

School Shooters: A Miscellany

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This document provides information on a wide variety of issues that are too infrequent in the lives of school shooters to warrant separate documents on their own. Documents focused on more common issues can be found on the Edited Data page of schoolshooters.info.

ADOPTION

Adoption, as a fact, a mistaken belief, or delusion, figured in the lives of several shooters. **Wellington de Oliveira** was adopted from a woman who was reportedly schizophrenic. **Thomas Hamilton** was adopted by his grandparents, but was raised believing that they were his parents and his mother was his older sister. **Eric Houston** believed he was adopted, but his parents said he wasn't. **Andrew Wurst** was delusional; he believed that his parents were not his real parents but people he was placed with when brought to earth from another world. Similarly, **Michael Carneal** may have believed he was an alien, with the implication that his parents were not really his parents.

ANARCHIST(S) COOKBOOK

This book provides instruction on making explosives from household materials. Several school shooters owned it, including **Michael Carneal**, **Kip Kinkel**, **Eric Harris**, and **Karl Pierson**. Also, **Jared Loughner** (a non-school shooter) had a copy. Kinkel and Harris engaged in bombmaking, and Pierson made Molotov cocktails for his attack.

ANIMAL CRUELTY

Though I have seen it stated that many school shooters committed acts of animal cruelty, I have not found this to be the case. **Clay Shroud** reportedly kicked his caged Dalmatians. **Andrew Golden** tortured and killed cats. **Luke Woodham**, under the direction of his friend Grant Boyette, tortured and killed his pet dog. Other shooters have been said to have engaged in animal cruelty but I have not found any documentation to support these allegations.

ARREST OF PEERS

Though peers often had knowledge of impending shootings, they were rarely charged with any involvement in the attacks. In several cases, however, friends of the perpetrators were arrested (though not necessarily convicted) for having played a part in the incidents. These include friends of **Jamie Rouse**, **Evan Ramsey**, **Luke Woodham**, and **Jeffrey Weise**.

ASSIGNMENTS ON SCHOOL SHOOTINGS

Several perpetrators wrote school assignments related to school shootings. **Eric Harris** wrote a paper called "Guns in School" (dated 10 December 1997). He referenced the recent shooting by Michael Carneal (1 December 1997), though he erroneously said it occurred in Texas. Harris recommended preventing school shootings through metal detectors and an increased police presence in schools. Whether or not he had conceived of carrying out a shooting at this point is unknown. Dylan Klebold, Harris's partner in the attack at Columbine High School, had written on 3 November 1997 about going on a "killing spree."

Not long after the Columbine attack, **Seung Hui Cho**, an 8th-grader at the time, wrote a paper that apparently not only mentioned Columbine but indicated his desire to carry out a similar attack. The paper caused significant concern and led to a psychiatric evaluation for Cho.

During his undergraduate program in sociology, **Steven Kazmierczak** wrote a paper called "No Crazies with Guns!: A Brief Summary of the Aftermath of Virginia Tech and the Ensuing Debate Over Mental Health and Gun Control Legislation." Kazmierczak reportedly was fascinated by the attack at Virginia Tech. Whether or not he had any thought of committing an attack at the time he wrote the paper is unknown.

Tim Kretschmer had a class in which the attack by Robert Steinhäuser was discussed. Kretschmer wrote a paper on the shooting but reportedly said what the teacher wanted to hear. Whether Kretschmer had begun to plan his attack at this point is unknown.

BEDWETTING (ENURESIS)

Two shooters reportedly had enuresis in adolescence and/or early adulthood: **Andrew Wurst** and **Steven Kazmierczak**.

DATES OF ATTACK, SIGNIFICANCE

A few attacks occurred on specific days for a reason. **Eric Harris** (and perhaps **Dylan Klebold**) chose 20 April for their attack because this was Hitler's birthday. Similarly, **Alvaro Castillo** chose 30 August for his attack because it was Kip Kinkel's birthday (as well as the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina). **Luke Woodham** carried out his attack on the one-year anniversary of the break-up with his girlfriend (whom he targeted and killed). **Pekka Eric-Auvinen** reportedly chose 7 November 2007 because it was the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution.

