

I'm not a bot



## Sylvia likens body

**Sylvia likens summary.** **Sylvia likens height.** **Parents of sylvia likens.** **Sylvia likens body found.** **Sylvia likens cast.** **Sylvia likens storia.** **Sylvia likens case body.**

In July '65, fair concessionaires Lester & Betty Likens left their kids Sylvia & Jenny with Gertrude Baniszewski (37), a divorced mom of seven, on East New York Street. On Oct 26, police found Sylvia's battered body in an empty bedroom upstairs. She had severe cuts, bruises, cigarette burns, scald marks, and malnutrition - a "3" was carved on her chest & she'd been branded with that on her stomach. The official cause of death was a subdural hematoma from a blow to the temple. Over several days, police took the Baniszewski family & eight neighborhood kids into custody; Anna Cisco, Michael Monroe, Randy Lepper, and Judy Duke were charged with injury to a person. Gertrude's youngest kids Marie, Shirley, James, and Dennis were placed in foster homes. A grand jury indicted Gertrude, her daughters Paula & Stephanie, son John Jr., Coy Hubbard, and Richard Hobbs on first-degree murder charges in Dec '65. The highly publicized trial drew national attention; Gertrude had supervised neighborhood kids torturing Sylvia in the basement for weeks without access to food or water. Neighbors were aware of Likens' condition but didn't intervene. Gertrude was found guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced to life imprisonment, but her judgment was reversed on appeal & a new trial ordered with a change of venue in '70. She was granted parole in '85 despite a public petition protest, and died from lung cancer in Iowa in June 1990 at age 60. In 1970, she pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter following a retrial in 1971, receiving a sentence of 2-21 years. She twice escaped from prison and was granted parole two years later. Stephanie Baniszewski, who testified for the state, was found not guilty and released. Coy Hubbard, Richard Hobbs, and John Baniszewski Jr. were convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to 2-21 years. They served 18 months before being released on parole in 1967. Coy Hubbard died from a heart attack in 2007, while Richard Hobbs died of lung cancer at age 21 in 1972. John Baniszewski Jr. lived under an alias, becoming a lay minister and hosting counseling sessions for children of divorced parents. He died of diabetes in 2005 at age 52. In 2007, the movie "An American Crime" debuted at Sundance, and Starz released "The Girl Next Door," based on Jack Ketcham's novel about the infamous murder. A monument to Sylvia Marie Likens stands near a house where she was tortured and eventually killed. Several movies, true crime stories, novels, and books have been written about her story, including one by defense lawyer Forrest Bowman Jr. and Kate Millett's "The Basement: The Story of a Human Sacrifice." John Dean's book, "House of Evil: The Indiana Torture Slaying," simply reports the events without attempting to explain them. Gertrude Baniszewski and Richard Hobbs were arrested in connection with the murder of Sylvia Likens, a 16-year-old girl who was tortured and murdered over a three-week period. Investigators found that several members of the household, including at least three of her children, took part in the beatings and torture of Sylvia while she was bound and gagged. Hobbs, 15, admitted to beating Sylvia "10 or 20 times" and carving words on her stomach with a needle. The case remains one of the most heinous crimes in American history, highlighting the darker aspects of human nature and the failure of social services to protect vulnerable children. The gruesome details of Sylvia Likens' torture and murder were revisited by Kate Millett in her writings. Notably, Sara L. Knox's book "Murder: A Tale of Modern American Life" devotes considerable space to the infamous case despite not focusing on its news coverage. Instead, it delves into The Basement, where the destroyed body of a girl is vividly described, contrasting with Millett's inability to look away from the same image. Notably, Knox spells the last name of Likens' torturer as Gertrude Baniewski, with a notable typo. A discussion on the detachment required when studying violence surfaces in an academic paper, raising questions about how detached one should be and whether reiterating such details is more than "straining." The case of Sylvia Likens has been subject to a leering fascination that blends moral outrage with titillation, turning into prurient voyeurism. The nuances of the trial are highlighted, particularly in regards to the status of Sylvia's hymen and the confusion surrounding the surname of the accused woman, Gertrude Baniszewski or Wright. Gertrude Baniszewski, mother of seven, was convicted for her role in the murder of 16-year-old Sylvia Likens in 1965. Her metamorphosis from Gertrude to Mrs. G. and back to Gertrude lasted only four months. She gave birth to two more children with her second husband, Mr. Gutherie, before reuniting with her first husband, Officer B. The courts eventually settled on Baniszewski as the surname for Sylvia's offspring, six of whom were