

# Paula Sims

Oh! That a dream so sweet, so long  
enjoy'd , Should be so sadly,  
cruelly destroy'd!

Thomas Moore,  
*Lalla Rookh, 1817*



**Lorelei Sims**  
06/05/86 – 06/17/86



**Heather Sims**  
03/18/89 – 04/29/89

Information researched and summarized by  
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Date	Age	Life Event
05/21/1959	0	Born in Freeman, Missouri, last of three children, only girl
05/1966	7	Family moved to La Plata, Northeastern Missouri, sexually molested by grandfather
1972	13	Hung out with Randy, shoplifting, drinking and smoking Marijuana, became aggressive
73'/74'/75'	13-16	Began having sex during her freshman year. She excelled at basketball and softball. In 1974 she popped pills (mom's Valium); 1975
1975	16	Took LSD with boyfriend Evan Dow. Became interested in bikes and drag racing with brother Randy. Randy took job in Illinois, other brother Dennis had brain surgery for seizures; she used some of his medication.
04/10/1976	17	In a car wreck with Randy, who died at scene at the age of 19. Paula suffered fractures to her face and jaw. Randy's autopsy showed drugs and intoxication.
04/10/1976	17	Started closing herself off from friends and family, liked to be alone often, less aggressive, suicidal ideology.

05/1976	17	Family moved to Wood River, Illinois – Cottage Hills. Paula made new friends with June Bland and Rhonda Henson who she met in Civic Memorial High School. These became long-term friendships.
1977	18	Graduated from high school – name in yearbook, no picture – known as loner
1978	19	Went to Lewis and Clark Community College for a year, keypunch program. She did not finish program. Bought first car, blue '69 Maverick. Went to work as cashier at the National Food Store on Godfrey road in Godfrey.
1978/1979	19/20	Song came out called “Lorelei”, told her friend, June that she was going to name her first daughter Lorelei. Paula often spoke of having children, wanted girls. Her brother Dennis’s seizures became worse, causing her mother to become severely depressed.
1979/1980	20/21	Introduced to Robert “Rob” Sims by her friend June’s cousin. Paula and Rob went to rock concert together.
05/02/1981	22	Married Robert Sims
01/1983	24	Rob and Paula moved to Brighton, Illinois
01/1984	25	Called her friend June, and told her that she and Robert were planning on starting a family, because they bought a house and were financially stable. Became friends with Minnie and Don Gray, their neighbors. Minnie and Paula became fast friends, and Paula talked to her about children.
06/05/1986	27	First child, a daughter, Lorelei Marie Sims, was born at 6:03 p.m.
06/17/1986	27	Lorelei was stolen from the family’s home late at night, supposedly by a man dressed in black, who held a gun on Paula, forcing her to lie on the basement floor, while he then took Lorelei from the house. Paula ran to her neighbor’s home, the Grays, and told them that Lorelei had been taken by someone. Minnie Gray told her husband to call the police. Minnie went back to the Sims’ home after Paula to stay with her until the police arrived on the scene. She let out the family’s dog by accident, and Paula got him back in, stating I can’t lose you too. Minnie remembered Paula telling her that the dog barked at anyone who came near their home, and she asked Paula if the dog had barked, because she did not hear him. Paula said that he didn’t bark, because he must have been in another room in the basement and did not hear the intruder, which Minnie felt was very weird, because the dog barked all the time, and could not see how a man breaking into their home would go unnoticed by this dog.
06/24/1986	27	Lorelei’s remains were found. Not sure if actual date, it was week after she was reported kidnapped from her home. The skeletal remains were found 150 feet behind the family’s home in the woods. A raccoon had carried the body down the hill. Police were not sure when the baby had died, they theorized maybe two days before she was reported missing by the parents, making them the top suspects in the death of their daughter.
06/14/1986	27	Police later learned after investigating the murder of Lorelei, that Paula had taken the baby out to Jack’s Hallmark Card Shop, in Jerseyville, the morning of the 14 <sup>th</sup> , which was the day before father’s day. Paula had lied to the police, stating she had never taken the baby out of the house. This gave the police reason to doubt the Sims’ statements about the case. The Sims was already suspects in the police’s eyes, and this did not help them.
07/11/1986	27	Detective Gantner told the <i>Post-Dispatch</i> that there was no way to prove that the remains found on June 24 <sup>th</sup> were the remains of Lorelei. They were not able to set cause of death either. The only thing they had left to identify the remains was bone marrow to match blood type with the mother.
7/1986	27	Detectives Yocom and Plummer decided to contact the FBI, to see if there was another way to identify the remains. They were told of a new kind of test which was available using genetic factors in the blood. The test was only being performed in two laboratories at this time, one in Phoenix, and the other in Atlanta. They chose Dr. Schanfield at the Allo Type Genetic Testing, Inc. laboratory in Atlanta, to do the testing.
08/19/1986	27	Lorelei’s remains were delivered to the Allo laboratory, along with blood samples from Paula. Ten days later, the results arrived. Detective Yocom read through three pages of the report before finding the answer on the third page, it was Lorelei’s remains. It was 97.2 percent certain. Dr. Schanfield had stated that only 95 percent was required to be accepted in court as positive identification of the remains.
09/27/1986	27	Lorelei was buried in a private ceremony, at the Woodland Hills Cemetery, in East Alton.
01/1987	28	Robert and Paula moved to new home at 1053 Washington Avenue in Alton.