Seung Hui Cho may have chosen 16 April 2007 because it was Holocaust Remembrance Day as well as being one day off from the one-year anniversary of his encounter with Professor

Bean. Bean studied the Holocaust and on the day of his attack Cho sent a letter to the English department complaining about Bean's treatment of him, and claiming five times in the letter that Bean "went on a holocaust" on him.

The dates of other attacks raise questions about whether or not they were chosen for a reason. **Steven Kazmierczak** committed his attack on Valentine's Day, but the significance of this is unknown. His girlfriend expected him to propose that day (he had asked her ring size). Another possibility is that he had been discharged from the military on 13 February several years earlier, returning home on 14 February. Perhaps this date symbolized his failure.

Karl Pierson studied the attack at Sandy Hook Elementary School and committed his own attack on 13 December 2013, one day short of the first anniversary of Sandy Hook. Though he wrote in his journal about the date, no information has been released to indicate that he timed it to coincide (he couldn't have done his attack on 14 December because this was a Saturday).

On at least two occasions, attacks occurred on the anniversaries of other attacks, but in neither case is there any indication that this was planned. **Seth Trickey's** attack was on the tenth anniversary of Marc Lépine's rampage, and **Adam Lanza's** attack was on the twentieth anniversary of the shooting by Wayne Lo. In Lanza's case, it is known that he was at least aware of Lo's attack, but there is no evidence that he timed his rampage to coincide with the anniversary of Lo's.

EATING DISORDERS

Laurie Dann and **Steven Kazmierczak** were bulimic. **Adam Lanza**, who was 6' tall and only weighed 112 pounds, may have been anorexic; if so, his minimal eating may have been due to delusions rather than simply not wanting to gain weight.

EMPLOYEE PERPETRATORS

Both **Verlin Spencer** and **Steven Leith** worked in secondary education; Spencer was a junior high school principal, and Leith was a teacher. **Robert Wickes** was fired as a substitute teacher's aide; he committed a shooting at the school.

Perpetrators who were employees in higher education include **Edward Allaway** (custodian), **Valery Fabrikant** (professor), and **Amy Bishop** (professor).

ESCAPE ATTEMPTS FROM THE SCENE

Most school shooters either killed themselves at the scene of their attack, or were apprehended there. Several left the scene, but waited for the police to pick them up or even called the police to confess what they had done. Very few seem to have intended to escape. These include the following:

Su Yong Kim escaped from the campus and led police on two-mile chase. When they blocked his vehicle, he shot himself in the head. Despite the attempted suicide, he survived.

Laurie Dann fled the school she attacked, driving away in her car. She ended up entering a private residence and holding people hostage. When police surrounded the house and escape

was impossible, she killed herself.

Andrew Golden and **Mitchell Johnson** had packed a van with supplies and thought they would escape and then return after things had settled down. They were intercepted by police before they reached the van.

Nicco Tatum got on a bus and made it from Las Vegas to Denver where he was captured; it is believed he was on his way to Chicago.

Tim Kretschmer fled the school he attacked and hijacked a car, going on a shooting spree. He may have intended to escape, though he ended up on foot in a gunfight with police; after being wounded twice, he killed himself.

Stephen Morgan (a non-school shooter) loitered at the scene where he had killed a woman and was questioned by the police as a possible witness to the crime. He then walked away and was at large for two days before turning himself in.

ESCAPE ATTEMPTS FROM PRISON

Clay Shrout planned to escape from prison but his attempt was foiled. **Todd Cameron Smith** was transferred from prison to a halfway house; he escaped from there but turned himself in the next day. **T.J. Lane** escaped from prison and was on the run for six hours before being recaptured.

FAMILY VICTIMS

The following shooters killed members of their families before going on their rampages:

- **Charles Whitman**: mother, wife
- **Clay Shrout**: mother, father, both sisters
- **Luke Woodham**: mother
- **Kip Kinkel**: mother, father
- **Jeffrey Weise**: grandfather, grandfather's girlfriend
- **Alvaro Castillo**: father
- **Adam Lanza**: mother
- **John Zawahri**: father, brother

Laurie Dann tried to kill her ex-husband by poisoning him. Other shooters, such as **Robert Poulin** and **Andrew Wurst**, thought about killing their parents but decided against it. See the document "Intended and Targeted Victims" for more information.