born during their relationship. Gertrude's baby was not officially recognized as Dennis Wright due to his unknown father. Her mother and siblings also contributed to Sylvia's abuse, with Paula, John Jr., and two neighbor boys being tried for murder. Gertrude received a 20-year sentence and became known as "Mom" among fellow inmates. After her release, she changed her name like the others. He had initially thought the damage was done by "a madman." After seeing the court photos of the dead girl, he said only someone completely detached from reality could inflict such agony on another person. He stressed "person," not "people," and contrasted this with the lone gunman who can be kept at bay due to mental illness. What about a mob of underage kids, directed by a 37-year-old woman, that terrorized a victim in Indianapolis? Gustave le Bon's theory in The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind suggests that groups are driven by an unconscious force created by a contagion of feeling. This can lead to irrational and volatile behavior, making crowds seem almost hypnotic. Gabriel Tarde expanded on this idea, stating that society is essentially imitation. Leaders influence followers, who then adopt these behaviors. On August 5, 1966, students in Beijing brutally attacked school administrators, leaving one teacher dead and others severely injured. had been given permission. They had the state on their side (Youqun Yang, "Student Attacks on Teachers: The Revolution of 1966," University of Chicago, Issues and Studies 37, 2001). Does Gertie told me to constitute authoritative permission under the roof of a single-family house? Gustave Le Bon believed in suggestion, an underground message that infects crowds. Tarde posited imitation rays moving through society. Imitation can be sonnambulism. I think it's my thought and action, but it's not. I am under the influence of contagious rays with magical properties to sway my will. Long ago in the city of L, there lived a poor man and his wife with their five children. They decided to leave the children behind and join a traveling carnival to make ends meet. Their oldest girl had married, and their boys lived with grandparents. The two youngest daughters, Sylvia and Jenny, had nowhere to stay. Sylvia was a pretty, obedient girl who liked music and dancing. She helped her mother keep house and watched over her little sister Jenny, who wore a leg brace and walked with a limp. One summer day, Sylvia and Jenny met Stephanie, a merry mischievous girl who took them home. After sunset, the man went out looking for his daughters, found their whereabouts, and knocked at the door of Gertrude's house. An ugly woman appeared, but her sweet voice calmed him. He asked after his daughters, and Gertrude agreed to watch over them for twenty dollars a week. Father and mother bid goodbye and promised to return before autumn leaves fell. Gertrude was a powerful witch who beat Sylvia and Jenny when the money didn't arrive and again when it did. But she turned her wrath on Sylvia as time passed because she couldn't bear her youth and beauty. Most people prefer stories with a clear resolution. The evil witch is defeated or punished. Virtue is rewarded, and justice is served. This type of narrative provides a sense of moral learning and justice done. However, some stories feature an unjust outcome, where the hero faces insurmountable challenges. This narrative approach explores cause and effect in a more nuanced way. A classic example of this type of story can be found in the true story of Sylvia Likens. The case highlights the devastating consequences of emotional contagion and the dangers of blindly following authority. In this story, Marie Baniszewski, Sylvia's mother, used manipulation and coercion to control her daughter, ultimately leading to her tragic death. The concept of emotional contagion is a real phenomenon that was studied in a 1993 book by E. Hatfield, J. Cacioppo, and R. L. Rapson. They found that people have an innate tendency to mimic the emotions and behaviors of others. This phenomenon can be observed in newborns and is also present in parent-infant relationships. In conclusion, stories with unjust outcomes serve as a reminder that life is often complex and nuanced. By exploring these narratives, we can gain a deeper understanding of human behavior and the importance of empathy and self-regulation. However, it's worth noting that this type of story is not often told in mainstream media, instead, more conventional narrative structures are favored. I see you, I imitate you, I feel what you feel. Unconscious imitation starts early, even before a child speaks. Mothers and infants synchronize heartbeat rates, mirroring each other's gestures, feelings, sounds, and glances. This phenomenon is not limited to humans; it can be observed in animals as well. Emotional contagion is a real and widespread issue. Epidemiologist Gary Slutkin says that violence is contagious, spreading from one person to another like a disease. The study on gunshot episodes in Chicago found that social contagion accounted for 61.1% of the incidents between 2006 and 2014. Scientists have been studying this