

LIFE AFTER MANSON

The untold story of Patricia Krenwinkel



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LOGLINE

Four decades after one of the world's most notorious crimes, a Manson Family member breaks her silence to reveal how a series of choices led to ultimate destruction.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Life After Manson is an intimate portrait of one of the world's most infamous crimes and notorious killers. At 21-years-old, Patricia Krenwinkel callously murdered three people at the command of Charles Manson. Now 66-years-old, she continues to be demonized by the public and haunted by the suffering she caused over four decades ago.

Through an exclusive interview with and never-before-seen footage of Patricia Krenwinkel, *Life After Manson* frames a historically irreconcilable story through a complex emotional lens, offering insight into what led a suburban girl to commit crimes the world will never forget. For the first time, the public will learn what caused a young girl to recklessly run away from home and toward destruction. Her unlikely relationship with the charismatic Charles Manson led her to cross every line of moral consciousness, resulting in the brutal murders she committed to win the approval of the man she loved.

Life After Manson offers a provocative character study that reveals a broken woman struggling with her past, her arduous effort to evaluate the cost of her choices, and the possibility of self-forgiveness. Can society offer her the same? Is it possible to identify with a woman who took life only to lose her own in a desperate effort to find love?



LONG SYNOPSIS

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Through an exclusive interview with and never-before-seen footage of Manson Family member Patricia Krenwinkel, *Life After Manson* is the first opportunity in over twenty years the world will have to hear from this now 67-year-old woman who continues to be demonized by the public and haunted by suffering she caused over four decades ago.

In two blood-filled nights, a series of heinous Los Angeles murders--led by a sadistic Charles Manson--set the world ablaze with fear and horror. In the days following the crimes, over 200 firearms were sold in a Beverly Hills sporting goods store. Doors that were once left open were triple locked. The entire country was paralyzed by the thought of such brutality happening in the posh neighborhoods of the rich and famous, fearful that it could happen anywhere, to anyone.

Life After Manson frames a historically irreconcilable event through a complex emotional lens, offering first-hand insight into what led to the tragic Manson Family murders, and understanding of the human complexities surrounding them nearly 45 years later.

A life sentence in prison has proven that not even a lifetime is sufficient for making peace with one's past. Since the August 9, 1969 murders, Patricia has been tormented daily by the unending suffering she caused as a young girl. Enveloped with shame and unrest, Patricia spent the first five years in solitary confinement and began the process of trying to understand what provoked the sequence of events that ended so miserably. She began peeling back the layers of her painful past to explore how she had come under this man's spell, and was then faced with the decision of her life - would she continue to follow Manson, or break free from the hold he had on her even behind prison walls?

A seemingly normal childhood that evolved into a series of traumatic events, for the first time the public will learn what caused an 18-year-old girl to recklessly run away from home and toward destruction. Her parent's divorce and the subsequent neglect that followed, ushered Patricia into the care of her suicidal older sister years of drug and alcohol abuse. Her chance-encounter turned unlikely-relationship with the charismatic Charles Manson led her to cross every line of moral consciousness, resulting in the brutal murders she committed to win the approval of the man she loved.

While the public flashes back to imagery of the "X" carved on her forehead, and of fellow Manson Girls with shaved heads taking orders from a madman, Patricia Krenwinkel still struggles deeply to become a woman she can forgive and accept. Today inmate #08314 is the longest incarcerated female inmate in the California prison system, and is barely recognizable an infamous Manson follower. To most inmates she is known as "Krenny" - a silver haired woman who keeps to herself, and can always be found in the prison's art building. Knowing she will never be paroled, and her crimes never fully excused, Krenny still fights fervently for freedom within herself.

Throughout this intimate confession, Patricia speaks candidly to the audience about her tragic deeds, reflecting on the journey that transformed a "monster" into a mentor behind bars. "All I can do is get up each day and attempt to share with others where I've been. It's a very convoluted story, but it all comes from just a simple thing as wanting to be loved." Scenes that chronicle this woman's journey through the stages of her life are intercut with never-before-seen family photo albums, an interview with her now deceased mother, and visual memories of a tormented teenager. Featuring exclusive footage from behind prison walls, including Patricia's parole hearings, art therapy, and support group discussions, the viewer is taken through a visual diary and journey from past to present.

