

**Keith Hunter Jesperson**  
*"Happy Face Killer"*



Information summarized by  
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Date	Age	Life Event
04-06-55	0	Keith was born in Chilliwack, British Columbia to the parents of Les and Gladys Jesperson
1961	5-6	Started to kill and torture animals -bashed in gopher heads -nailed crows to a board and threw knives at them -nailed cats and small dogs to a board and stuck them with nails and needles -favorite thing was to crimp a couple of cats' tails together with wire and hang them over a rope. They'd claw each other until one was dead. (Dad witnessed him throw a cat against the pavement, and finished it off by strangling it to death, and then dad bragged about it to others)
No specific date		Keith's father Les drank heavily, dominated his family, looked down on women, put his kids down with sarcasm and wisecracks, Keith received little attention from father compared to siblings
No specific date		Keith's earliest memory was of rolling a rock down a slide in a play park. It hit his little brother Brad on the head, drawing blood and making him cry
No specific date		Keith's father shocked him in greenhouse- father claimed it was only 12 volts, Keith claims 220
No specific date		Family moved from Canada to Washington, into a trailer park against Keith's will
No specific date		all classmates teased him and called him crude nicknames In elementary school Keith was teased for being oversized -was content to play alone and was unusually shy
1964	9	Keith called a lady a "bitch" and her 16 year old son jumped out of his car, slugged him and kicked him twice with pointy toed cowboy boots (father beat Keith until he couldn't scream anymore)
No specific		Frequently played with mischievous boy named Martin who always blamed Keith for his wrong-doings and Keith would get 'belted' in front of everyone.

date		-Keith beat Martin unconscious-says he would have killed Martin if his father didn't pull him off
1966	11	Keith's father charged him and his brothers room and board to teach them the value of money (later found out he had been paying far longer than his brothers were required to)
No specific date		Keith and some schoolmates were forced to strip off their clothes by a neighbor dairyman who also stripped his own clothes. The neighbor asked the kids to touch his genitals, but Keith ran
No specific date		Keith's dad gave him a BB gun and he shot a neighbor in the genitals, and also shot an overweight neighbor bending over to pick raspberries
No specific date		A boy held Keith's head under water while swimming at a lake until he 'saw black'. Keith realized he had to stand up to this bully so at the public swimming pool Keith held him under water until a lifeguard pulled him off. Keith said he had every intention of drowning him (2 <sup>nd</sup> attempt at murder)
1968-69?	13-14	In 7 <sup>th</sup> grade, Keith's friend Tom Hagger introduced him to shoplifting
1969	14	Shot an arrow with an exploding tip at the home of one of his teachers
1969	14	A classmate's recollection of Keith: "he could be bright when he wanted to, but then he would do something stupid. He'd be too kind or too mean, too generous or too stingy. You never saw the in-between...I always wondered if he was in control of his own brain, if he might've had brain damage. He sure acted like it"
No specific date		Strange fascination with fires-his grandpa did too
No specific date		Sexual sadism in Keith traced to Great Uncle Charlie
Middle school		Got rejected by every girl he liked, and never went to a prom or a dance
1969	14	Had sexual intercourse for first time-described it as rape in his later writings
No specific date		Started experimenting with pipe bombs and cannons
1971-72	16-17	Keith's lifelong companion (only friend) Duke, his Labrador retriever was shot by his dad because he said he was dragging and didn't look good-dad claimed he looked as if he got into some poison
1972-73	17-18	Keith was always teased about not being able to reach the top of the rope they had to climb for wrestling practice-so one day he did and the rope pulled lose from the bracket and he fell 25 ft. to the hardwood floor, he slammed his head hard on the side
1972-73	17-18	Keith graduated with a rank of 161 in a class of 174- I.Q was 102
No specific date		Dad never sent him to college, said he "can't do it"
1985	30	Keith's mom Gladys died-didn't have much remorse
1986	31	Got married to a woman named Rose. Had 3 children.
1990	35	Keith filed for divorce from Rose
No Specific Date		Took up truck driving in long-haul trucking outfit in Cheney, Washington
1-23-90	35	1 <sup>st</sup> murder. Keith raped and killed (by strangulation) Taunja Bennett- Portland, Oregon He also punched her in the head 20 times to the point where he could no longer recognize her face. The fact that she was slightly retarded sexually excited Keith.