FIRE-SETTING / ARSON

Robert Poulin set his house on fire after raping and killing a young woman in his bedroom; he then went to his school where he committed a rampage attack. **Luke Woodham** used fire (apparently under the direction of his friend, **Grant Boyette**) in killing his pet dog. **Eric Harris** liked to set fires and once did so in a dumpster at work that was serious enough that the fire department responded. **Andy Williams** reportedly set a fire that resulted in a fire department response.

Several shooters used fire in their attacks at schools, including **Laurie Dann** who tried to burn down a house and two elementary schools, and **Pekka-Eric Auvinen** and **Matti Saari**

who both set fires in their schools during their attacks.

John Zawahri set fire to his home after killing his father and brother.

Other shooters made firebombs or Molotov cocktails that they used in their attacks; this includes **Leo Kelly**, **Nicholas Elliot** (had Molotov cocktails in his locker but did not use them), and **Karl Pierson**. **Eric Harris** and **Dylan Klebold** used bombs in their attacks that started fires in the school.

FIREARMS, FAMILY ROLE MODELS FOR MISUSE

A pattern I noted in my books was that though many shooters had family members who engaged in the legal, appropriate use of firearms, a high percentage of traumatized school shooters had family role models for the misuse of firearms. These include:

- **James Wilson**: Father threatened to shoot him (not known if he was holding a gun at the time).
- **Patrick Purdy**: Father threatened Purdy's mother with gun.
- **Eric Houston**: Probable: uncle killed three men in a fight; not known for sure that this was with a gun; even if not, the uncle may have been a role model for murder
- **Jamie Rouse**: Father killed six pet cats with a shotgun.
- **Evan Ramsey**: Father, older brother, and mother's boyfriend were arrested on firearms charges.
- **Mitchell Johnson**: Stepfather was in prison on firearms charges.
- **Jeffrey Weise**: Father was in armed standoff with police.
- **Asa Coon**: Older brother was arrested on firearms charges.
- **Jose Reyes**: Father put a gun to mother's head.
- **Nathaniel Brazill**: Possible: his mother was evasive about possibly having shot someone, but admitted to pointing a gun at someone; though this could have been self-defense, her evasiveness raises doubts about this.

HOSTAGE SITUATIONS

I differentiate between "hostage" situations and "kidnapping." Hostage situations involved keeping people in a room with the perpetrator in a standoff situation with law enforcement. Kidnapping refers to an incident in which the perpetrator left the scene and hijacked a car at gunpoint, forcing the driver to take him where he wanted to go. In addition, "human shield" refers to the perpetrator grabbing someone to use as a shield to keep law enforcement from shooting at him. Though someone who is kidnapped or used as a human shield may in a sense be a hostage, the dynamics of the situations vary. Hostages were used as a bargaining tool, the kidnap victim was used as a means of escape, and the human shield was used as protection.

Several shooters held hostages behind close doors (**Robert Wickes**, **Eric Houston**, **Valery Fabrikant**, **Gary Scott Pennington**, **Barry Loukaitis**, and **Robert Flores**). Most of these situations did not last long, but Wickes's and Houston's dragged on for hours. Two of these situations were resolved by people in the room overpowering the shooter (**Barry Loukaitis** and **Valery**

Fabrikant), and three perpetrators released the hostages with no further casualties (**Eric Houston**, **Gary Scott Pennington**, and **Robert Flores**). **Houston** and **Pennington** surrendered to police; **Flores** killed himself. **Floyd Warmesley** held one student hostage and then surrendered with him.

In a different twist, dozens of people were trapped in the building where **Biswanath Halder** and numerous law enforcement officers were engaged in a shootout. This, too, lasted several hours.

Two other hostage situations involved isolating girls in a room and molesting them. **Duane Morrison** held hostages for hours, gradually letting them go, but indicating that at 4:00 "something" was going to happen. Police broke into the room and in the ensuing chaos **Morrison** shot and killed one girl as she attempted to flee to safety. **Morrison** was shot by police and then killed himself. **Charles Roberts** held ten girls in an Amish schoolhouse, molested them, and then shot them, killing five. He then killed himself.

