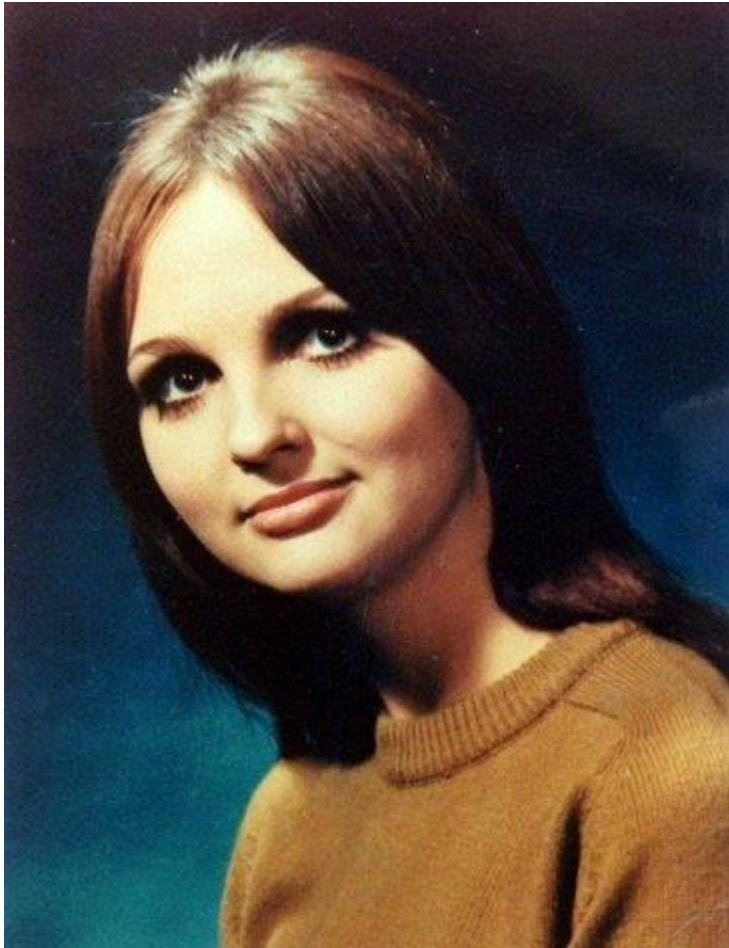


# After 46 Years, Jane Doe Found Near Manson Killings Is Identified

By MIKE McPHATE APRIL 28, 2016

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Photo



Reet Jurvetson Credit The Jurvetson family

A young woman was viciously stabbed to death, her body found in 1969 not far from the notorious murders by [Charles Manson](#)'s band of followers. For decades, the circumstances led people to wonder about the woman known only as Jane Doe 59: Was she another victim of the cultlike group?

The Los Angeles police this week revealed her identity as Reet Jurvetson, a 19-year-old from Montreal, while leaving open, if only narrowly, the possibility that Mr. Manson played a part in her death.

Ms. Jurvetson had recently moved to Los Angeles when her body was found by a passer-by in the brush off Mulholland Drive near Laurel Canyon on Nov. 16, 1969. She had been stabbed more than 150 times.

The style of the killing along with the timing and location of the discovery — about five miles down the road from the mansion where actress Sharon Tate and four others met their end at the hands of the Manson family a few months before — led to speculation that the cases were connected.

In the 1974 book “Helter Skelter: The True Story of the Manson Murders,” the authors recounted a widely circulated theory that Jane Doe 59 was present during the killing of a Manson follower and was murdered so she could not discuss it.

Photo



Charles Manson in 1969. Credit Associated Press

The Los Angeles Police Department said [in a statement](#) on Wednesday that detectives had interrogated Mr. Manson, who is in Corcoran State Prison in California, but had gleaned nothing of relevance to the Jurvetson case.

“No new leads were learned,” Detective Luis Rivera said in an interview with [People Magazine](#). But, he added, investigators could not “rule out” the possibility that followers of Mr. Manson were involved.

Researchers of the group said there was no known evidence to support a link.

“It’s always easy to think that Manson or the Manson family had to be involved in any kind of suspicious disappearance or murder in that era, particularly where stabbing was involved,” said Jeff Guinn, who wrote the biography “[Manson](#).”

Mr. Manson's brainwashed cohorts were small in number and talked among themselves about their deeds, Mr. Guinn noted. But he said no member or associate of the group professed any knowledge of Jane Doe 59 during interviews with him for his book.

That is not to completely discount a possible role in Ms. Jurvetson's killing, he said. "But it's a convenient thing, since they were obviously so capable of any disgusting violent act, to link them with murders that haven't been solved," he added.

Kristian Gravenor, a writer from Montreal, [reported the identity of Jane Doe 59](#) on his blog Tuesday night after interviewing a childhood friend of Ms. Jurvetson.

Ms. Jurvetson was the youngest of three children in a family that settled in Montreal in the 1950s after fleeing Estonia during World War II, according to relatives.

"Reet was a lovely, free-spirited and happy girl," her sister, Anne Jurvetson, said [in a statement](#). "She was deeply loved by both family and friends."

Her relatives recalled a young woman who had dreamed of going to California as a teenager and eventually saved up enough money to fly there in the fall of 1969.

In Los Angeles, she lived with a boyfriend, identified only as Jean, reported Mr. Gravenor, who said he had spoken with a friend of Ms. Jurvetson, Ilmi Siimann.

Then she disappeared.

Ms. Jurvetson's parents never reported their daughter missing to the police, her sister said.

"As months and then years passed, we imagined that she was making a new life for herself," she said. "We were always hoping that she would re-establish contact with friends and family."

Eventually, Anne Jurvetson said, she knew her sister was probably dead. Never, though, did she suspect a violent end. "It is devastating," she said.

The break in the case came last summer, after Ms. Siimann and Anne Jurvetson saw a post-mortem photo of Jane Doe 59 that had been discovered online through a mutual friend.

The Los Angeles police were notified, a DNA comparison was made with her sister, and Reet Jurvetson's identity was finally established.

The authorities said the investigation into the killing remained open, and detectives were especially interested in finding the man named Jean, or John, with whom Ms. Jurvetson had a relationship.

On Aug. 9, 1969, the gruesome killings at the home of a pregnant Ms. Tate and her husband, the film director Roman Polanski, stunned the nation and sent a wave of terror through Los Angeles. Mr. Manson and his followers were later convicted.

Manson experts have long suspected that the group was behind more killings.

Photo



Reet Jurvetson in her mid-teenage years. Credit Anne Jurvetson, via Associated Press

Ms. Jurvetson's brother, Tonu, held out hope until the very end that he would one day reunite with the "gregarious," green-eyed girl who disappeared so many decades ago, his widow, Tiu Jurvetson, said. He died in 2014.

"She was exceptionally bright, a straight-A student," she said in an interview on Wednesday. "She was the kind of person who had great potential to do something wonderful."

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