In 1956, after multiple stints in reform school, twenty-one-year-old Manson was sentenced to three years at Terminal Island Penitentiary, the first in a series of prisons he would see in his life.

(Courtesy of the US Bureau of Prisons)

In 1968, Manson brought his Family to Spahn Movie Ranch in Chatsworth, California, where they cared for the horses and grounds in exchange for permission to live as they wished.

(Anonymous / AP / Shutterstock)

In a photograph often imitated today, Family members posed with Straight Satans biker Danny DeCarlo in a cave on the grounds of Spahn Ranch: (Left to right) DeCarlo, Catherine Share, Mary Brunner, Chuck Lovett, Jennifer Gentry, Catherine “Cappy” Gillies, Lynette Fromme, Sandra Good, and Ruth Ann Moorehouse.

(Courtesy of the Photo Collection at the Los Angeles Public Library)
Sharon Tate wore a yellow-taffeta mini dress when she married Roman Polanski in London in January 1968.

(Evening News / Shutterstock)

Sharon Tate's body was taken by investigators from her rented house on Cielo Drive in Benedict Canyon, where she and four others were killed on August 9, 1969.

(AP / Shutterstock)

Below: Leno and Rosemary LaBianca were murdered at their home on Waverly Drive in Los Feliz on August 10, 1969.

(Anonymous / AP / Shutterstock)
The hunt for evidence in the aftermath of the killings took place on foot and by helicopter in the Hollywood Hills as well as other locations.

(Courtesy of the Photo Collection at the Los Angeles Public Library)

Crews searched for additional bodies in multiple sites, including a 35-foot well at Spahn Ranch.

(George Brich / AP / Shutterstock)
When arrested at Barker Ranch in October 1969, Manson wore buckskin clothing sewn by Family members and laced-up by leather thongs similar to those used to tie Leno LaBianca’s wrists during his murder.

(Anonymous / AP / Shutterstock)

Charles “Tex” Watson was held for months in Texas before extradition to Los Angeles to face trial for seven counts each of first-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

(George Brich / AP / Shutterstock)
The three Manson girls on trial for murder—(left to right) Susan “Sadie” Atkins, Patricia “Katie” Krenwinkel, and Leslie Van Houten—often smiled and laughed while walking to court.

(Lauren Bacall / AP / Shutterstock)

Linda Kasabian, initially indicted on seven counts of murder, was later given immunity as the prosecution’s most important witness.

(David F. Smith / AP / Shutterstock)

Manson Family girls, holding constant vigil outside the courthouse, shaved their heads after the verdict: Nancy Pitman (aka Brenda McCann), Sandra Good, Catherine “Cappy” Gillies, and Mary Brunner.

(Wally Fong / AP / Shutterstock)
Mary Brunner—the Wisconsin librarian who became the first member of the Family and the mother of Manson’s son Michael—was a reluctant but crucial prosecution witness.

(George Brich / AP / Shutterstock)

Prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi, thirty-five, had lost only one of his previous 104 felony cases when he was assigned to the Tate-LaBianca trials.

(AP/Shutterstock)

Manson never realized his dream of becoming a rock star, despite his connections to Beach Boys drummer Dennis Wilson and producer Terry Melcher. He continued to play guitar and record music in prison.

(Trinity Mirror / Mirrorpix / Alamy Stock Photo)
Afton Burton began visiting Manson when she was eighteen and soon became known as Star Manson. She obtained a license for their prison wedding in 2014, but it expired as his health declined.

(Polaris Images)

In 2016, seventy-year-old Tex Watson was denied parole for the seventeenth time. He will be eligible again in 2021.

(Photo by Lis Wiehl)
Charles Manson spent the vast majority of his years behind bars, moving from juvenile detention facilities to county jails and federal and state prisons. Clockwise: in 1968, in 1985, in 1996, and in 2017, three months before he died.

