

## **DEADLY NIGHTMARE ENDS CONFESSING TO 4 DEATHS, SUSPECT SAYS 'LOCK ME UP'**

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The unmasking of **Leslie Allen Williams** as a mild-mannered serial killer has confirmed the nightmares of three families, shocked crime-hardened metro Detroiters and touched off sharp debate over Michigan's parole system.

**Williams** , 38, is a haunted man who stalked girls, walked through cemeteries talking to tombstones and visited his victims' crudely dug graves for months after killing them, authorities said Thursday.

He grew up surrounded by trauma and perversion. His mother was a prostitute gunned down by her third husband when **Williams** was a child. His father was convicted of sexually abusing **Williams** ' half-sisters.

After confessing to the murders of four teenaged girls and at least four other unsolved or unreported sexual assaults, **Williams** told police Thursday to lock him up and throw away the key.

"I don't want to cause any trouble," **Williams** told State Police detectives. "I don't want to cause taxpayers any grief. I want to be locked up. Lock me up so I don't do it again. I have no control over my life."

**Williams** is expected to be charged today with the murders of Kami Villanueva, 18, of South Lyon; Cynthia Jones, 15, of Milford; and sisters Michelle Urbin, 16, and Melissa Urbin, 14, of Tyrone Township in Livingston County. The teenagers disappeared between Sept. 14 and Jan. 4.

Police also said he will be charged with the Aug. 11 rape of a 9-year-old girl from Wixom.

**Williams** told State Police Detective Sgts. David Bergsma and Mike Lenahan that he stalked the Urbin sisters in an area near Hartland where he had broken into homes of women he had met at his therapist's office. He also told detectives he had been window-peeping.

He saw the Urbin sisters eight times over several days while casing houses to rob. He said he was sexually attracted to the way Melissa walked. Armed with a three-inch pocket knife, he confronted the girls by jumping from some bushes. He put them in his car's trunk, raped them and suffocated them within an hour of the kidnapping.

He drove a few miles north to the Oakwood Cemetery in Fenton and dumped the girls and buried them in a shallow grave, telling the investigators that he returned several times over the winter to make sure that washed-away dirt hadn't exposed the bodies.

**Williams** told police he'd planned on killing the Urbins before he grabbed them.

"He told us he gets the urge to kill. That's why he was up in the Springfield Township cemetery talking to the tombstones," Bergsma said. That's where he was arrested.

**Williams**, detailing his exploits calmly, also said he had killed Villanueva and Jones immediately after abducting them, using the same methods -- cuffing his victims with plastic bands and suffocating them. Oakland County Medical Examiner Ljubisa Dragovic said Villanueva was strangled and Jones died of a stab wound.

**Williams** has told police he committed several sexual assaults in which the victims have not come forward. One of those was the attempted abduction of a woman in her 20s from a gas station telephone booth in New Hudson. That incident was reported in November 1990, only about three months after **Williams** was paroled from prison, but the victim dropped charges. **Williams** had just finished more than six years in prison for a similar attack.

Through his attorney, Larry Kaluzny, **Williams** urged the other victims to go to police.

"He's hoping that someone will learn from his mistakes and maybe this won't happen again. If some of the victims had come forward, he might have been arrested sooner and caught sooner and there would have been fewer people harmed," Kaluzny said.

'Nice guy who kills'

**Williams** -- heavily muscled, tattooed and neatly groomed -- was jailed Sunday after being caught by police after he kidnapped a woman from a cemetery in Springfield Township near Clarkston.

While family members and acquaintances described **Williams** as a pleasant person who was trying to turn around his crime-sotted life, police told of a calculating killer who had sex with at least one of his victims after he killed her.

"He was a nice guy who kills young girls," said Oakland County Sheriff's Sgt. Doug Hummel.

While being held in the Oakland County Jail on Monday and Tuesday, **Williams** denied he had committed any crimes other than the abduction in the cemetery.

During a search of his northwest Detroit home Tuesday night, police found a ring belonging to Villanueva, the first solid evidence that linked **Williams** to the missing girls.

In a tearful 45-minute meeting Wednesday night in the jail, **Williams** confessed the four killings to family members, said James Jardine, **Williams**' uncle.

**Williams** gave no details of the killings as he talked to his aunt, his older brother, Lyle, and Jardine. Jardine said no one asked.

"Can you imagine what it must be to try and tell somebody that? The only thing worse is being the one who's being told," Jardine said.

The family discussed **Williams** ' childhood and his depression, Jardine said. Then he met with his lawyer and later led police to the bodies.

**Williams** ' demeanor during the grim evening was described as matter-of-fact.

"He had an uncanny sense of direction," said Oakland County Sheriff's Capt. Glenn Watson. "He took us to a field in the dead of night, looked around and said, 'It's right here.'"

Kaluzny, the attorney who was present for **Williams** ' questioning, said **Williams** was the one who suggested searching for the bodies early Thursday morning.

"They were going to wait until it was light, but **Williams** thought he would be able to recognize the sites easier in the dark, since the incidents occurred in the dark," Kaluzny said.

Finding the bodies

Using a backhoe, police found the Urbin sisters under several feet of dirt at the edge of Oakwood Cemetery in Fenton.

The two girls were touching each other in their grave and had been covered with a blanket. One was naked; one was clothed.