		Laverne Pavlinic made up a story about this and said that her and her live-in boyfriend, John Sosnovske, committed the murder in order for him to move out- even if it meant jail time.
July-August 1992	37	2nd murder, 'Jane Doe' (later known as Claudia) in Blythe, California. Keith raped and eventually choked her to death.
September 1992	37	3 <sup>rd</sup> murder. Body found of Cynthia Lyn Rose in Turlock, California. Keith choked Cynthia because she came in his struck while he was sleeping, after previously telling her he wasn't interested in her or having sexual relations. He wrote letters to <i>The Oregonian</i> claiming that Cynthia was a prostitute that he picked up and murdered- signed it with a happy face.
First week in Nov. 1992	37	4 <sup>th</sup> murder. Keith strangled Laurie Ann Pentland when she wanted to charge him double the price for the sex they had- she kept threatening to call the police and Keith snapped. Salem, Oregon
July 1993	38	5 <sup>th</sup> murder. 'Jane Doe' found in Santa Nella, California. State highway patrol listed her as an OD 'street person.'
9-14-94	39	6 <sup>th</sup> murder. 'Jane Doe' found west of Crestview, Florida. Keith later claims her name was 'Susanne.'
January 1995	39	7 <sup>th</sup> murder. Picked up a girl named Angela Surbrize near Spokane, Washington. She rode with him for about a week until she kept nagging him to hurry up and get to Indiana to be with her boyfriend. So he forced sex upon her and then choked her. Keith tied her body to under the truck and drug her- placed her nose down to "grind off her face and prints."
3-10-95	39	8th murder. Choked fiancée Julie Ann Winningham, Washougal, Washington. -he really liked her but it became apparent she was only after Keith's money. First valuable link because it was someone Keith knew.
3-22-95	39	Keith was arrested for questioning in his fiancée Julie Winningham's death, then was released and headed to Arizona. Detective Buckner detained Jesperson for 6 hours with no confession- Las Cruces, New Mexico. Keith attempted suicide by overdosing on sleeping pills- said body rejected sleeping aids.
03-23-95	39	2nd attempt at suicide.
03-24-95	39	Jesperson wrote an incriminating letter to his brother Brad, confessing all of the murders. After writing the letter, confessed to Detective Buckner about the murder of Julie Ann Winningham. Conchise County, Arizona.
03-30-95	39	Detective Buckner took Jesperson into custody and returned him to Washington State.
No specific date		Keith's brother Brad turned the incriminating letter over to police
No specific date		While in jail, Jesperson confessed to the murder of Angela Surbrize.
September 1995	40	Angela Surbrize's body was found by the details that were given by Jesperson.
No specific date		Keith became upset that other people were getting the attention for a murder he committed, so he wrote on a bathroom stall that he killed Taunja and that he enjoyed it and signed it with just a smiley face. Led investigators to Taunja Bennett's purse to release the innocent people from prison who were found guilty of her murder.
No specific date		Claimed 160 murders (later recanted most confessions)
October 1995	40	Pleaded guilty to Julie Ann Winningham's murder. Clark County, Washington.
11-02-95	40	Entered a no contest plea for the murder of Taunja Bennett. Received life in prison, Multnomah County, Oregon.

No specific date		Received life in prison for the murder of Laurie Ann Pentland.
December 1995	40	Received life in prison for the murder of Julie Ann Winningham.
06-03-98	42	Received life sentence for the murder of Angela Subrise.
<b>Serial Killer Information</b>		
Sex	Male	
Race	White	
Number of victims	8	
Country where killing occurred	United States	
States where killing occurred	Oregon, California, Florida, Washington	
Type of killer	serial	
Height	6'6"	
<b>Childhood Information</b>		
Date of birth	April 6, 1955	
Location	Chilliwack, British Columbia	
Birth order		
Number of siblings	4	
XYY?	Unknown, but not specifically mentioned	
Raised by	mother and father (Les and Gladys)	
Birth category	Not noted	
Parent's marital status	Married	
Family event	Nothing notable until mother's death	
Age of family event	30	
Problems in school?	yes	
Teased while in school?	yes	
Physically attractive?	Not really, very oversized	
Physical defect?	no	
Speech defect?	no	
Head injury?	Fell off rope in wrestling practice (25ft to hardwood floor)	
Physically abused?	yes	
Psychologically abused?	Yes, father treated him less than other siblings	
Sexually abused?	no	
Father's occupation	Not noted	
Age of first sexual experience	14	
Age when first had intercourse	14	
Mother's occupation	Not noted	
Father abused drugs/alcohol	Yes, alcohol	
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	Not noted	
<b>Cognitive Ability</b>		
Highest grade in school	12	
Highest degree	High school diploma	
Grades in school	varied	
IQ	102	
<b>Work History</b>		
Served in the military?	No	
Branch	No	
Type of discharge	No	
Saw combat duty	No	
Killed enemy during service?	No	
Applied for job as a cop?	Wanted to when was younger, never did	

Worked in law enforcement?	No
Fired from jobs?	No
Types of jobs worked	Truck driver
Employment status during series	Employed with truck driving company
<b>Relationships</b>	
Sexual preference	Females
Marital status	Married, divorced
Number of children	3
Lives with his children	No
Living with	No one, traveled
<b>Triad</b>	
Animal torture	Yes, severely
Fire setting	Yes, only few times on side of highway
Bed wetting	No
<b>Killer Psychological Information</b>	
Abused drugs?	Not noted
Abused alcohol?	Not noted
Been to a psychologist?	Not noted
Time in forensic hospital?	Not noted
Diagnosis	Not noted
<b>Killer Criminal History</b>	
Committed previous crimes?	No
Spend time in jail?	No
Spend time in prison?	No
Killed prior to series? Age?	No
<b>Serial Killing</b>	
Number of victims	8
Victim type	Typically 'lot lizards' (prostitutes)
Killer age at start of series	35
Gender of victims	Females
Race of victims	White and 1 black
Age of victims	21, 23, 26, 32, 40, 41
Method of killing	strangulation
Type of serial killer	Disorganized
How close did killer live?	Picked victims up either enroute, or in a resting point
Killing occurred in home of victim?	no
Killing occurred in home of killer?	Yes, 1 Taunja
Weapon	Hands
<b>Behavior During Crimes</b>	
Rape?	yes
Tortured victims?	no
Stalked victims?	no
Overkill?	no
Quick & efficient?	Would often play games, strangle victim until they lose consciousness, then bring them back he repeated this several times typically
Used blindfold?	No
Bound the victims?	No
<b>After Death Behavior</b>	
Sex with the body?	No

Mutilated body?	Yes 1 victim-drug under his semi truck
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	No
Moved, buried	Dropped off at random spot while making a delivery
Cut-up and disposed of	No
Moved, too home	No
Sentencing	
Date killer arrested	March 30, 1995
Date convicted	October 1995
Sentence	Life without parole
Killer executed?	No
Did killer plead NGRI?	N/A
Was the NGRI plea successful?	N/A
Name and state of prison	Oregon Department of Corrections
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death	N/A

#### References

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