phenomenon, including neuroscientist Marco Iacoboni, who suggests that mirror neurons may play a crucial role in our ability to imitate and empathize with others. This concept is often referred to as mimesis or imitative behavior, which is hardwired into human nature. The victims of violence are particularly vulnerable, as they can't distinguish themselves from their attackers through mirroring. For example, when children mirror "Gertie" (not Sylvia) in the study on biological mirror mechanism, it's a clear case of unconscious contagion. This issue is not limited to the past; it's still relevant today. The Charlottesville protest is another example of this phenomenon. The marchers were carrying torches and chanting anti-Semitic slogans, creating an atmosphere of inflamed hatred that led to the tragic murder of counterprotester Heather Heyer. René Noël Théophile Girard's work on mimetic desire sheds light on this issue. His ideas on how humans are often driven by a desire to imitate others and be part of a group can help us understand why violence spreads so easily in certain situations. Mimetic desire is a fundamental concept in Girard's theory, suggesting that humans are inherently imitators who crave something missing in themselves or others. This longing can lead to vengeful rivalry and contagious violence when one individual seeks to possess an inner quality or attribute they lack. According to Girard, this phenomenon can only be relieved through the scapegoat mechanism, where a vulnerable person is blamed for the community's collective guilt, and their punishment brings about a sense of cleansing and harmony. The myth surrounding Sylvia Likens' story seems to explain too much, but beneath its surface lies some truth. Rene Girard's interpretation of human violence touches upon this reality. Sylvia was indeed used as a scapegoat, and the true horror of her case is not just about murder, but about a ritual killing that reflects deep-seated societal problems. The story raises questions about how such killings can occur without any clear ritualistic context, leading one to wonder if the woman who orchestrated these events, Gertrude Baniszewski, was driven by a desire for power or humiliation. The contrast between Sylvia's life and death is stark. On one hand, she was depicted as shy, the odd one in her family, and someone who struggled with her appearance due to missing front teeth that her parents couldn't afford to fix. This portrayal suggests she was somehow less than others, emphasizing her cleanliness and virtue. However, those who actually knew her described her differently: she was good at ironing, went to church, owned a Bible, and was orderly. Her father praised her skill with ironing, while her mother highlighted her cleanliness. The trial testimony reveals more about the people involved in Sylvia's tragic story than it does about her. Gertrude Baniszewski, the adult leader of the group, denied any involvement, claiming the children had fabricated their stories and that she was too ill to participate. Her gaunt appearance and chain-smoking habits were highlighted in the media, further reinforcing her image as an ogress from a Grimm brothers' tale. The photographs of Sylvia and Gertrude serve as stark reminders of the people behind this story. Sylvia's smiling face, despite missing teeth, conveys a sense of joy and vivacity, which is contrasted with the scowling visage of Gertrude Baniszewski, who seems to embody evil in her own right. Ultimately, the story of Sylvia Likens serves as a reminder of the dangers of scapegoating and the ease with which societal problems can escalate into violent acts when left unchecked. It also highlights the complexities of human nature, where individuals like Gertrude Baniszewski can be driven by desires for power or humiliation, leading to tragic consequences. Was she nice? A girl who'd always tidy up before us kids got home, and helped around the house. But what happens when someone as sweet as her gets hurt? That's how Sylvia was described by Marie - a "real nice girl." But it's a description that can be both comforting and suffocating. It's the kind of girl who'd sit quietly in church without complaint, but also one who could easily get overlooked or ignored. I remember my own childhood in small-town Minnesota; it was similar to Sylvia's world - neat, orderly, and bound by rules. But what lies beneath that surface? Is she just a faceless, obedient girl, willing to please everyone else but herself? The true story of Sylvia Likens is one of horror and neglect, where even the "nice" ones can become victims. It highlights how easily a system can fail, leaving behind the most vulnerable. The brutal act of slapping her in th face! She's not som emotionally disturbed 4 year old, you know? My own daughter and her friends age 10 could hav gang ed up on those bastards, I no this by hart someone you love, your own sistir. The tw discussants, true crime wachers, hate Gertrude and Paula and Ricky Hobbs and Coy Hubbard and th neighbor kids who participated in or watched th crimes take place, but they also hate Jenny. They hate her passiv. Sylvia was passive to, but shes' the victim. If