

School shootings in the united states

[Law](#), [Crime](#)



In this paper it looks at some previous school shooting that have happened in the United States. It looks at the shooters, and also look at theories of what possibly could've been their motives for committing such a tragedy, taking innocent lives. The paper looks at what we have learned and what we can do to prevent future school shooting tragedies. It looks at how bullying has pulled the trigger and how kids just want to be heard. The paper looks at what psychologist and criminologist have to say about future shootings and past shooters.

It looks at the copycat effect and how the 1999 Columbine High School shooting has set the tone and gained such attention that people have attempted or made notion that there will be an attempted repeat. Keywords: School shootings are a tragedy that does not cross many minds in America until one occurs. The people who end up involved never imagine something like that happening to them, and the ones that go unaffected by the situation continue to ignore it. This is a major problem in America today.

But we can't really fix what we don't know what to fix, looking back on these tragedies that take place in schools. We see don't see nothing but a cold blood killer, but looking deeper than what the naked eye sees on the surface, we have saw that many of the shooters that have shot up schools in the past have been victims. They have been victims of harassment, depression, and anger that has been built up. They have stated warning signs but people in society tend to ignore and blow the warning signs off like nothing could ever happen.

That is until all the built up anger and resentment from being bullied, feeling alone, and depressed seem to outburst in to horrific tragedies. The Columbine Shooting. America's most deadly school shooting took place at Columbine High School in 1999. Two boys named Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold opened fire on their classmates killing which 14 classmates and teaches life got taken away that day when Harris and Klebold entered their school. They also took their own life after the horrific act (Phillips, 2006). It is said that the two killers were plotting this soon to be known tragedy for two months.

Right after the shooting happened, it was discovered that one of the gunmen had an internet site talking about killing. The website talked about making pipe bombs on the website it stated that " pipe bombs were some the easiest and deadliest way to kill a large group of people. " The site also referred to NBK which was an event that that was approaching where the pipe bombs would be used. It's said that the two boys were a members of an antisocial group that are referred to as the " Trench Coat Mafia" there was supposedly a group of ten students that wore long coats and dark sunglasses all the time.

Classmates of the two killer's state that they were jerks and that they were strange. They didn't really talk to anyone else at the school, they were considered to be outcasts (Marshall, 1999). Shooters who were victims of bullying. One in particular shooting is a prime example that bullying can send someone over the edge. The shooting took place at Heath High School in west Paducah Kentucky in 1997. The shooter was Michael Carneal who

claimed he was bullied and he opened fire on the school prayer group, shooting eight of his classmates.

When Carneal was asked why did he do it? He said he was sick of being bullied and picked on (Deadly lessons: Understanding, 2003). Carneal stated that he was talked down to and humiliated and even physically tormented. He was brought to his breaking point due to bullying. Michael Carneal wasn't just the only one that has opened fire in school due to being bullied. Alleged shooter Charles Williams who took the lives of two students injuring thirteen others when he opened fire at a Santana High School in Santee California in 2001.

It was the deadliest shooting in the United States since massacre that took place at Columbine High School in 1999. Williams had a fit depressingly common profile for children in trouble in the United States Schools according to psychologists and the schools security. The teen was a social outsider whose angry lethal threats were taken as jokes by his friends and family. Richard Butterworth a psychologist who studies United States school shootings, states that the consciousness that are in kids today is shooting is the way to manifest their anger.

Since the Columbine school shooting schools have been so afraid of a fire in their hallways, they have put extinguishers everywhere. But yet they have done nothing to what are causing the fires, these kids are mad and they don't know what else to do states Butterworth (Quinn, 2001). Eric Chester a Denver based teen expert stated that Williams " appears to be another distraught, disengaged, disenfranchised kid who wanted people to take notice of him" (Quinn, 2001).

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Williams was a 15 year old who was described as “ a skinny kid who got picked on a lot” some of his other aquanauts described him as an outsider who was a nerd, but others state that he was well liked. One classmate Jessica more says people called him “ freak, dork, and nerd” (Bradberry, 2001). These two examples of school shooters were not the only victims that felt like they had to open fire inside hallways to be notice or heard. Sad to say they will probably be more that are victims of being bullied and will feel as this is the only way.

The Copycat Effect. Since the Columbine High School shooting they seem to be an outburst of copycats that have been found with bomb making material in their passion, people who have made threats to do something Columbine like, to people found just days before their plots that are columbine like and are about to be take place and have been stop due to tips to the officials. The recent school shooting that took place a Sandy Hook Elementary School where 28 in total lost their life including the shooter himself and his mother.

From the evidence gathered at the house of alleged shooter Adam Lanza, there was no goodbye letters nor a tell all letter. No motive was giving as to why Lanza opened fire in an elementary school full of innocent kids, from the news the day of the shooting no one really knew of an Adam Lanza which means he was antisocial probably. However the officials and investigators did discover he was a twenty year old boy who was obsessed with mass killers. The most odd and dark disturbing thing investigators and officials recovered at Lanza’s house was Lanza’s fascination with the 1999 Columbine High School shooting.

