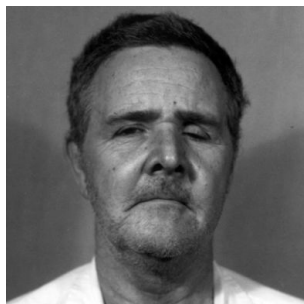




HISTORY &  
CULTURE  
**The  
Importance of  
Being Audrey**



HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
**Geena Davis**



## Henry Lee Lucas

Murderer (1936–2001)

Henry Lee Lucas was a murderer best known for allegedly killing hundreds of people in the 1960s and '70s, though only three (including his mother) were confirmed.

### Synopsis

Henry Lee Lucas was a murderer born on August 23, 1936, in Blacksburg, Virginia. Born to alcoholic parents, including a mother who prostituted herself, Lucas's sexual deviancy formed in his teen years. In 1960, he was sentenced for the murder of his mother. Paroled in 1970, Lucas went back to jail for the attempted kidnapping of a 15-year-old girl. Released again in 1975, he killed two more women, and was arrested in 1983. He confessed to murdering hundreds of people, though no proof existed beyond three known victims. Lucas sat on Death Row, later changed to life in prison by Texas Governor George W. Bush. He died in a Texas prison from natural causes on March 12, 2001.

**NAME**  
Henry Lee Lucas

**OCCUPATION**  
Murderer

**BIRTH DATE**  
August 23, 1936

**DEATH DATE**  
March 12, 2001

**PLACE OF BIRTH**  
Blacksburg, Virginia

**PLACE OF DEATH**  
Huntsville, Texas

### Early Life

Murderer Henry Lee Lucas was born on August 23, 1936, in Blacksburg, Virginia. One of nine siblings, Lucas was raised by abusive alcoholic parents. His mother ruled the household with an iron fist and prostituted herself in their backwoods community to make money. As a teenager, Lucas's sexual deviance became increasingly pronounced, and he reported having sex with his half-brother and with dead animals.

Lucas spent his teen years in and out of jail. In March 1960, he was sentenced to 20 to 40 years in prison for murdering his mother. He was sent to Jackson State Penitentiary in southern Michigan, but after two attempted suicides, he was admitted to Ionia State Mental Hospital. He was paroled in 1970 after serving 10 years.

### Murder and Conviction

A year after his release, Lucas was sentenced to five years for attempting to kidnap a fifteen-year-old girl at gunpoint. After his second release in 1975, he traveled to Michigan where he teamed-up with a petty thief named Ottis Toole. They shared an unhealthy interest in rape and death. In October 1979, Lucas traveled the country accompanied by Ottis and his young niece, Becky Powell, who was mildly retarded.

According to Lucas, he and Powell became romantically involved, filling one another's lifelong need for love and respect. Despite this romance, however, he eventually killed Powell, along with Katharine Rich, an elderly woman with whom they had been staying.

In June 1983, Lucas was arrested for possession of a deadly weapon. In his cell, he began confessing to hundreds of murders. Egged on by investigators from around the country, Lucas's confessions became increasingly farfetched. It is unclear how many murders he actually did commit, but some believe it was just three: his mother, Becky Powell and Katharine Rich. He was sentenced to death, but the sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment by Texas Governor George W. Bush. While on Death Row, Lucas became a born again Christian and spent the last 18 years of his life as a model prisoner. He died in a Huntsville, Texas, prison from natural causes on March 12, 2001, at the age of 64.

**Article Title**

Henry Lee Lucas Biography

**Author**

Biography.com Editors

**Website Name**

The Biography.com website

**URL**

<http://www.biography.com/people/henry-lee-lucas-11735804>

**Access Date**

January 21, 2017

**Publisher**

A&E Television Networks

**Last Updated**

April 2, 2014

**Original Published Date**

n/a

# BIO NEWSLETTER

Sign up to receive updates from BIO and A+E Networks.

*email address*

**SUBSCRIBE**



## MORE STORIES FROM BIO

**BIOGRAPHY**

**Leonard Lucas**

(1936–)

**BIOGRAPHY**

**Lee Harvey  
Oswald**

(1939–1963)

**BIOGRAPHY**

**Jared Lee  
Loughner**

**MURDERER • (1988–)**

**SEE MORE**