Jenny had really loved her sistir, she would hav acted. The societal expectations placed on girls and young women can be overwhelming, often resulting in feelings of shame and guilt. Millett suggests that this "back of the cave" mentality can lead to a double standard where women are held to different moral codes than men. The rigid rules and punishments for girls were designed to suppress their sexuality, labeling them as dirty, promiscuous, or evil if they dared to express themselves freely. The fear of being discovered and judged by others is ever-present, particularly from older women who view young girls as guilty of something even before they understand what that something is. As Millett notes, this leads to a sense of suffocating morality that perpetuates violence against women. The hatred and intolerance towards women are still present today, manifesting in threats and violence against feminist bloggers. The connection between beliefs and actions can be complex, with ideas and ideologies often serving as justifications for violent behavior. As Gertrude so vividly illustrates, the act of condemning someone for being different can lead to shame and persecution. This same dynamic is at play among some white evangelicals who spew hatred towards dark foreigners. In her analysis of Melanie Klein's psychoanalytic theories, Nancy Chodorow highlights the importance of understanding rage, splitting, projection, and introjection in shaping our interactions with others. By recognizing these mechanisms, we can gain insight into why certain groups demonize their enemies and perpetuate harm against vulnerable populations. Given article text here The distinction between good and evil is often rooted in projection, where those who are part of the group assign negative qualities to outsiders, perpetuating racism, nationalism, and ethnic conflict. This mentality can also be used to ward off perceived threats. The author highlights the role of misogyny and homophobia as ways to contain anxiety-inducing desires within oneself. A notable example is Larry Craig's arrest for soliciting gay sex, which illustrates how virulent forms of prejudice can manifest in public figures. Similarly, Gertrude Baniszewski's treatment of Sylvia Likens, including physical abuse and torture, highlights the dangers of contagion and the normalization of violence against vulnerable individuals. The socioeconomic circumstances of the actors involved in the case do not seem to have contributed directly to the brutal murder. Rather, it appears that systemic factors such as poverty, unemployment, and lack of financial security were merely part of the broader context. Todorov reflects on acts of kindness among people brutalized in concentration camps, highlighting ordinary gestures like sharing food. He notes that even under extreme conditions, individuals can choose to share or hoard resources, and that caring is a distinct concept from group solidarity or sacrifice. Todorov emphasizes the importance of empathy, stating that caring makes the giver happy. The text also discusses individual acts of kindness among guards and others in positions of power who perpetrated monstrous acts during the same period. It questions what defines us as individuals, whether we know our true nature, and when urges become actions. The passage ends with a reflection on the threshold between thinking and doing, using examples from personal experiences and historical narratives. In "In the Penal Colony," Sylvia's plight is a haunting reminder of the brutal reality faced by those deemed undesirable. The teenagers' fervent admiration for Chairman Mao and their willingness to quote from the Little Red Book on buses convey a sense of zealotry. However, Sylvia's life in the Baniszewski household is marked by cruelty and indifference. The lack of empathy displayed towards Sylvia is striking, with no one offering her aid or comfort. Even Mrs. Vermillion, an adult neighbor, failed to intervene despite witnessing Sylvia's physical abuse. The family pastor, Roy Julian, also turned a blind eye to the situation, his testimony at the trial revealing his tacit approval of severe punishment for wayward children. Sylvia's "difference" in this household was not due to her background or identity but rather her individuality. Her fate serves as a stark warning against the dangers of unchecked conformity and the devastating consequences of ignoring human rights violations. Gertrude was asked about child traffic during the trial, and she admitted to telling her children to stay away from the victim, Sylvia. Gertrude claimed she couldn't take the noise anymore and had tried to lock doors, but she also said she didn't care if anyone else suffered because of it. She believed that she could bind people together with love as long as there were others left to receive the manifestations of their aggressiveness. However, her actions showed a different story. Her face was worn and covered in sores, reflecting her inner turmoil. The victim, Sylvia, had been subjected to brutal treatment, including being forced to eat family "demons" or simply exist as a means to an end. Gertrude's actions were part of the