The Columbine massacre was like the center of Lanza's obsession that had to do with mass shootings. According to the Newtown report, Lanza had "hundreds of documents, images, and videos pertaining to the Columbine High School massacre." He also had downloaded videos about the two gunmen (Pearce, 2013). During an analysis of school shootings between the years 1999-2007 Professor Ralph W. Harkin of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice at City University of New York found that 8 out of 12 school shooters "directly referred to the Columbine shooting" (Pearce, 2013).

Seung-hui Cho just right after the Columbine High shooting, Cho was an eighth grader when he had supposedly written a disturbing English paper and in it he stated that he wanted to make a repeat of the Columbine shooting eight years after that paper he opened fire on the campus of Virginia Tech College and took the lives of 32 people including his own. Which passed the Columbines total body count with flying colors, even though it was at a college. He still was in the train of thought while he was in grade school which wasn't many years later after the Columbine shooting.

Like one Criminologist warned in 2007 after the Virginia Tech shooting "records exist but to be broken" (Pearce, 2013). Theories behind the purpose of kids and teenage killers. Although there are a lot of theories on why kids and teenagers go on killing sprees at schools, no one can really put a finger on to why they go on their killing sprees taking innocent people's lives. A big theory is that they are bullied and that's the only one that makes sense to a lot of unknown motives of past mass killers that go on killing sprees at schools.

They are out casters that can no longer stand the bullying and humiliation, and just want to be heard. They feel as if the only fix to being heard and notice is pack guns to school and unleash the hurt and angry they feel to the bullies, even though they tend to take innocent people's lives that haven't done nothing to them in their path to destruction. Some theories state that they just want the fame weather they take their own life in the process or they pay the price living. Other theories blame mental illness, some theories blame numerous things all at once.

They were mental ill and got picked on and they went unheard, so they wanted to get famous to get notice and heard. But nobody can actually pin point what has exactly triggered today's youths killing sprees. James Alan Fox a Criminologist professor at Northeast University in Boston states " Nothing is different about kids" although fifty years ago, a kid that has been getting bullied or is a victim of being bullied is more likely to take their anger out by going on a vandalism spree rather than to pick up the nearest gun they can get their hands on and go on a killing spree (Khadaroo, 2013).

What has been learned and what can help prevent school Shootings. Shootings at educational institutes are tragic and a shocking thing for the United States. For the most recent big massacre that took place at Sandy Hook Elementary, there have been many discussions on what we can do to prevent something so horrific from happening again. But in the reality a lot of people find themselves asking can anything really be done to prevent such horrific things like school shooting from happening?

An article the is prepared by Dr. Daniel J. Flannery at Case Western Reserve University and colleagues the article contains an examination of the past <https://assignbuster.com/school-shootings-in-the-united-states/>

studies on the topic that's main focus is on "targeted" and "rampage" or "spree" shootings. The article finds that there are some characteristics shared from past shooters. Shooters shared characteristics like narcissism, depression, low self-esteem, and a fascination with violence. There isn't however enough distinctive similarities to create a distinctive profile for a future potential shooter (Springer, 2012).

The authors came to a conclusion, that the most effective way to possibly prevent these kind of tragedies is through a threat assessment. An assessment which requires fundamental testing, such as suicide risk, homicide risk, thought process, reality testing, mood and behavior, as well as social and developmental histories. Another key is to pay close attention to an obsession with violence and firearms. Even though this may seem obvious, but the resources that are provided to mental health school officials don't provide for these assessments.

The other conclusion that the authors have come to, is that the mental health officials and adults need to take threats of violence seriously, just like they have been doing to the suicide threats (Springer, 2012). Conclusion. The conclusion we have come to by the end of this paper on school shootings is, that majority of the shootings that have happened have been outburst of anger and just of dire need of wanting to be heard. Although there isn't many clear motives, almost in every case the shooter have or has been bullied or has been an out-caster.

We've learned that the Columbine High School shooting has set the bar high for the high body count and even though that was surpassed at the Virginia Tech shooting. The Columbine gave school shootings a new tone. Sure we

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could crack down on guns and make stricter laws toward them. But the Columbine shooters made it clear that if someone really knew how to make a good bomb they could just as well kill people. There are rules about being tougher on bullying but there's always going to be bullying going on no matter how much we suspend kids, press charges against them it might take away some of the bullying.

But it will still be there. A lot of these shooters just wanted to be heard and they felt as opening fire in the hallways of school was the only way to get people to listen. So even though there isn't a lot we can do in prevention of these horrific crimes we can still look for a solution. School shootings can happen in any community in this country. What people don't realize is that it can happen in a flash, it doesn't matter how many awards the school gains for being an efficient school, it doesn't matter how many good people they're in the community.

There is always a left out person an out caster that has been a victim or is being a victim as we speak that just wants someone to hear them out but this country don't seem to listen even when they do make threats. Some shooting the shooters have clearly said something bad was going to happen, that they were going to do something. But there again no one would listen people just think yeah right you couldn't and you wouldn't. But in reality they are being dead serious. Every threat needs to be taken serious and the one that makes the threats needs people to take time to listen to what they have to say, to what they are feeling.