
Legal Histories of School Shooters

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This document identifies those shooters who were arrested, had encounters with the police, or were reported to law enforcement prior to their attacks. Many of the perpetrators engaged in illegal activities without getting caught (most commonly substance use, but also theft, shoplifting, prostitution, vandalism, fire-setting, sexual offenses, making and detonating explosives, torturing and killing pets, and other misconduct); these activities are not included here unless they came to the attention of the police. Entries are ordered chronologically within each section.¹

1 · Secondary School Shooters

BRENDA SPENCER Arrested for shoplifting and burglary (she broke into her former elementary school and vandalized it; this was the same school that she later attacked).
JAMIE ROUSE Lost his driver's license due to four traffic violations in nine months.
MITCHELL JOHNSON Charged for molesting a child he was babysitting.
KIP KINKEL Arrested with a friend for throwing rocks off a highway overpass. Caught shoplifting CDs; not known if police were involved.
ERIC HARRIS Arrested for breaking into a van and stealing equipment. He also had traffic violations. His online bomb-making activities, mischief, vandalism, and threats of violence twice were brought to the attention of the police, but these were not investigated, and he received no charges.

1 [This document includes incidents up to 2014; we hope in a future revision to extend the coverage up to the present. — Ed., 2025]

DYLAN KLEBOLD Arrested for breaking into a van and stealing equipment. He also had traffic violations.

CHARLES “ANDY” WILLIAMS Found by police with several forty-ounce bottles of beer; they reportedly didn’t charge him and just told him to go home.

JASON HOFFMAN Arrested in tenth grade for hitting a peer with a racquet.

ERIC HAINSTOCK Shortly before his attack, was charged with disorderly conduct, criminal damage, and recklessly endangering safety.

SEBASTIAN BOSSE Arrested for illegal possession of a firearm; committed his attack the day before his scheduled court date.

ASA COON Charged with domestic violence at age twelve for aggressive behavior toward his mother. He was also placed in a detention center.

T.J. LANE Charged with simple assault for holding his uncle while Lane’s half-brother hit him. Lane was charged a month later with assault for hitting a peer and putting him in a chokehold. Charged with failure to control a motor vehicle; fined and lost his license for seventy-five days.

ROBERT BUTLER, JR. Unspecified trouble with the police; required to perform community service. Arrested for criminal trespass (joy-riding on school’s football field).

2 • College Shooters

CHARLES WHITMAN Arrested for illegal poaching; also had multiple traffic violations. In marines, court-martialed, demoted, and punished with thirty days’ confinement and ninety days’ hard labor.

VALERY FABRIKANT Due to threats to university personnel, administrators had protection from security; they once had Fabrikant searched by police for fear he was carrying a gun.

PETER ODIGHIZUWA After finding shotgun shell casing on his property, he feared he was in danger and complained so much to local police that they threatened him with a charge of obstructing justice. Charged with domestic violence for hitting his wife.

ROBERT FLORES, JR. Demoted in the military shortly before his discharge; reason unknown. At University of Arizona, made threat that was reported to the campus police, but this did not lead to investigation.

SEUNG HUI CHO Twice told by campus police to leave women alone; also was transported by police for involuntary commitment to a psychiatric facility.

STEVEN KAZMIERCZAK Several contacts with the police as an adolescent for mischief/vandalism, a suicide attempt, and being a missing person. As adult, received speeding ticket that had significant consequences for his employment at a corrections facility, which he ended up leaving.

MATTI SAARI “Imprisoned” on a ship for violent behavior (not clear if this involved police or not).

AMY BISHOP Killed her brother when she was twenty-one; police were involved but this was ruled an accident so she was not charged. She was later interviewed during an investigation of a letter-bomb that had been sent to her former boss, but she was not charged. She was arrested for assault and battery and disorderly conduct for hitting a woman in a restaurant. At University of Alabama, campus police once barred her from a building due to an administrator’s fear of her.

ONE GOH Had multiple liens against him, was sued for credit card debt, and was evicted from an apartment for not paying rent. He also had multiple traffic violations and was once charged with misdemeanor assault and battery.

3 · Aberrant Adult Shooters

TYRONE MITCHELL Arrested for burglary. Possible legal involvement due to substance abuse. Convicted of misuse of firearm.

PATRICK PURDY Had forty contacts with law enforcement, including solicitation of prostitution, drug possession, driving under the influence, vandalism, public drunkenness, possession of weapons, unlawful discharge of firearm, and other charges.

LAURIE DANN Arrested for harassment, but the charges were dropped. She was also arrested for theft.

DUANE MORRISON Discharged from Navy after going AWOL. Arrested for burglary and possession of marijuana. Arrested for harassment.

JIVERLY WONG Had at least five encounters with the police, including driving an uninspected vehicle, passing a bad check, and other minor violations. He developed paranoid delusions about police.

BRUCO EASTWOOD Had multiple charges over many years, including menacing, assault, domestic violence, and driving under the influence of alcohol.

AARON YBARRA Was found by police drunk in the street and was involuntarily committed to a hospital. He also had arrests for drunk driving and driving without insurance.

4 · Non-School Shooters

CLAY SHROUT Police were investigating him for illegal drugs at the time he killed his family.

STEPHEN MORGAN Harassed a woman he was obsessed with; university referred the case to the police, but Morgan left town and the woman did not press charges; he later killed her.

JARED LOUGHNER Was arrested three times in the community due to drinking alcohol as a minor, possessing drug paraphernalia, and vandalism. He also had five contacts with campus police and was eventually suspended from the college due to his behavior.

JAMES HOLMES University psychiatrist reported to campus police that Holmes had made threats. [\[SS.1\]](#)