

Arthur Shawcross

The Genesee Rive Killer



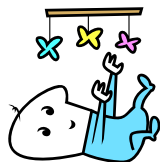
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Birth

- Born on June 6, 1945 at the U.S. Naval Hospital in Kittery, Maine
- 1 month premature
 - weighed 5 pounds
 - spent 20 days in the hospital
- Mother Bessie was 18, father Arthur Roy was 21
- Born with XYY
- Was first of four children
 - Sister Donna (-1)
 - Sister Jean (-3)
 - Brother Jimmy

Infancy

- Mother took Art to Watertown, NY until father completed military stint
- Spoke first word at 9 months
 - Norm is 12 months
- Walked at 15 months
 - Norm is 9-12 months
- Weaned from a bottle at 16 months
 - Norm is 9-18 months



- **Age 4**
 - Claims he was punished with belt and a broom handle
 - Father would use buckle and draw blood
 - No confirmation of this
- **Age 5**
 - Missed 33 days of kindergarten
 - Still talked “baby talk”
 - Described as “odd”
 - Frequent nightmare
 - Wet the bed
 - Mother didn’t pay as much attention to Artie as she did with the others
 - Artie craved attention

- **Age 6**
 - Began running away from home
 - School
 - Earned As and Bs in first grade
 - Teacher said “had lazy work habits”
- **Age 7**
 - Began having conversations with imaginary friends
 - Peers
 - made fun of him
 - called him “oddie”
- **Age 8**
 - Was a bully—mean to younger children
 - Had trouble making friends
 - Doctors said he was “attractive, neat, and well-dressed”
 - Kept running away
 - Felt his parents didn’t like him as well as his other siblings

- Age 9**
- Grades in 3rd grade slip
 - Mother discovers husband has a wife and son in Australia
 - Family relations decline
 - Mother dominates husband
 - Things are never the same
 - Hit in head with stone
 - hospitalized
 - received stitches
 - caused numbness for years
 - still has knot on head
 - First sexual encounter
 - Claims Aunt had sex with him
 - no confirmation of this

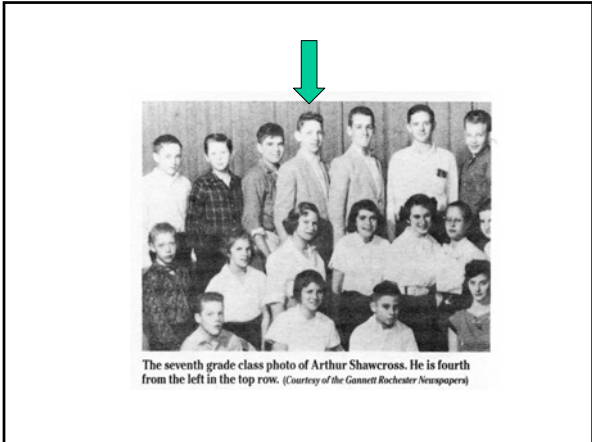
Age 10

- **School**
 - Stayed in 4th grade for 2 years
 - Would cry and speak baby talk when bullied by other children
 - Constantly got into fights
 - Bullied younger children
- **Home**
 - Ran away
 - Nightmares
 - Still wetting the bed
- **Crime**
 - Began shoplifting and stealing

- **Age 11**
 - Masturbated often
 - When caught by mother
 - threatened with butcher knife
 - Stuck broom handle into his rectum
 - mother denies all of this
 - psychologists are not sure
- **Age 13**
 - Family built a small house nears Brownsville, NY
 - 3 sets of relatives moved to the area
 - Called “Shawcross Corners”
 - New bedroom means he only shares room with his younger brother

Age 14

- Claims he had constant oral sex with his sister and cousin (he denies this)
- Claims he had sex with a female neighbor
 - When caught by her brother, was forced to have oral sex with him
- Claims he was raped by a male stranger
- Began having sex with a variety of animals (sheep, chickens, dogs)