Laurie Dann escaped from the scene of the shooting in a car, then fled on foot. She entered a house and held the family hostage as police surrounded the home. She eventually killed herself.

Tim Kretschmer hijacked a car, kidnapping the driver and telling him where to drive as **Kretschmer** went on a shooting spree. He then let the driver go. Similarly, **John Zawahri** hijacked a car and made the driver transport him.

Kimveer Gill briefly tried to use a bystander as a human shield.

IMMIGRANTS

The following shooters were immigrants to the U.S. or international students here:

- **Gang Lu**: from China
- **Wayne Lo**: from Taiwan
- **Mark Duong**: from Vietnam
- **Peter Odighizuwa**: from Nigeria
- **Biswanath Halder**: from India
- **Seung Hui Cho**: from South Korea
- **Jiverly Wong**: from Vietnam
- **One Goh**: from South Korea
- **Elliot Rodger**: from England
- **Chris Harper-Mercer**: from England

One shooter was an immigrant to Canada:

- **Valery Fabrikant**: from Belarus

LITIGATION, HISTORY OF

Valery Fabrikant sued colleagues at his university. His behavior was so inappropriate that he was charged with contempt of court. He committed his attack the day before his contempt hearing.

Peter Odighizuwa initiated a lawsuit against a former employer for unlawful discharge, but dropped it. He subsequently

sued the former employer regarding worker's compensation.

Biswanath Halder had sued multiple prospective and former employers for discrimination. He also sued several employees at Case Western Reserve University because he believed they had hacked and destroyed his website.

Amy Bishop sued her university for discrimination after she had been denied tenure.

Gang Lu threatened to sue his university because he had not won the prize for best dissertation.

It is perhaps worth noting that all of these perpetrators were college shooters who carried out targeted attacks at their universities.

MARITAL STATUS AND CHILDREN

Though school shooters are often thought of as isolated loners with poor social skills, a number of them married and some of them had children.

- **Charles Whitman** was married. He beat his wife and talked about separation and divorce. He killed his wife prior to his rampage attack.
- **Edward Allaway** was married, divorced, and remarried.
- **Laurie Dann** was married and divorced. She tried to kill her ex-husband with arsenic.
- **Clemmie Henderson** was married and had two children; he had remarried by the time of his attack.
- **Valery Fabrikant** was married and divorced; he then married a second time and had two children.
- **Jillian Robbins** was married and divorced.
- **Peter Odighizuwa** was married with four children. His wife left him and took the children after he assaulted her.
- **Robert Flores** was married and had two children. His wife divorced him, alleging that he had been abusive.
- **One Goh** was married and divorced; he had one child.
- **Jiverly Wong** reportedly was married and divorced, and according to some accounts, had a child.
- **Charles Roberts IV** was married and had three children.

NAZI INTEREST

A number of shooters have been interested in Hitler and the Nazis. These include **Robert Smith**, **Marc Lépine**, **Luke Woodham**, **Andrew Wurst**, **Eric Harris**, **Jeffrey Weise**, **Kimveer Gill**, **Pekka-Eric Auvinen**, **Steven Kazmierczak**, **Karl Pierson**, and **Jared Loughner** (not a school shooter). None of these shooters were connected to any organized neo-Nazi groups.

Seung Hui Cho wrote "88" in his manifesto and used "88" in a fake return address when he mailed the manifesto. Some people use "88" as a code abbreviation for "Heil Hitler" because *h* is the eight letter of the alphabet. Whether this was Cho's meaning is unknown.

Stephen Morgan (a non-school shooter) made anti-Semitic comments and owned a copy of the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a notorious anti-Semitic document. Whether or not Morgan had any Nazi interest is unknown.

OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER (OCD)

Several shooters reportedly had symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), though I believe all of them were psychotic and either what initially looked like OCD was really related to their delusions, or else they had both psychotic symptoms and OCD. These shooters include **Laurie Dann**, **James Wilson**, **Steven Kazmierczak**, and **Adam Lanza**.

