

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
Plaintiff-Respondent,

vs.

NO. 3080

CHARLES MANSON, SUSAN ATKINS, LESLIE
VAN HOUTEN AND PATRICIA KRENWINKEL,

Defendants-Appellants.

LESLIE VAN H

Partial Trans of Susan Atkins
APPEAL FROM THE SUPERIOR COURT OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

HON. CHARLES H. OLDER, JUDGE PRESIDING

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT ON APPEAL

APPEARANCES

For Plaintiff-Respondent:	THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL 600 State Building Los Angeles, California 90012
For Defendant-Appellant Charles Manson:	IRVING KANAREK, Esq.
For Defendant-Appellant Susan Atkins:	DAYE SHINN, Esq.
For Defendant-Appellant Leslie Van Houten:	LESLIE VAN HOUTEN In Propria Persona
For Defendant-Appellant Patricia Krenwinkel:	PATRICIA KRENWINKEL In Propria Persona

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J. Hollombe, CSR
Murray Mehlman, CSR
Official Reporters
211 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

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LESLIE LOUISE VAN HOUTEN,
a defendant herein, called as a witness by and on her own
behalf, being sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. KEITH:

Q Leslie, were you born in Monrovia, California?

A No. I was born in Altadena, California.

Q That is the hospital where you were born; is that
right?

A Yes.

Q St. Luke's?

A Yes.

Q At that time, your mother and father were
living in Monrovia?

A Yes.

Q When were you born, Les?

A August 23, 1949.

Q And you went to school in Monrovia?

A Yes.

Q Grade school?

A Yes.

Q High school?

A Yes.

Q Junior high school? I forgot that.

A Yes.

1 Q And you have an older brother?

2 A Yes. I have got lots of older brothers, but one --

3 Q One particular older brother?

4 A Yes.

5 Q What is his name?

6 A Paul.

7 Q Do you know how old he is?

8 A No.

9 Q And you have a younger brother and sister?

10 A Yes.

11 Q What are their names?

12 A Bessie and David.

13 Q They were adopted by your mother and father,
were they?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Do you remember how old --

17 A They are war babies.

18 Q I know.

19 Do you remember how old they were when your
20 mother and father adopted them?

21 A No.

22 Q Were you a little girl at the time?

23 A Yeah.

24 Q Leslie, do you remember your mother testifying?

25 A Yeah.

26 Q And like she said, you had family meetings, you

1 and your mother and father?

2 A I didn't remember them until she said it. Then,
3 yes, we did.

4 Q Did your mother's testimony refresh your
5 recollection?

6 A Yes. About a lot of stuff.

7 Q And you remember that now?

8 A What?

9 Q You remember the family meetings now?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Where you and your mother and father, and perhaps
12 your older brother, talked things over?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Okay.

15 Now, did you have lots of hobbies when you were
16 a little girl? Do you remember that?

17 A I played with dolls.

18 Q Do you remember sewing?

19 A I'd make my dolls clothes.

20 Q Did you take up the sousaphone at one time?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Do you remember that?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Do you have any idea how old you were then?

25 A No.

26 Q Did you play in the band, a school band?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Was it the high school band or the junior high
3 band, or don't you remember?

4 A I beg your pardon?
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1 Q Do you remember whether it was the high school
2 band or the junior high band?

3 A Yes. I played in the band all the way through
4 elementary, junior high and high school.

5 Q Playing the sousaphone?

6 A Different things.

7 I played the drums too.

8 Q Do you remember whether or not you enjoyed
9 yourself when you were a child?

10 A Yes, I enjoyed myself.

11 Q Did you have a good time?

12 A Yes. Up to a certain point.

13 Q Do you remember your mother saying you were
14 sort of feisty?

15 A I was into everything going on in the block.
16 I knew what everybody was doing.

17 Q You had fun as a small child?

18 A Yes. As much as I could.

19 You know, I couldn't do certain things in the
20 back yard because I couldn't mess it up.

21 Q Your mother wasn't a stern disciplinarian,
22 would you say -- or was she?

23 A No.

24 My parents, see, my parents told me that they
25 knew that I knew how far I could go without upsetting them,
and how much it would hurt them to upset them. So I never

1 did what I wanted to do because I knew it would upset them.

2 So, they never disciplined me.

3 Q In other words, you were sort of a proper
4 little girl?

5 A Sure. Until I started learning how to sneak
6 and not have them catch me, and then I started sneaking
7 things.

8 Q What do you mean by sneaking things?

9 A To do what I wanted to do without them finding
10 out.

11 Q How old were you then?

12 A Well, I did it all along. I did it all along,
13 but really just when I started feeling really tired and
14 miserable, I just started to do things I wanted to do.

15 Q Were you a teenager then?

16 A Yes.

17 Q You were a homecoming princess, weren't you,
18 when you were a freshman and sophomore in high school?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Did you like that?

21 A It was all right.

22 Q Did you get a kick out of it?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Did you want to be a homecoming princess?

25 A I really didn't care one way or the other.

26 Q You were just chosen by the other members of

1 the student body?

2 A Yes. The football players.

3 Q And you took part in student activities, did
4 you not, when you were younger in high school and junior
5 high?

6 A Yes. I was very active in student government
7 and things like that.

8 Q Is that because you really took an interest
9 in it then?

10 A No.

11 I liked winning, and I always won. So, every-
12 time, you know, there was something to try for, I'd try
and I'd win.

14 Q But once you won, did you continue your
15 interest? I mean, did you enjoy it?

16 A I saw it through, but it wasn't as interesting
17 as trying to win.
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Q Now, after you graduated from Sawyer's, did you go some place in the desert?

A Yes, I went to Victorville.

Q Did you go to Victorville shortly after, if you remember, graduating from Sawyer's?