Age 15

- Failed 8th grade (2 years behind in school)
- Still had nightmares, wet the bed, and talked baby talk
- Began setting brush fires
- Became more violent
- Tortured animals
- Described as a loner and as being moody

Age 16

- **School**
 - Still in 8th grade
 - Had perfect attendance record but didn't pay attention in class
 - Joined wrestling team, but became violent when he got mad
 - Got hit in the head with a discus - spent four days in the hospital
 - Bullied other kids

Age 17

- **School**
 - In 9th grade
 - Grades fell
 - Dropped out of school
- **Crime**
 - Burgled homes
 - Stole
 - Peeped into houses

Age 18 & 19

- Arrested for breaking into a Sears store, received 18 months probation
- **Sarah Chatterton**
 - Met her while working at the Family Bargain Center (he was fired for poor customer service)
 - Married her—she was 20 (September, 1964)
 - Did not consummate the marriage for several weeks
 - His son Michael was born a year later (10/2/65)
- **Work**
 - Quit or fired from several jobs during the year
 - Favorite job was at a butcher shop

Age 20

- **Shawcross Arrested**
 - Hit a 13-year old who threw a snowball at his car
 - Received 6 months probation
 - Psychologists label him an “emotionally unstable personality”
- **Drafted into the Army (4/7/66)**
 - Initial discipline problems
 - Settles down
 - Falls off 40-foot ladder and hits head
- **Sarah Divorces Shawcross**

Age 22

- **Linda Neary**
 - Meets at a bar
 - Didn't have sex until marriage
 - They get married (September, 1967)
- **Vietnam (October, 1967)**
 - Sent to Vietnam as a supply parts specialist



Age 23

- **September, 1968**
 - Left Vietnam
 - Took 21 days leave in Clayton, NY
- **October, 1968**
 - Was stationed in Fort Sill, OK
 - Became moody, saw an Army psychiatrist
 - Attempts suicide by overdosing
- **Spring, 1969**
 - Discharged from the military

Age 24

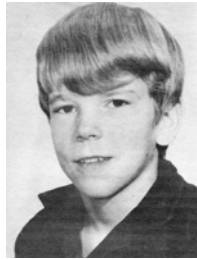
- **Linda Neary**
 - Got angry and beat her up, she was 4-months pregnant and she miscarried (June, 1969)
 - She divorced Shawcross (Fall, 1969)
- **Arson**
 - Was arrested for setting fire to Knowlton Brothers paper mill (April, 1969) and Crowley's Cheese Company (September, 1969)
 - Sentenced to 5 years in Attica prison for arson (December, 1969)

Age 24 - 26

- **Prison**
 - Sentenced to 5 years in Attica (December, 1969)
 - Claims he was raped by three Black inmates; claims he got revenge
 - Was transferred to Auburn Prison (June, 1970)
 - Was paroled early for saving a prison official's life during a riot (October 18, 1971) and returned to Watertown, NY
- **Penny Sherbino**
 - Started dating; they knew each other from high school (January, 1972)
 - Penny got pregnant (already had 2 children), but later miscarried
 - Got married (April 22, 1972)

Age 26

- **Killed Jack Blake**
 - April 7, 1972
 - 11-year old boy
 - Sexually assaulted the boy
 - Strangled him and battered him on the head
 - Shawcross claims
 - He cut out his heart and genitals and ate them
 - He returned to the grave site several times to have sex with the body



Age 27

- **Killed Karen Ann Hill**
 - September 2, 1972
 - 8-year old girl
 - Raped, strangled, and mutilated her
 - Arrested on October 3, 1972



Age 27

- Sentenced to 25 years in Green Haven Prison
 - Sentence was light in order to get confession and to clear Jack Blake case
- Never charged with death of Jack Blake



Age 28-41 The Prison Years

- 1974 Became violent in prison after receiving constant threats from other inmates
- 1975 Filed for divorce because Penny wouldn't visit . Claimed he had sex with a female nurse's aide
- 1977 Still not cooperating well with psychologists, not attending therapy, breaking rules
- 1978 Earned his GED and then a "B" in a college horticulture class
 - Received excellent comments from counselors and staff

Age 41

- April 28, 1987 – Paroled after 14 ½ years
 - Parole board was uncomfortable releasing him
 - Psychologist's reports were not positive
- Robert Kent (parole officer)

At the risk of sounding melodramatic, I consider this man to be possibly the most dangerous individual to be released to this community in many years.