POLICE INTERVENTION

It is sometimes said that rampage attacks end before the police arrive. This is not always the case. In a number of cases, in fact, gunfire was exchanged between the perpetrators and the police (or on-site security guards). The following sections note the perpetrators who fired at police, those the police shot at, and the outcomes of these events.

Perpetrators Who Fired on Police

The following shooters shot at police, with the outcome noted if the officers were hit:

- **Charles Whitman** killed an officer
- **Larry Harmon**
- **Brenda Spencer** wounded an officer
- **Clemmie Henderson** killed one officer and wounded another
- **Mark Duong** wounded an officer
- **Evan Ramsey**
- **Eric Harris**
- **Robert Steinhäuser** killed an officer
- **Biswanath Halder**
- **Jeffrey Weise** killed a security guard
- **Kimveer Gill**
- **Pekka-Eric Auvinen**
- **Matti Saari**
- **Tim Kretschmer** wounded two officers
- **John Zawahri**

Perpetrators Fired Upon by Police

The following perpetrators were shot at by police and either wounded or unharmed (those killed by police gunfire are listed below under "Suicide by Cop"):

- **Patrick Lizotte** was wounded
- **Evan Ramsey**
- **Eric Harris**
- **Jason Hoffman** was wounded twice
- **Biswanath Halder** was wounded
- **Jeffrey Weise** was wounded
- **Kimveer Gill** was wounded
- **Tim Kretschmer** was wounded twice
- **Wellington de Oliveira**

Suicide by Cop

Most shooters who die in their attacks die by their own hand. Several, however, have been killed by police in what is commonly referred to as “suicide by cop.” They did not always leave records that they intended to die during their rampages, but their behavior during the attacks, including firing upon police officers, suggests that they did not want to live (though they may have fired in the hopes of escaping).

The following shooters were killed by police: **Charles Whitman**, **Clemmie Henderson**, **Larry Harmon**, **Mark Duong**, **John Zawahri**, and **Myron May**. **Jason Hoffman** said he had wanted to be killed by police; he was wounded twice but survived (though he subsequently killed himself in prison).

RAGE BY STEPHEN KING

Early in his career Stephen King wrote a novel titled *Rage* that was published under the name Richard Bachman. It tells the story of a high school student who kills a teacher and holds the class hostage. Several school shooters appear to have imitated or been influenced by this story, including **Kristofer Hans**, **Gary Scott Pennington**, **Barry Loukaitis**, and **Michael Carneal**. In addition, two other students appear to have imitated the story, holding classes hostage at gunpoint though they did not kill anybody: **Jeffrey Lyne Cox** (San Gabriel High School) and **Dustin L. Pierce** (Jackson County High School).

RELEASED FROM PRISON

Several shooters committed their attacks at such a young age that they could not be tried as adults and were released from prison when they reached adulthood (or before). **Seth Trickey** was released at age 18. The following shooters were released at age 21: **James Kearbey**, **Mitchell Johnson**, and **Andrew Golden**. **Floyd Warmesley** reportedly was released in his teens. **Kenneth Bartley** was released in his early twenties. **Azizollah Mazooni** committed his attack at age 25 and was released at 35. **Mason Campbell** reportedly will be released when he turns 21. **Johnson** and **Bartley** quickly ended up in prison on other charges. **Warmesley** apparently was charged with drunk driving many years after his release.

SATANISM / OCCULT

Clay Shrout was interested in Satanism, vampires, and casting spells. **Luke Woodham** was interested in Satan and the Anti-Christ, and **Steven Kazmierczak** read about Satanism. **Adam Lanza** reportedly had a website in middle school that featured some satanic content.

SELF-INJURIOUS BEHAVIOR

Several shooters reportedly engaged in “cutting” or other forms of self-injurious behavior: **Clay Shrout**, **Jamie Rouse**, **Michael Carneal**, **Mitchell Johnson**, **Dylan Klebold**, **Todd Cameron Smith**, **Jeffrey Weise**, and **Steven Kazmierczak**.

SEXUALITY

Sexuality is a very complex subject and is thus divided into several sections.

Sexual Abuse

Multiple shooters were victims of childhood sexual abuse that occurred in a variety of settings. **Eric Houston** was molested by a high school teacher. **Evan Ramsey** was molested in a foster home. **Mitchell Johnson** was victimized by an older boy who lived in the same neighborhood as Johnson's grandmother. **Eric Hainstock** was sexually abused by a stepbrother.