(Courtesy of the Ventura County Sheriff's office and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation)
Roger Smith, interviews
Dr. David E. Smith, interview
Jason Freeman, interviews, recent recorded phone calls with Manson
Shawn (Freeman) Moreland, interview
Bill Freeman, interview
Paul Dostie, interviews, research
Arpad Vass, interview, research
Jack Cook, email interviews, research
Gary Stewart, email interviews, research
John Michael Jones, Manson friend, interviews
Bruce Fox (aka Stoner Van Houten), interviews
Matthew Roberts, interview
Sharmagne Leland-St. John-Sylbert, interviews
Ben Gurecki, Manson friend, interview
Kay Hinman Martley, interviews
Gary Kent, movie production manager at Spahn Ranch, interview
Jeff Rose, IT help
Gilbert Wright, DA’s office, four CDs of grand jury and trial transcripts, crime scene photos, exhibits used in the ten trials
Terry Thornton, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), inmate bio and general case information, record requests, and photos
Luis Patino, CDCR, Board of Parole Hearings, parole board transcripts and records requests
Arineh Shahverdian, LA County Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner, autopsy reports
Kermit Hicks, retired LA county courthouse employee, email interview
David Ogul, interview
Chad Sandifer (George Spahn’s grandson), interview
Jim Powers, public library in Ashland, Kentucky, news and genealogy research
Larry Ramos, LA County Assessor’s Office, info on 10050 Cielo Drive
Campbell County Clerk’s Office, Kentucky, Kathleen Manson’s first marriage license
Carole Scott, beta reader
Laurel Corona, beta reader
Bob Koven and Myra Chan, opened their home in LA for research trips
Géza Keller, studio audio enhancement on DA/police witness interviews and general support
Joe Rosignolo, studio audio enhancement
Alexandra Badalamenti, news research support
Peter Chiaramonte, donation of his book about Leslie Van Houten
Glenna Schultz, interview, research
Jaxon Van Derbeken, source referrals
California Board of Parole Hearings: transcripts dating back to 1978, when Manson and most of his codefendants first became eligible to request parole (some additional years are posted on cielodrive.com). Manson’s transcripts were obviously the most important, but because he was not present when the killings occurred, only the transcripts of his codefendants could describe what happened at the crime scenes. Bruce Davis leads these defendants with thirty-one parole hearings since he first became eligible in 1976. We reviewed hearing transcripts as well as appeals, letters, and statements read aloud or submitted for hearings, and Gov. Brown’s statements overturning parole board approvals:

- Of Krenwinkel’s fourteen hearings: 2011, 2016

LA County District Attorney’s Office: partial transcripts from grand jury testimony (among the most notable witnesses were Mary Brunner, LASD detectives Charles Guenther and Paul Whiteley, Susan Atkins, Terry Melcher, Gregg Jakobson, and Danny DeCarlo); transcripts from pre-trial motion hearings and witness interviews; trial transcripts and exhibits, the latter of which were reused in multiple trials. Exhibits included items such as news articles, audio taped witness interviews, crime scene photos, Shorty Shea’s pawn tickets, booking sheets, a partial transcript of Stovitz’s interview with Rolling Stone, and detective interviews with Atkins’s cellmates Ronnie Howard and Virginia Graham.

LA Superior Court: archival records for several of the main trials, including the court clerk’s minutes describing courtroom drama and other highlights; motions with backup documents and transcripts; witness interview excerpts and other compelling evidence or arguments, some of which didn’t make it into the trial.

Federal Bureau of Prisons: Manson’s prison timeline

National Archives and Records Administration: Manson’s federal court files for charges of violating the Mann and Dyer Acts, stealing US Treasury checks and mail theft, from 1955 to 1969. These provided filings, rulings, handwritten letters from Manson and his mother to judges, arrest warrant authorizations, and probation/parole records, including Manson’s reports to his probation officers and their reports to their superiors.

CDCR: basic inmate info, disciplinary records, news releases, and inmate photos
Public Records Requests That Produced Notable Materials (Cont.):

LA County Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner: official autopsy and toxicology reports for all nine victims. Other pages were found online, which may have since been either stolen, misplaced, or made unavailable for release due to privacy or other reasons. (Sharon Tate’s, for example, doesn’t show she was pregnant.)

State of West Virginia Department of Public Safety: arrest/investigative reports on Kathleen Maddox Manson’s 1939 arrest for armed robbery in the Ketchup Bottle caper

Notable Records Accessed Online or Through Other Sources:

FBI files for Charles Manson, Jay Sebring, Joel Rostau, Eugene “Gino” Massaro, and Vincent Buglioni, the latter of whom reported extortion attempts against him Mendocino County probation records for the Family’s drug arrest in June 1968: These included a useful social history for Susan Atkins and Mary Brunner, and details on their relationship with Manson and the Family.

