was circus-like, and the defendants' bizarre behavior became a striking trait of the proceedings.

On March 29, 1971, Atkins was found guilty and sentenced to death, along with all of the other defendants. California's 1972 ban on the death penalty changed her sentence to life in prison, however. Atkins was the longest-serving female inmate in the state of California at the time of her death, on September 24, 2009, at the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla, California.

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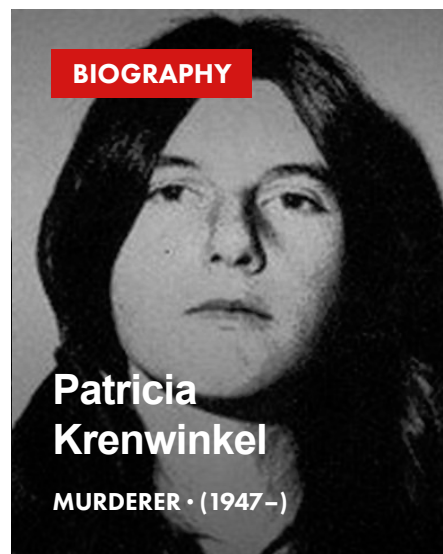
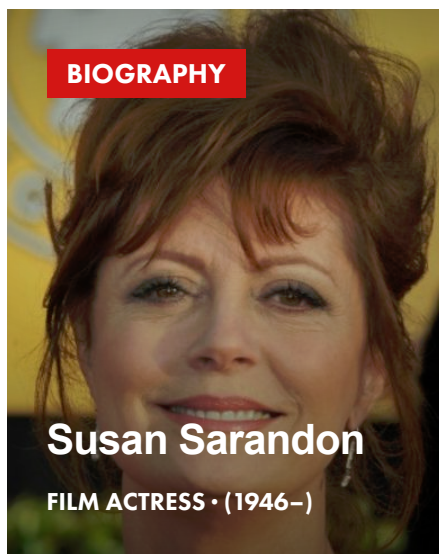
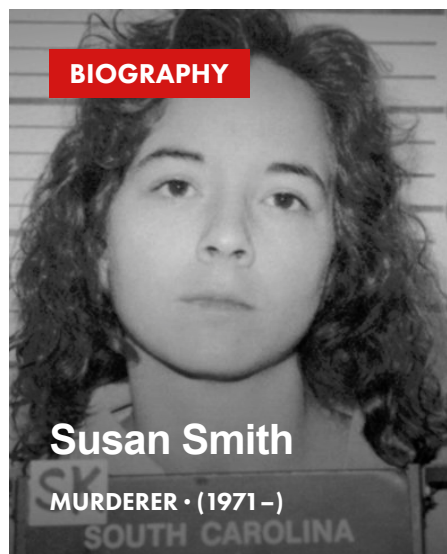
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