Set to debut in 2014, during the 45th anniversary of the Manson murders, this exclusive story will be the first time in over 20 years the world will hear directly from one of the killers who took part in one of the most notorious crimes in history, and the first time we will be invited into her reflections on a moment in time that is still too horrific to be fully understood. The last media interview Patricia participated in was with Diane Sawyer in 1994, since the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation no longer allows for their high profile inmates to be interviewed. While the director of *Life After Manson*, Olivia Klaus, was filming her last documentary *Sin by Silence*, she was able to capture the exclusive footage with Patricia in the support group being documented. As seen repeatedly in the media, events and personalities associated with the Manson murders have been the source of much fascination for generations, yet *Life After Manson* provides many details about the events and Patricia's life that was never accessible and remained uncovered until now.

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PATRICIA KRENWINKEL - QUICK FACTS

EARLY YEARS

Born on December 3, 1947 in Los Angeles, California, Patricia Krenwinkel's parents divorced when she was fourteen.

She dropped out of her first semester of college to go live with her step sister in Manhattan Beach, CA where she was introduced to the late 1960's drug scene.

Patricia met Charles Manson at a party in 1967, and became one of his most devoted followers.

She was the third person that Manson recruited into "The Family."

As part of The Manson Family, she was known as "Katie."

THE CRIMES

The Manson Family murders resulted in the deaths of seven people in two, separate Los Angeles homes on the nights of August 8 and August 9, 1969.

- The first night occurred at the home of Roman Polanski and actress Sharon Tate, who was eight and a half months pregnant. By the end of the night, Tate and four others in the house were murdered. Patricia was responsible for stabbing Abigail Folger (of the coffee empire).
- The second night occurred at the home of local business owners, Leo and Rosemary LaBianca. Patricia was responsible for stabbing Mrs. LaBianca.

On March 29, 1971, Patricia was found guilty and sentenced to death, along with three other Manson Family defendants.

- Charles Manson was also convicted for the murders and conspiracy charges even though he was never found to have committed a homicide himself but commanded the members of his Family.

LIFE IN PRISON

California overturned the death penalty in 1972 which changed Patricia's sentence to life in prison.

Patricia has maintained a perfect prison record with no disciplinary write-ups.

She received a Bachelor's degree in Human Services from the University of La Verne and is active in prison programs such as the Canine Support Team, which trains dogs for the disabled. She is also a reading tutor and a mentor in several inmate support group programs.

She currently works in the Forestry Department at the prison, which trains inmates to become firefighters.

The last media interview Patricia participated in was with Diane Sawyer in 1994.

Patricia is the longest-incarcerated female inmate in the California prison system.

Patricia has been denied parole thirteen times. Her last hearing was in January 2011, and her next one is scheduled for 2018.

2014 is the 45th Anniversary of the Manson Family murders.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT



I remember the first time I walked into prison. I was nervous that night as I began my volunteer work at the California Institution for Women; my mind was racing with scenes from movies of barbed wire barricades and hardened criminals. As the guard slammed the gate behind me, I wondered if I had made the right decision. Walking toward the visiting room, the fluorescent lights seemed blinding. The smells from the dairy farms nearby were somewhat nauseating; the sounds of the alarms ringing and guard announcements kept me on edge. As I entered the inmate support group that evening back in 2001, all my preconceived notions seemed to fly back over the barbed wire fence. I was introduced to women who looked like they could be my grandmother, mother or even...myself. Were these women really murderers?

I still remember one of the first women I met who introduced herself as "Krenny." As I continued to volunteer, I slowly got to know this quiet woman who mainly stayed to the side of the group listening. I was always struck by the lines of age and worry on her face. While she seemed to be unsure of herself, there were simultaneous signs of strength. She seemed to keep to herself. Yet, when she spoke, all the other inmates paid respectful attention. Her shyness didn't keep her from giving of her wisdom as a mentor among the group when she felt it was needed. I was intrigued by what might be behind the walls that Krenny built around herself as protection. Still, I felt that this woman was the type of person who would open up to me in her own time.