Tex Watson’s pre-trial medical and psychiatric examination records from his time in LA county jail and at Atascadero State Hospital

William Garretson’s polygraph exam transcript

LAPD Sergeant Michael McGann’s arrest and incident report for Garretson, which describes events at the Tate murder scene and afterward, in response to Garretson’s claim against McGann and the city of Los Angeles

The first two LAPD homicide investigative reports from each of the Tate and LaBianca cases

Paul Grassner’s interview/story with former LA sheriff’s deputy Preston Guillory, also published in Grassner’s 1993 autobiography

LASD investigative reports from the Spahn Ranch raid and witness interviews concerning Family history, and the Shorty Shea and Gary Hinman murder cases, done in Inyo County after the raids at Barker and Myers Ranches

LASD search warrant affidavit for the Spahn Ranch raid

Numerous witness interviews by law enforcement officials from the DA’s office, LASD, LAPD, and Inyo County Sheriff’s Office, including Leslie Van Houten, Paul Watkins, Brooks Poston, Danny DeCarlo, and Stephanie Schram

Appellate court briefs and rulings for Manson et al. (Tate-LaBianca case) 1976; Manson (Hinman case) 1977; Watson 1970, 1976, 1977; Van Houten 1980; and Brunner 1973

Historic photos helped us flesh out many descriptions, such as the Family’s life at Spahn Ranch, the raids, and dumpster diving; Susan Atkins’s stage revue as a topless vampire; Manson’s immolation incident at Vacaville; Family members’ courthouse dress and demeanor; the house at 10050 Cielo Drive, which was demolished in 1994; Sharon Tate and Roman Polanski’s wedding, etc.

Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms: report for the Barker Ranch fire in 2009

Forsher v. Bugliosi, Supreme Court of California ruling and appeal of dismissal of libel and invasion of privacy case re: Helter Skelter, both in 1980

Inyo County Office of the Sheriff, news release re: Barker Ranch “dig,” 2008


Tuscarawas County, Ohio, Juvenile Court filing in 1986 proving that Charles Jay White aka Charles Milles Manson Jr. was Jason Freeman’s father

Colorado death certificate for Charles “Jay” White, aka Charles Milles Manson Jr., by “self-inflicted gunshot to head” on Interstate 70 in June 1993


Obituaries for Rosalie Handley (2009) and Colonel Scott (1954), also Scott’s death certificate

Leona Rae Manson’s divorce decree in Denver, Colorado, 1964

Helter Skelter, 1976

Charles Manson Superstar, 2002

Six Degrees of Helter Skelter, 2009

Aquarius, 2015–16

Diane Sawyer TV interviews, 1993

The Manson Women, now on Biography.com

Truth and Lies: The Family Manson, ABC documentary, 2017

Dateline: The Summer of Manson, 2017

Good Morning America, interview with Dianne Lake, 2017

YouTube archives containing countless video clips of interviews or statements on this case over the years, including those featuring Manson and Family members; witnesses such as Phil Kaufman, who had dealings with Manson and the Family; investigators involved in the raids such as CHP Officer James Pursell,
who arrested Manson at Barker Ranch, and LASD Sergeant Gleason, who helped find Shorty Shea’s remains in 1977; Bruce Davis and Lynette Fromme speaking to media or protesting; a BBC video of Bruce Davis prison interview; a TV interview with author Ed Sanders and Debra Tate; and news clips.

Some of the most helpful Facebook groups included Helter Skelter Alternate Theories; In Memory of the Parent, Tate, LaBianca Murders of 1969; Manson Family Myth 1967–present, and others that were formed, renamed, or disappeared after running their course.