crime, which included branding the victim with a burning needle and forcing them to work as a prostitute. Despite her claims of innocence, Gertrude had made Sylvia into a pawn in their twisted game. The boundaries between self and other became blurred, leaving the question of who truly owned "T". In a notorious case at 3850, an indoor "blood sport" has gained notoriety. The victim's mangled body raises questions about her fate. A woman dictates a letter to the girl for her parents, but the recipient remains unaware of the mistake in address. The writer fabricates a tale of boys who exploited the girl sexually and then brutally assaulted her, an account stolen from sensationalized news sources. The girl writes down this fabricated narrative without realizing it's not hers. The pencil moves across the page to form words that reveal her attempts to provoke Gertie and incur financial losses. This unsigned letter discloses Gertrude Baniszewski's narcissistic tendencies, as everything revolves around Gertie. Gertrude is not a cunning criminal who plotted the perfect crime. Instead, she's an ordinary individual driven by malignant self-interest. The absurd letter highlights her preoccupation with Gertie and her own interests. In this context, the suspects' identities merge into Gertrude, representing a hydra-like figure with multiple heads. The criminal is a collective entity comprising Gertie, the kids, Sylvia, and others, acting in concert like a swarm of bees or geese. This narrative blurs lines between perpetrator and victim. René Girard's concept of cathartic violence comes to mind, where spectators are sated by violence, whether real or imaginary. Afterward, they return home, appeased, and smug about the perceived justice served. In this context, I don't believe the group at 3850 would have tortured a white boy. Instead, it was a girl in this particular hierarchy, where brutal morality serves as the whip that transforms clean, obedient girls into victims. Into a vessel of darkness and chaos, Sylvia's fate was sealed in those final hours of her life. Gertrude and others forced her back into the house as she desperately tried to flee. Later, she attempted to alert the Vermillions with a makeshift warning signal on the basement ceiling. Mrs. Vermillion testified that she heard strange noises from next door the night before Sylvia's death. The Vermillions didn't call the police despite the commotion. As the sounds ceased, it was as if the chaos had vanished into thin air. Sylvia's own words were echoed by her sobbing sister: "Jenny, I know you don't want me to die, but I'm going to die." Her tormentors, John Baniszewski, Coy Hubbard, and Richard Hobbs, received varying sentences for their role in her death. They were released after 18 months. Paula, convicted of second-degree murder, was paroled after serving two years. The case is a stark reminder that even in the 1960s, societal attitudes towards punishment and justice were flawed. The house where this tragedy unfolded has since been demolished, but its dark legacy lives on. Sylvia's story has become an urban legend of sorts, with some deeming her a martyr to ending child abuse. Others see her as a saint, not in the classical sense, but in the context of her brutal ordeal. The parallels between Sylvia's torture and that of Saint Agnes are striking, with both women enduring unimaginable pain while remaining steadfast in their faith. For some, Sylvia has become an icon, symbolizing resilience and courage in the face of unfathomable horror. They used to tell stories where good people got what's coming to them, but that's not how it really is down here. People get hurt, and it's often not fair. Rene Girard wrote that we all have our own personal reasons for turning against someone else. I'm wondering if that girl in my third-grade class was just like me - scared of being told what to do and too afraid to speak up. It's the same with crowds, whether they're at a rally or online. They get worked up over something and then turn on their victim. Sylvia Likens was held captive for months by her so-called caregiver, Gertrude Baniszewski. In 1965, Sylvia died after being starved and abused. Her death led to changes in the way police and prosecutors handled cases like hers. People got angry because it could have been any of them or their children. There were books and movies made about her story. Before that summer, Sylvia was just a normal teenager. She listened to music, skated, did chores, and hung out with friends. But things changed when she moved in with Baniszewski's family. They started beating her because they didn't get paid for taking care of her like they thought they should be. Then, people around her started turning against her - her sisters, their boyfriends even joined in. It got so bad that Sylvia was raped and starved. She would eat out of trash cans just to survive. Sylvia Baniszewski was subjected to unimaginable physical and emotional abuse by her aunt, Patricia, who eventually took control of her life. The young girl was forced to endure humiliating acts, including burns and torture, which led to her eventual death at the hands of her own family members.