It wasn't until about five years into my volunteer role at the prison that I finally got my answers as to who Krenny really was as I began documenting the support group for my last film, *Sin by Silence*. I was interviewing Norma, one of the support group's leaders, asking her to tell me about any good times in prison. Prison is a horrible place to have to call home, but I also had been witness to snippets of happiness in such an ugly and dark place. Norma started to tell me a story about her struggles to go to college. There was a program at the institution that allowed selected inmates to get their AA degree. Norma wanted to attend these college classes, but couldn't afford the fees on her 10 cent an hour wage. One of her fellow inmates stepped forward and offered to sponsor Norma in the special degree program. She saw in Norma an opportunity to invest in the future, empowering a woman who would actually have a chance at a future release from prison. Norma kept telling me how much it meant that her friend Krenny believed in her and with tears streaming down her face she called Krenny by her real name - Patricia Krenwinkel. My jaw dropped!

I had read *Helter Skelter*. I had heard the stories from older family members who had lived through the period of time when those crimes that had shocked the world. Like so many, I had always been mesmerized by the mysteries of the Manson Family. Was the woman I had gotten to know over the last 5 years actually Patricia Krenwinkel? Once again, the remaining preconceived notions I had were thrown beyond that barbed wire fence. Over the years, I had gotten to know Krenny as a person; not the Patricia Krenwinkel that the rest of the world knew her as. I had had many conversations with Krenny about life, love, politics and so much more. As she revealed slivers of her past in the support group, I knew that she had gone through some extremely terrible times. But, I had never connected all the dots; that those rough times might include horrific crimes like the infamous Manson Family murders.

About a year later, as I continued to document the support group, Krenny came up to me and said that she would like to go on camera. I was filming the concept of having women speak directly into the camera against a black backdrop to create a style of a visual diary. As Krenny and I walked into the hallway, I got her in position and told her where to look into the camera. It took a few moments for her to think about where to begin, but then the floodgates opened. It was obvious that this woman had remained silent about too many secrets and had kept so much pain wrapped up inside for years. As we stood in the hallway, it was as if this filming process became a therapeutic purge of her soul. I guess it was because of the years I had known her up to this point, that she finally felt she could trust someone with her deepest, darkest secrets. Even if it meant that someone had a camera in her face, it was as if Krenny had been waiting for this one moment her entire lifetime.

It was no small miracle that I was actually allowed to capture Krenny on camera. California has legislation in place that allows the Corrections Department to censor the media from interviewing their high profile inmates behind bars. However, since she was legitimately part of the support group I was documenting, there we stood together participating in a moment of unparalleled reality. As I quietly stood in that empty prison hallway, with nothing but a camera separating me and one of the world's most notorious female killers, my mind did not race to thoughts of terror. Krenny was revealing the story of her life and the choices she had made that led her down the path toward destruction. I found a very unexpected, personal connection to her. She had been part of something so horrible and had crossed so many moral lines, could it be I was actually sympathizing for her?

As I continued to listen to this broken woman, I heard her message and "I got it." Nothing excuses her actions nor negates the horrible things that happened. But, as she continued to share her journey, I understood more how a young girl, so beaten down physically, emotionally and sexually could get caught in the spell of madman. As a woman my heart broke for her, and I understood how at such a young, impressionable age the simplest choices can lead someone down a slippery slope. From that moment on, I began to better understand the dividing line between who this woman was and had become. The tragedy whose name was Patricia Krenwinkel and the mentor, Krenny, who struggles on a daily basis in prison to be the woman she is today.

Has Patricia Krenwinkel committed unspeakable crimes? Yes. Has Patricia Krenwinkel made decisions with horrific consequences? Yes. But, Patricia Krenwinkel has also become a new person and the world now has an opportunity to learn from this woman who society has labeled a "monster." *Life After Manson* provides that doorway through which to view and actually see the transformation from the monster into a mentor and inspiration behind bars; arguably taking the focus past the final sting of such horrific crimes to offer us a never-before-seen perspective of the fragile identity of women and the process of rehabilitation. Instead of keeping Patricia's story frozen in time, I truly hope people will listen with open ears in the present, just as I did that day in the prison hallway.

I created *Life After Manson* to embody a critical lesson for society and an opportunity for personal reflection as Krenny holds up the mirror to herself, to powerfully reveal the lessons she has so painfully learned that dares the viewer to do the same.