Cielodrive.com
Mansonsbackporch.com
Murdersofaugust69.com
Mansondirect.com
Mansonblog.com, with original ATWA site archived at accessmanson.mansonblog.com
ATWAearth.com, ATWA’s Facebook and Instagram pages,
   atwaatwar.wordpress.com, atwaatwar.com
tlbradio.com, TLB radio podcasts of interviews with all types of people involved in the case or parties to it from yesterday and today
lsb3.com, Tate-LaBianca
Homicide Research Blog
releasemansonnow.com
cdc.ca.gov
cdcrtoday.blogspot.com
University of Missouri-Kansas City School of Law, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/fftrials/manson/mansonchrono.html
Aboundinglove.org, website for Watson’s Abounding Love Ministries
bobbybeausoleil.com
leslievanhouten.com
biography.com, including “The Manson Women” show
jasonfreebirdfreeman.wordpress.com
criminal-justice.
iresearchnet.com
findagrave.com
NOTABLE BOOKS:

Manson: The Life and Times of Charles Manson, by Jeff Guinn
Helter Skelter, by Vincent Bugliosi with Curt Gentry
Manson in His Own Words, as told to Norm Emmons
Will You Die For Me? The Man Who Killed for Charles Manson Tells His Own Story, by Tex Watson as told to Chaplain Ray
The Killing of Sharon Tate, by Lawrence Schiller and Susan Atkins
Child of Satan, Child of God: Her Own Story, by Susan Atkins with Bob Slosser
The Myth of Helter Skelter, by Susan Atkins-Whitehouse
The Family, by Ed Sanders
If Republicans Had Any Hearts, They’d Be Democrats, by Jon Fisher
Restless Souls, by Alisa Statman with Brie Tate
The Manson File: Myth and Reality of an Outlaw Shaman, by Nikolas Schreck

PRIMARY AND NOTABLE NEWS OUTLETS, MAGAZINES, WIRE SERVICES, AND ARCHIVES:

Los Angeles Times
New York Times
Rolling Stone
Los Angeles magazine
Washington Post
California Digital Newspaper Collection: mostly AP and UPI
Ashland Daily Independent
Charleston Daily Mail
People
Variety
New York Daily News
New York Post
Riverside Press Enterprise
Long Beach Press-Telegram
Time
Newsweek
Sacramento Bee
CNN
San Francisco Chronicle, sfgate.com
Bakersfield Californian
The Guardian, theguardian.com
TMZ
Daily Mail, dailymail.co.uk
Bloomberg.com
MANSON FAMILY MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES

Charles “Charlie” Milles Manson, leader of Manson Family
Patricia Krenwinkel, aka Katie, Marnie and Mary Ann Scott, helped kill Tate/LaBianca victims
Susan Atkins, aka Sadie Mae Glutz, helped kill Gary Hinman/Tate victims
Charles “Tex” Watson, aka Charles Montgomery, self-described “Manson’s right-hand man,” led Tate-LaBianca killings
Leslie Van Houten, aka Leslie Sanskonton, helped in LaBianca murders
Robert “Bobby” Beausoleil, aka Cupid and Jason Lee Daniels, killed Hinman
Bruce Davis, aka Jack McMillan, helped kill Hinman/Donald “Shorty” Shea
Steve Grogan, aka Clem Tufts, and Scramblehead, helped kill Shea
Linda Kasabian, Family member, prosecution’s primary witness
Mary Brunner, first Family member, mother of Charlie’s third son and reluctant prosecution witness
Catherine Share, aka Gypsy, Family member
Lynette Fromme, aka Squeaky and Red, second Family member, attempted to assassinate President Gerald Ford
Sandra “Sandy” Good, aka Sandy Collins Pugh and Blue, loyal Family member, threatened to kill 171 corporate leaders
Ruth Ann Moorehouse Heuvelhurst, aka Ouisch, early Family member
Catherine Gillies, aka Cappy, Family member
Nancy Pitman, aka Brenda McCann, Family member
Katherine “Kitty” Lutesinger, Bobby’s girlfriend
Barbara Hoyt, Family member, prosecution witness
Dianne Lake, aka Dianne Bluestein, Family member, prosecution witness
Stephanie Schram, Family member, prosecution witness
Brooks Poston, former Family member, prosecution witness
Paul Watkins, Family member, prosecution witness
Danny DeCarlo, aka Richard Allen Smith, Straight Satans biker, reluctant prosecution witness
John Philip Haught, aka Zero/Christopher Jesus, allegedly committed suicide by Russian roulette

MURDER VICTIMS, DATE KILLED

Gary Hinman, musician and friend of Family members, July 27, 1969
Bernard Crowe, aka Lotsapoppa and Poppa (attempted murder by Manson), August 1
Sharon Tate Polanski, wife of director Roman Polanski, August 9
Jay Sebring, aka Thomas Kummer, “Hairdresser to the stars,” August 9
CAST OF CHARACTERS

MURDER VICTIMS, DATE KILLED (CONT.)