03/12/1987	28	Detective Plummer gave a subpoena to the Sims for more information only. He felt this might also serve as a reminder that the authorities were still watching them. The Sims went to the courthouse in Jerseyville. The Sims's lawyer Mr. Sherwood filed a motion to quash the subpoenas. This motion was denied by Circuit Court Judge Claude Davis.
06/17/1987	29	First anniversary of Lorelei's death.
02/01/1988	29	Second child was born, Randall Troy. Named after Paula's brother Randy, and Robert's father Troy. They were very happy at the birth of a son... Paula stated later on, that she had threatened Randall's life over crying.
03/18/1989	30	Third child, Heather was born.
04/29/1989	30	Heather was reported by Paula to have been taken from their home in Alton late at night. Paula had stated that she was taking out the trash and someone hit her in back of the head. Medical examiner found no forensic evidence to prove that Paula had been struck in the back of the head. Robert had corroborated her story, stating that when he got home she was found lying on the floor, and the baby was gone. They went to look for her, and then called the police. Eerily similar events to three years before, where Paula had stated someone had kidnapped Lorelei.
05/03/1989	30	Heather's remains were found at Lock & Dam 26, at Alton lake. Found by Charles Saunders at 7:00 p.m. in a trash barrel near the edge of the parking lot, in a black trash bag. The body shows signs of frost bite, where the medical examiner believed she may have been put into a freezer and kept there for a few days. Paula's DNA was found on the trash bag the baby was found in.
01/11/1990	30	Paula is charged with the death of Heather. She was only suspected in the death of Lorelei, and was never charged due to lack of forensic evidence. Paula went to court in Peoria, Illinois. Judge Andy Matoesian presided over the case. Prosecutor was Donald Weber, and Defense for Paula was Donald Groshong. The case was in court for a little over two days. The jury deliberated for ten hours. Robert was not charged in the deaths, even though he was suspected of being an accomplice. The police believed he helped hide the babies' bodies.
01/31/1990	30	Paula was found guilty of first degree murder in the death of Heather. She was also charged with obstruction of justice and concealing a homicide. No charges had been filed on this date for the death of Lorelei, due to lack of forensic evidence.
02/1990	30	Paula admitted to killing her infant daughter Lorelei on 06/17/86, and admitted to killing her daughter Heather on 04/29/89. She stated that it was post-partum depression for both deaths, and that she had post-partum with her son Randall, and had threatened him after he would not stop crying one day, but was able to control herself enough to keep from killing him as well.
02/1990	30	Paula received a sentence of life without parole. Robert obtained custody of Randall. She was convicted on one count of first degree murder, two counts of obstructing justice, and one count of concealing a homicide, as well as three counts of obstructing justice.
06/11/2001	42	Appeal heard, <i>People vs. Sims</i> , in the Appellate court of Illinois, Fifth district. The appeal was made by Paula stating ineffective assistance of counsel by her attorney Donald Groshong. The judge denied post-conviction relief. She wanted a new trial to prove she suffered from post-partum depression psychosis.
10/17/2006	47	Sims asks the Illinois Prisoner Review Board for clemency.

### General Information

Sex	Female
Race	White
Number of victims	2
Country where killing occurred	United States
States where killing occurred	Illinois
Cities where killing occurred	Alton
Type of killer	Organized – Visionary (heard voices telling her to kill) stated by Paula, "Due to post-partum psychosis I had auditory and visual hallucinations. Voices told me to hurt them and said that I was a bad mother. I visualized demons. Dead children and a masked gunman. At times I was kind of