THE FILM TEAM

OLIVIA KLAUS: Director / Producer

Olivia Klaus is an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose work has been seen on various networks like CNN, HLN, Discovery, MTV and The History Channel. *Sin by Silence*, her directorial debut in 2009, went on to win numerous film festival and advocacy awards, highlighted by People Magazine, NPR, Fox News, and The Insider before being broadcasted on Investigation Discovery to over 2.5 million viewers. The film even went on to inspire new legislation in California based on the documentary. "The Sin by Silence Bills," AB 593 and AB 1593, were signed into law by Governor Brown on September 30, 2012, to improve the paths to freedom for nearly 7,000 currently incarcerated domestic violence victims who have spent decades behind bars. Olivia is also the Creative Director at Orange Static, an interactive agency that focuses on developing websites for non-profits, along with a variety of films and documentaries.

ANN-CARYN CLEVELAND: Producer

Ann-Caryn's range of cross-disciplinary work has been distributed by HBO, Discovery, MTV, PBS, National Geographic, BBC, Sundance Channel, Sony Pictures, Women Make Movies and awarded honors. She began her film career in the research rooms of directors Alex Gibney and Robert Kenner. She received her MFA from USC's School of Cinema-Television while working full-time for Sony Pictures Digital Entertainment. In addition to helping market blockbuster films at Sony, she helped design and build one of the first social networking sites that bridged the gap between consumers using their own media tools and infusing it with blockbuster film content. She is currently a Co-founder at BrightSky Labs.

MICKI DICKOFF: Producer

Emmy Award winning filmmaker Micki Dickoff's work has been broadcasted on PBS, ABC, Bravo, Lifetime, Court TV, Channel 4 and the BBC. She received a fellowship from the Directors Guild of America and her most recent documentary, *Neshoba: The Price of Freedom* distributed by First Run Features, opened theatrically in 2011 to critical acclaim and won numerous award in film festivals worldwide.

KRISTEN IRVING: Producer

Kristen most recently worked on Oscar nominated and Sundance award-winning films such as *Bully* and *The Crash Reel* to create grass-roots, local and national social engagement and social media campaigns. Prior to independently producing campaigns, Kristen worked at Participant Media where she was responsible for the marketing campaign direction of their feature films and documentaries including *The Help*, *Contagion*, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, and *A Place at the Table*.

MONIQUE ZAVISTOVSKI: Editor

Films Monique has edited, written, or produced have won awards worldwide including at the Sundance, Los Angeles, and South By Southwest Film Festivals. She is the winner of an INSIGHT award for Excellence in Editing/Story Editing for her work on *The Shape of Water*, narrated by Susan Sarandon. In 2006, a short film she produced and edited, *The Wraith of Cobble Hill*, won the Jury Prize in Short Filmmaking at Sundance and was short-listed for the Academy Awards. The following year, Monique cut *Circus Rosaire*, which premiered at Slamdance and won Best Feature Doc and Audience Awards at several festivals. In 2009, she finished cutting *The Legend of Pancho Barnes and the Happy Bottom Riding Club*, featuring Kathy Bates, which went on to win a 2011 Emmy Award. Among her latest projects is *The Light In Her Eyes*, which aired on POV and is touring the world as part of the Sundance Institute's Film Forward series. She recently co-authored and published her first book, *Children and Fish Don't Talk: Adventures with Nazis, Communists and the Metropolitan Opera*.

LUKE ROTHSCHILD: Composer

Luke Rothschild is a composer and multi-instrumentalist who creates scores for film, television, dance and theater. He has written feature film scores for HBO Documentary Films, Sony Pictures, and several award winning independent films that have debuted at SXSW, and Tribeca Film Festivals. He is also an internationally celebrated inventor of musical instruments and sonic sculptures, and is honored to have been chosen as a Sundance Composer Fellow. Luke performs with String Theory, the LA based performance and music production ensemble that he co-founded in 2002. String Theory creates giant harp installations and performances in the US and abroad to critical acclaim. Luke's work with String Theory and as a solo entity has led to client relationships with the likes of Showtime, Walt Disney Imagineering, HBO, The Sundance Channel, Mercedes-Benz, SONOS, Qualcomm, Volkswagen, and Warner Music Group among others.

CREDITS

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Kristen Irving

Edited by

Monique Zavistovski

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Consulting Producer

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