Trying to Find a Home

- Placed in the Binghamton, NY area
- Moved to Delhi, NY
 - Moved into Rose Walley's apartment
 - She has been Art's prison pen pal
- Rose and Art moved to Fleischmanns, NY
- Rose and Art moved to Rochester, NY



Christmas, 1987 (age 42)

- Invited his family to come visit
 - They declined
 - Discovered mother had thrown away a present he had sent her
- Was having an affair with Clara Neal (age 56)



The Killings

- Dorothy Blackburn (March 15, 1988)
 - Agreed to mutual oral sex for \$30
 - She bit his penis, drawing blood
 - He bit her vagina and then strangled her, causing her to lose consciousness
 - He threatened to kill her but she kept calling him names
 - He strangled her and eventually dumped the body into the river
 - Police discovered her body on March 24, 1988



- April, 1988 Fired from Brognia Produce when they discover his criminal past
- April, 1988 Has sex with a prostitute but does not kill her
- May, 1988 Gets a job with G&G Food Service as a salad maker (\$6.25 per hour)
- June 28, 1989 Has sex with a prostitute but does not kill her

- Anna Steffan (July 8, 1989)
 - 28-year old prostitute
 - Strangles her after she got frustrated by his lack of an erection after 40 minutes
 - She threatened to tell police that she saw him with Dorothy Blackburn
 - Dumps her body near the river
 - Body is discovered on September 9



- Dorothy Keller (July 29, 1989)
 - 59-year old housekeeper for Shawcross and Rose
 - She threatened to tell Rose about their 2-month long affair
 - Shawcross bludgeons her to death
 - Hid the body, went back to see it, threw her skull into the river
 - Body is discovered on October 31



August, 1989

- Art and Rose Marie Walley finally get married after two years of living together
- Art invited a lot of people to the reception (he made lots of food)
- Only the boyfriend of Rose's daughter and his mother attended

Patty Ives (September 29, 1989)

- 25-year old prostitute
- She tried to steal his wallet and had seen him with Anna Steffen
- Body found on November 6, 1989



June Stotts (October 23, 1989)

- 30-year old, mildly-retarded neighbor
- Strangled her after she was going to tell people they had sex
- Went back one week later, had sex, cut her open, and ate her vagina
- Body is discovered on November 23, 1989



Frances Brown (October, 1989)

- 22-year old prostitute
- Suffocates by pushing his penis deep into her throat
- Body found on November 13, 1989



Maria Welch (November 9, 1989)

- 22-year old prostitute
- Strangled her after she lied to him about having her period



Jo Ann Van Nostrand (November 22, 1989)

- Prostitute who survives Shawcross
- Has sex with her and ejaculates for the first time with a prostitute
- She pulls knife on him when she thinks he is trying to strangle her

Elizabeth Gibson (November 26, 1989)

- Prostitute
- Strangles her after she panicked and started to gauge his face
- Body found on November 27, 1989



Darlene Trippi (December 4, 1989)

- 32-year old prostitute
- Strangled after she made fun of him for not getting an erection



Felicia Stevens (December 26, 1989)

- 29-year old African-American prostitute
- Strangled her after she stuck her head in his car and threatened to yell rape if he didn't pay her

June Cicero (December 18, 1989)

- 34-year old prostitute
- Strangled after she made fun of him for not getting an erection and threatened to tell police who she was
- He returned a few days later, cut her up, and ate her vagina
- Police discover the body but do not publicize. Instead they stake-out the body
- Police helicopter spots Shawcross parked above the body on January 2, 1990