A That is the next place I remember.

Q All right, and did you go there alone or with someone?

A I went there with two women.

Q Were these women older than you were?

A I don't know. I don't even remember their names.

Q Was one of their names Dee, by any chance?

A Somebody told me it was, but I didn't remember that.

She was a blonde with blue eyes and she had a little tiny year and a half year old kid -- baby.

Q Had you known these two women or girls, as the case may be, for some time?

A No, I just met them through a friend of mine.

Q Just before going to Victorville?

A Yes.

Q Did you go to a cattle ranch in Victorville?

A Yes, a great big cattle ranch.

Q And was there a girl or woman who owned the cattle ranch?

A There was a girl whose parents were wealthy

and they owned the cattle ranch and we went there and we lived on it, and her parents were living at Palm Springs or, you know, one of those desert towns.

Q Do you have any recollection, Les, about how long you stayed in Victorville?

A Oh, long enough to check it out, you know, long enough to get to know it.

Q Did you take acid out there with the other girls with whom you went?

A I remember taking acid out there.

Q Incidentally, did you tell your mother or father that you were going to Victorville or did you just go?

A I don't know if I told them or not. I didn't see any reason to tell them.

Q Is it difficult for you now, Les, to comprehend periods of time?

A I don't see any point in it, that is the only reason.

Q But can you, if you tried?

A It comes back like, you know, in pictures, different places.

Q Can you tell us if you spent a long period of time in Victorville or a relatively short period?

A No, but I ended up in San Francisco.

Q I know that. We will get to that next.

A I don't know how long.

Q All right. So you went to San Francisco?

A Yes.

Q And with whom did you go?

A The blonde.

Q Whose name you cannot remember?

A My father told me her name was Dee.

Q Did you stay with Dee in San Francisco?

A Yes.

Q In the Haight-Asbury area?

A Yes.

Q Did you like it in Haight-Asbury?

A No, it was very frightening.

Q There were a great many people around who scared you, is that correct?

A It was just in general, a change from all of the things that I had heard when I was younger.

Q You mean heard about Haight-Asbury?

A Yeah, you know, it started out supposedly from what I heard, there was lots of love on the street, and by the time I got there all it was was a bunch of --

It was just all gutter, the whole thing.

Q When you were in San Francisco did you meet a young man who was with two young girls?

A Yes.

Q What was his name?

A Bobby Deasoleil.

Q Were you still staying with the [redacted] when you went to San Francisco with from Victorville when you met Bobby?

A Yes.

Q And was this sort of a chance encounter?

Perhaps you could tell us. Do you remember how it came about that you met him?

A She and I were just living at the house with her husband, and I went somewhere one night and I came home, and Bobby and Gypsy and Gail were there with Hocus and Bo, the dogs. *Sam*

Q Gypsy is the Catherine Share that testified here?

A Yes.

Gypsy.

Q And Gail was another girl?

A Yes.

Q Did you eventually go some place with Bobby and Gypsy and Gail?

A That next day I did.

We started up for Oregon, but we never made it.

Q How did it come about that you went with Bobby and Gypsy and Gail with such suddenness, you might say, the next day?

A I just felt such a good feeling around them, and it was a feeling I had all my life been looking for.

1 to be in someone else.

2 In fact, when I was a little child, I remember
3 I used to look in the mirror and wonder why nobody else --
4 why I couldn't be as happy with other people as I was
5 within myself. If that makes any sense? And when I met
6 these people, it was like I was seeing the people that I
7 had always just wanted to be with, to have a good time,
8 and they lived for the moment in everything they did.
9 It was so obvious, their complete freedom and just wish
10 to experience.

11 Q So you started out for Oregon but didn't make
12 it?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Did Bobby have some kind of a vehicle at that
15 time?

16 A Yes. He had the Randy Starr pickup truck
17 with his Round-Up somebody.

18 It was like a little caravan of people where
19 we were cowboys.

20 "And his stuntmen." That is what it was. We
21 were his stunt team and he was Randy Starr.

22 Q You were very attracted to Bobby?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And you fell in love with him, didn't you?

25 A Yes. Almost immediately.

26 Q You still are in love with him?

Q But later on?

A Yes. Because they were used to showing how they could express themselves, and I was used to hiding it.

So, at first Gypsy and I had to go through a few things before I would let myself actually, you know, be what I wanted to be around her.

Q You liked Gypsy very much then too?

A Yes.

Q She was easy to get along with and be with?

A Yes.

Q Did you go to different places in California with Bobby and Gypsy and Gail?

A Yes. We traveled all around, here and there.

Q Small towns?

A Yes.

Q Woods?

A Yes.

We spent a lot of time up above San Francisco in the real dense woods. You know, the redwoods, or whatever it is called, way back up in there.

And then a lot of times on the ocean front.

Q Would you sort of camp out?

A Yeah.

Well, see, by then we had built this tent on the back of the truck. We built it at his mom and dad's with

Q Did you enjoy yourself during this wandering existence with Bobby and the other girls?

A Yes.

Q And what was there about your existence then that you enjoyed so much?

A Nothing was planned, everything happened for the moment at the moment Just freedom.

Where someone would ask us to come over, we would go over. Or if someone was down the road, we would just pick them up, and just do whatever there was to do.

There was no idea for tomorrow, because we never, you know, we didn't know tomorrow would even ever be there.

Q So I take it that you lived for the day and filled your days with the most pleasurable existence that you could; is that right?

A Everything was pleasurable.

Q During that period of time, as far as you were concerned, was there any pain or unhappiness within you?

A No.

Q Now, Les, nonetheless, was there, you might say, a discordant note within the four of you?

A One of the girls was jealous because there was three women to one man, and she would always pick fights with Bobby to get his attention.

Q Was that Gail?