Jones was found near Buno and Old Plank roads in Milford Township in a grave about four feet deep.

The body of Villanueva was found late Wednesday afternoon in a field near Charms and Buno roads in Milford Township, about two miles east from where Jones' body was found. She had been strangled manually.

Hard childhood

**Leslie Williams** was born on July 4, 1953, to Dorothy **Williams** and Lyle Young **Williams** , her second husband, in Angola, Ind. Dorothy **Williams** had two girls from her first marriage and three boys with Lyle **Williams** .

The family lived in the 31000 block of Alvin in Garden City.

According to court records, Garden City police received a tip that Dorothy **Williams** was working as a prostitute in her home.

An investigation by Chief Arthur Nagle and Detective Frank Sanders disclosed that neighborhood children had witnessed **Williams** ' two daughters performing sex acts on their stepfather.

Dorothy **Williams** was arrested on a charge of prostitution and Lyle **Williams** was charged with taking indecent liberties with his two stepdaughters.

Lyle **Williams** told police that he knew his wife was a prostitute, and in fact had watched her and customers from a hiding place in the bedroom closet. He did not admit sexually abusing his stepdaughters.

In 1957, **Williams** pleaded guilty to taking indecent liberties with his stepdaughters, and in December was committed to the state hospital for the criminally insane in Ionia.

The **Williamses** were divorced in 1961, after Lyle had been released from the hospital.

Dorothy **Williams** moved to California in late 1959 and met James E. Adams, whom she married in 1962. Lyle Jr. and **Leslie** went to live with their mother and her new husband. The other brother, Jay, and the girls went elsewhere to live.

The marriage was troubled and Dorothy filed for divorce.

The night before a hearing, James hunted down his wife and shot her in the head. He then killed himself.

The boys were returned to Michigan to live again with their maternal grandparents in Milford.

The record begins

**Leslie Williams** ' criminal career began at age 17 when he broke into a neighbor's home. He was sentenced to probation. That was 1970.

For most of the next 22 years, he was either awaiting trial or serving time in prison. He was convicted of attempted breaking and entering, larceny from an auto, breaking and entering, assault with intent to commit murder, assault and first-degree sexual conduct.

In 1983, **Williams** pleaded guilty to assault with intent to commit kidnapping and assault with intent to sexually penetrate, for a kidnapping committed less than two weeks after he was paroled from prison.

This time, **Williams** also was charged with being a habitual offender, which carries the possibility of life in prison.

Oakland County Circuit Judge John N. O'Brien sentenced **Williams** to five to 10 years for the assault and seven to 30 years for being a habitual offender.

O'Brien told **Williams** : "There isn't going to be anybody that can help you with your problems until you face them and try to help yourself."

**Williams** said, "Well, I start out all right and then I get depressed and then I don't think straight."

He was paroled in 1990, after a positive recommendation from a therapist.

Critics on Thursday blasted the decision to let **Williams** out of prison after less than seven years.

"I think **Leslie Williams** represents the failure of the entire criminal justice system, particularly the parole system," said Oakland County Sheriff John Nichols. " **Leslie Williams** never should have been on the street. And four young ladies are dead because of that."

Brooks Patterson, the former Oakland County prosecutor who began criticizing Michigan's parole policies in the mid-1970s, said: "He was a time bomb. . . . But the parole system is blind to the potential danger of these people. They ought to distinguish between first offenders and fourth offenders."

In a letter **Williams** wrote to Jacqueline Moss of the parole board in July 1990, **Williams** thanked the board for "the vote of confidence" and admitted surprise at being paroled so quickly.

"I had little confidence in gaining a parole any time soon," he wrote.

Model parolee

Since September 1991, **Williams** has reported to parole officers in the Corrections Department office on Detroit's west side.

William Mannix, parole supervisor, said **Williams** had been a model parolee, reporting twice a month as required and presenting check stubs to show he was working.

"He was a low-key, mild-mannered person," Mannix said. "We never saw any evidence of any kind of problems."

Mannix added: "He was spic-and-span clean. The whole thing was kind of a shock to us, too."

His parole was due to expire in August 1993.

Mannix said it is impossible to detect any problems with a parolee as long as he shows up at the office, holds down a job, is cooperative in counseling and does not prompt any complaints from people in the community.

"He was doing very well here," Mannix said. "But we can't go inside someone's head and see what he is thinking."

Upon first being paroled, **Williams** saw another therapist, William McDonald, an Episcopal priest from Fenton.

McDonald declined to discuss specifics of **Williams** ' treatment, but said:

"The whole field of psychopathology is just basically a dance with the demons. There's so much craziness and so much pain and so much crazy response to craziness and pain, especially these days."

Sgt. Hummel suspected **Williams** might be a serial killer from the moment he heard **Williams** ' remarkable admission of guilt to reporters at his arraignment on Monday after abducting and threatening to rape a woman he had stashed in his trunk.

Said Hummel: "That's not the typical statement of somebody who has just fallen off the wagon. This man was a man crying for some help."

Caption: Photo Color CRAIG PORTER; Map HANK SZERLAG

: Friends of Kami Villanueva, 18, console one another Thursday outside South Lyon High School. **Leslie Williams** confessed to killing her. Medical personnel prepare a stretcher Thursday for the remains of a body removed from its burial spot at the edge of Oakwood Cemetery in Fenton.

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Memo: Photo PATRICIA BECK

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