Two shooters engaged in homosexual prostitution: **Patrick Purdy** did this at a young age (perhaps as young as 13, but certainly by age 15) so that this constituted child sexual abuse. **James Wilson**, who committed his attack at 19, also engaged in prostitution with an older male, but whether or not he was underage at the time is not clear.

In addition, **Duane Morrison** may have been abused as a child. His long final letter doesn't state this, but suggests it. This is discussed in my article on **Morrison** (both the letter and the article are on the website).

Homosexuality

Though some shooters have been called gay by their peers, this has often been used as a general putdown that had no connection to the shooters' sexual orientation. A few school shooters, however, have identified as gay, including **Patrick Purdy**, **Eric Hainstock**, and **Bryan Oliver**. Others either experimented with gay encounters (**Eric Houston**, **Steven Kazmierczak**), considered possibly having gay encounters (**Robert Poulin**), or wondered if they might be gay or bisexual (**Alvaro Castillo**). **Adam Lanza's** sexuality is enigmatic, but his computer contained material about homosexual fantasies.

Sexual Assaults / Offenses

A couple of shooters committed (or were alleged to have committed) sexual offenses well before their attacks. **Mitchell Johnson** admitted to sticking his finger in the vagina of a two-year-old. **Valery Fabrikant** allegedly raped a student, and though the student reported this to the university, no charges were ever pressed so no investigation occurred.

Other shooters committed sexual assaults on the day of their attacks. **Robert Poulin** raped and killed a young woman in his home, and may have attempted to rape women prior to this; he also apparently made obscene telephone calls. **Charles Roberts IV** and **Duane Morrison** molested girls at the schools they attacked. **Roberts** said he molested two young girls twenty years before his attack, but the women in question denied this.

Eric Harris wrote about his fantasies of tricking girls he knew into his room and raping them, but he apparently made no effort to actually do so. **Alvaro Castillo** reported hearing voices telling him to commit rape. **Michael Carneal** downloaded a document titled “Raping of a Dead Corpse”; another document on his computer was a story of **Smurfs** (cartoon characters) who

go into a sexual frenzy and apparently commit rape. **Stephen Morgan** (a non-school shooter) planned to rape and kill a woman he had been stalking before going on a rampage at Wesleyan University. He ended up killing the woman off-campus.

Prostitutes / Casual Encounters

Gang Lu bragged about his visits to prostitutes. **Seung Hui Cho** hired a woman from an escort service shortly before his rampage, but reportedly she rejected his attempt to have sex with her. **Steven Kazmierczak** had casual encounters with both males and females. **James Holmes** (a non-school shooter) reportedly used prostitutes; shortly before his attack he met with a prostitute but was unable to perform.

As noted above, both **Patrick Purdy** and **James Wilson** prostituted themselves.

Mitchell Johnson used telephone sex lines.

Bondage

Several shooters were interested in sexual bondage. **Robert Poulin** was obsessed with bondage and rape and engaged in both on the day of his attack. **Laurie Dann** had pornography focused on the bondage of men. Both **Pekka Eric-Auvinen** and

Tim Kretschmer had pornography that dealt with bondage, and **Auvinen** wrote about this interest online. **Dylan Klebold** referred in his journal to his interest in bondage (as well as a foot fetish). **Steven Kazmierczak** expressed interest in masochistic sex.

Pedophilia

Alvaro Castillo was sexually aroused by a child and feared that he might be a pedophile.

Adam Lanza wrote at length about pedophilia, defending it as a practice and yet denying that he was a pedophile.

Thomas Hamilton was obsessed with young boys and took thousands of photographs of them in bathing suits, focusing on the middle of their bodies. Though he was suspected of being a pedophile, there are no reliable reports of inappropriate sexual behavior.

SUICIDE IN PRISON

After his attack, **Jason Hoffman** said his intention was to be killed by police. Though he survived the attack, he killed himself in prison. Other shooters have been so distraught about shooting people that they tried to kill themselves in prison. This includes **Jamie Rouse**, **Michael Carneal**, and **T.J. Solomon**.