Summary of Killing (1989)

- March 15 Dorothy Blackburn (27)
- July 8 Anna Steffen (28)
- July 29 Dorothy Keller (59)
- Sept 29 Patty Ives (25)
- Oct 23 June Stotts (30)
- Oct Frances Brown
- Nov 9 Maria Welch (22)
- Nov 26 Elizabeth Gibson
- Dec 4 Darlene Trippi (32)
- Dec 18 June Cicero (34)
- Dec 26 Felicia Stevens

Arrest and Trial

- January 3, 1990
 - Shawcross arrested
- November, 1990
 - Trial begins
 - Shawcross found guilty and sentenced to 250 years
 - Sent to Sullivan Correctional Facility



Update

- July 10, 1997
 - Married Clara Neal in visitor's room. She was 66, he was 52
 - Clara: "It was nice and all. It took 10 years to make the grade but I finally did it."
- September 13, 1999
 - Had art privileges suspended after trying to sell his art on e-bay
- June 17, 2000
 - Released from solitary confinement and placed back into general population



Psychological Summary

- Genetics
 - XYY
 - Parents had no history of violence
- Birth Difficulties
 - Born 2 months premature
 - Weighed 5 pounds
 - Spent 20 days in the hospital
- Birth Order
 - First of four
 - Brother Jimmy
 - Sister Jeannie

Physiological

- Brain Abnormalities
 - EEG showed brain abnormality: “paroxysmal irritative patterns in bifrontotemporal areas—more in the right side”
 - CAT scan showed a slight asymmetry
 - MRI showed
 - a small subarachnoid cyst
 - a healed frontal lobe fracture
 - A slightly atrophied and foreshortened temporal lobe

Physiological

- Head Injuries
 - Age 9
 - Hit in head with stone
 - Received a concussion, stitches
 - Still has knot
 - Age 10
 - Hit head while at the lake
 - Hospitalized, but doctors could find nothing wrong
 - Age 16
 - Hit on the head with a discuss
 - Concussion—unconscious for many hours
 - Spent four days in the hospital with a hairline fracture
 - Age 18
 - Hit on head with a sledge hammer
 - Received a concussion and was unconscious for many hours
 - Age 22
 - Fell 40 feet from a ladder and hit head while in the army
 - Concussion and was unconscious for many hours

Physiological

- **Chemical Abnormalities**
 - **Pyroluria**
 - Elevated level of Kryptopyrrole (200) – 20 is high
 - Serious Vitamin B6 and zinc deficiencies
 - Pyrolurics have terrible behavior problems, can't control anger when provoked, have mood swings, tend to be night people, usually skip breakfast
 - **Exposed to lead while in Vietnam**
 - Slept in lead-lined ammunition crates
 - Hospitalized, but doctors could find nothing wrong
- **Physical Abnormalities**
 - None
- **Physical Attractiveness**
 - Neither attractive nor unattractive

- **Physical and Psychological Abuse**
 - Shawcross says yes
 - Family denies
 - Psychologists are not sure
- **Triad**
 - **Animal Torture**
 - Skinned fish and enjoyed watching them suffer
 - Tortured cats, birds, squirrels, and chipmunks
 - **Fire Setting**
 - Started brush and trash fires in his mid-teens
 - Burned down a barn and paper mill when he was 24
 - **Bed Wetting**
 - Wet his bed through his mid teens

Psychological Info

- **IQ**
 - 4th grade between 86 and 92
 - Age 48
 - Full scale = 95
 - Verbal = 88
 - Performance = 107
- **Diagnoses**
 - 20 Emotionally unstable personality
 - 27 Defective moral and social development
 - 32 Evidence of schizoid personality
 - 34 Abnormal character with psychosexual difficulties
 - 38 Is in good contact with reality and in good control of his mental facilities
 - 40 A lack of any emotional disturbance
 - 41 Orgasmic and ejaculatory problems
 - 42 Post-traumatic stress disorder