Abigail “Gibby” Folger, heir to Folgers coffee fortune, August 9
Wojciech “Voytek” Frykowski, August 9
Steven Parent, August 9
Leno LaBianca, supermarket owner, August 10
Rosemary LaBianca, dress shop owner, August 10
Donald “Shorty” Shea, ranch hand at Spahn Ranch, late August

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, MURDER CASE, AGENCY

Sergeant Michael McGann, lead detective on Tate team, Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)
Sergeant Jess Buckles, lead detective on Tate team, LAPD
Sergeant Danny Galindo, Tate/LaBianca, LAPD
Sergeant Frank Patchett, LaBianca team, LAPD
Sergeant Paul Whiteley, Hinman/Shea, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department (LASD)
Deputy Charles Guenther, Hinman/Shea, LASD
Deputy Bill Gleason, Spahn Ranch auto theft ring/Shea, LASD
Officer James Pursell, raids at Barker and Myers Ranches, California Highway Patrol in Inyo County (CHP)
Ranger Dick Powell, Barker/Myers raids, US Park Service in Inyo County
Deputy Don Ward, Inyo County Sheriff’s Office (ICSO)

ATTORNEYS/JUDGES

Vincent Bugliosi, lead prosecutor for Tate-LaBianca trials
Aaron Stovitz, prosecuting co-counsel for Tate-LaBianca
Burton Katz, prosecutor for Hinman trial
Judge William Keene
Judge Charles Older
Judge Malcolm Lucas
Evelle Younger, LA County District Attorney
Irving Kanarek, defense attorney for Manson
Paul Fitzgerald, defense attorney for Manson, then Krenwinkel
Richard Caballero and Daye Shinn, defense attorneys for Atkins
Ronald Hughes, defense attorney for Manson, then Van Houten
Maxwell Keith, defense attorney for Van Houten
William Garrettson, caretaker for Cielo Drive property
Winifred “Winnie” Chapman, Polanskis’ housekeeper
Dennis Wilson, Beach Boys drummer and unwitting Manson Family benefactor
Rudi Altobelli, talent manager and owner of Cielo Drive property
Terry Melcher, music producer and son of Doris Day
Gigg Jakobson, talent scout, friend of Dennis and Terry
Juan Flynn, ranch hand at Spahn
Rosina Kroner, Tex’s dealer girlfriend
Paul Crockett, gold prospector in Death Valley
Alan Springer, Straight Satans biker
Ronnie Howard, Susan Atkins’s cellmate
Virginia Graham, Susan Atkins’s cellmate
George Spahn, owner of Spahn Ranch
Ruby Pearl, forewoman at Spahn
Gary Kent, film production manager at Spahn
Roger Smith, Manson’s parole officer
Dr. Roger Smith, founder of Haight-Ashbury Free Clinic, addiction specialist
Sgt. Paul Dostie, retired from Mammoth Lakes Police Department, cadaver dog handler
Arpad Vass, scientist/expert in identifying human remains in soil
John Michael Jones, contemporary Manson confidante
Sharmagne Leland-St. John-Sylbert, one of Jay Sebring’s girlfriends
Rosalie Willis, Manson’s first wife
Leona Rae “Candy” Stevens, aka Leona Rae Musser, Manson’s second wife
Charles Milles Manson Jr. or Jay White, Manson’s son with Rosalie
Jason Freeman, Charlie and Rosalie’s grandson
Shawn Freeman Moorland, Jason’s mother
Afton Elaine Burton, aka Star Manson, Manson’s former fiancée

Doris Tate, Sharon Tate’s mother
Debra Tate, Sharon’s sister
Anthony DiMaria, Jay Sebring’s nephew
Kay Martley, Gary Hinman’s cousin
Lou Smaldino, Leno’s nephew, son of Leno’s older sister
Tony LaMontagne, Leno’s grandson
Frankie Struthers and Suzan Struthers LaBerge, Rosemary LaBianca’s children