	normal but those times were fewer and fewer as the days progressed.”
Height	5’9”
<b>Childhood Information</b>	
Date of birth	May 21, 1959
Location	Freeman, Missouri
Birth order	Last of three children
Number of siblings	2 brothers
XYY?	No
Raised by	Both parents
Birth category	Youngest, only girl
Parent’s marital status	Married
Did serial killer spend time in an orphanage?	No
Did serial killer spend time in a foster home?	No
Was serial killer ever raised by a relative?	No
Did serial killer ever live with adopted family?	No
Did serial killer live with a step-parent?	No
Family event	Car accident, lost her brother, Randy, suffered multiple facial fractures
Age of family event	17
Problems in school?	No
Teased while in school?	No
Physically attractive?	Yes
Physical defect?	No
Speech defect?	No
Head injury?	Airbag caused multiple facial fractures, required surgery for jaw
Physically abused?	Sexually abused by grandfather, fondled
Psychologically abused?	Grandfather tormented her with threats of sexual assault, would masturbate where she could see him, would show his penis to her
Sexually abused?	Fondled by grandfather, short of penetration
Father’s occupation	Amoco Oil Company
Age when first had intercourse	15
Mother’s occupation	Stay at home mom
Father abused drugs/alcohol	No
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	No
<b>Cognitive Abil</b>	
Highest grade in school	Graduated high school, and attended one year of community college
Highest degree	Diploma
Grades in school	A/B student before grandfather’s sexual abuse began
IQ	Fairly bright, as stated by her teachers
Source of IQ information	Weber, Bosworth (pg. 31)
<b>Work History</b>	
Served in the military?	No
Branch	N/A
Type of discharge	N/A
Saw combat duty	N/A
Killed enemy during service?	N/A
Applied for job as a cop?	No
Worked in law enforcement?	No

Fired from jobs?	Yes, found undercharging co-workers and friends as cashier in grocery store, National Foods Store
Types of jobs worked	Clerk at National Foods Store
Employment status during series	Unemployed, stay at home mom
<b>Relationships</b>	
Sexual preference	Heterosexual
Marital status	Divorced
Number of children	1 living, 2 deceased
Lives with her children	No, husband has custody of son
Living with	Spouse and son before imprisonment
<b>Triad</b>	
Animal torture	No, loved animals
Fire setting	No
Bed wetting	No
<b>Killer Psychological Information</b>	
Abused drugs?	Yes
Abused alcohol?	Yes
Been to a psychologist (prior to killing)?	No
Time in forensic hospital (prior to killing)?	No
Diagnosis	N/A
<b>Killer Criminal History (Prior to the series)</b>	
Committed previous crimes?	Yes, shoplifting, undercharging co-workers and friends
Spent time in jail?	No, arrested for shoplifting, but was released to her parents
Spent time in prison?	No
Killed prior to series? Age?	No
<b>Serial Killing</b>	
Number of victims (suspected of)	2
Number of victims (confessed to)	2
Number of victims (convicted of)	1
Victim type	Infant daughters
Killer age at start of series	28
Killer age at end of series	31
Date of first kill in series	06/17/1986
Date of final kill in series	04/29/1989
Gender of victims	Female
Race of victims	Caucasian
Age of victims	Loralei was 13 days, and Heather was 6 weeks
Type of victim	Family - child
Method of killing	Asphyxiation, hand over nose and mouth of infants
Weapon	No weapon
Was gun used?	No
Type	N/A
Did killer have a partner?	No
Name of partner	
Sex of partner	
Relationship of partner	
Type of serial killer	Organized - Visionary
How close did killer live?	In same home, parent
Location of first contact	Basement of family's home
Location of killing	Inside home/uncertain, possibly basement where baby

	slept
Killing occurred in home of victim?	Yes
Killing occurred in home of killer?	Yes
Victim abducted or killed at contact?	At contact
Behavior During Crimes	
Rape?	No
Tortured victims?	No
Stalked victims?	No
Overkill?	No
Quick & efficient?	Yes
Used blindfold?	No
Bound the victims?	No
After Death Behavior	
Sex with the body?	No
Mutilated body?	No
Ate part of the body?	No
Drank victim's blood?	No
Posed the body?	No
Took totem – body part	No
Took totem – personal item	No
Robbed victim or location	No
Disposal of Body	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	No
Left at scene, hidden	No
Left at scene, buried	No
Moved, no attempt to hide	Loralei, moved to woods, left on top of ground, not buried
Moved, hidden	Yes, Heather was left in a garbage can, not near the home
Moved, buried	No
Cut-up and disposed of	No
Burned body	No
Dumped body in lake, river, etc.	Woods behind home in a ravine, and parking lot garbage can at the lake
Moved, took home	No
Sentencing	
Date killer arrested	07/08/1989
Date convicted	01/31/1990
Sentence	Life without parole
Killer executed?	No
Did killer plead NGRI?	No
Was the NGRI plea successful?	No
Did serial killer confess?	Yes, after conviction
Name and state of prison	Dwight Correctional Center, Illinois
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death	Alive, in prison serving natural life term
Cause of death	N/A

## References

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