

Mass Murder, Mental Illness, and Men

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Abstract

Although mass murder is a rare event in the United States—perhaps a dozen to a dozen and a half incidents a year in the recent decades—occurrences tend to overshadow the much greater number of other murders, because of the electrifying effect upon the public of so many lives being lost all at once. Much of the heightened frequency and greater death toll stems from the easier availability of semiautomatic weapons since the 1970s. Several recent, highly dramatic mass murders were committed by mentally ill persons, which has led to unwarranted stigmatization of the mentally ill as an inherently dangerous element in society. Mass murder is an almost exclusively male phenomenon (male:female ratio ~24:1)—a reflection of evolutionarily driven tendency for males to be more aggressive than females. Most mass murders are planned well in advance of the outburst, usually as acts of revenge or retribution for perceived slights and wrongs. Overwhelming hopelessness is often present: this may help explain how nearly half the persons committing mass murder either commit suicide or are killed by the police in the immediate aftermath of the event. The percentages of mass murder among white and black persons approximate their percentages in the general population; the ratio for Hispanics appears less than expected. The majority of mass murderers are persons with paranoid personality configurations (including, at the more severe end, paranoid schizophrenia)—typically associated with a deep sense of disgruntlement and unfairness. Persons at high risk to commit mass murder are hard to spot in advance, given the much greater number of grudge-holding persons than those who ever carry out a mass murder. This complicates the task of law enforcement: Mass murder is difficult to prevent, all the more so given the unpopularity of government confiscation of semiautomatic weaponry.

Introduction

THE QUESTION ABOUT a possible relationship between mass murder and mental illness was vaulted into one of nationwide interest throughout 2011–2012, owing to a number of spectacular examples. This *annus horribilis* began with the attempted assassination of Congresswoman Gabrielle Gifford by Jared Loughner in Arizona on January 8, 2011. Although Ms. Gifford survived her grievous injuries, six others died. A year and a half later, a white supremacist neo-Nazi killed six persons in a Wisconsin Sikh temple. That massacre was followed 2 weeks later by the still more electrifying rampage in Aurora, Colorado, in which a recently dismissed graduate student, James Holmes, shot 12 people to death in a movie theater, wounding 6 dozen more. But these tragedies paled in comparison with what was about to happen 4 months later: the shooting to death of 20 elementary-school children and 6 of their teachers—by 20-year-old Adam Lanza in Newtown, Connecticut.

These four cases serve as a convenient starting place in discussing the controversy concerning mass murder and mental illness. Three of the four, namely, Loughner, Holmes,

and Lanza, appear to have been mentally ill by almost any commonly accepted standard. But there is vagueness inherent in the phrase “mentally ill”: Not all who use the term use it in the same way, not even within the field of psychiatry, let alone within the much wider public sphere. An example from my work at a forensic hospital is illustrative.

Some years ago a middle-aged high-school teacher lured an adolescent boy onto his property, immobilized him at gunpoint, and proceeded to castrate him while still alive, and then cook and eat his genitals. Once arrested, the judge at his trial declared that the man must be sent to a forensic hospital (rather than to a prison), because anyone who would commit such a grotesque crime must be crazy (though, to sound more technical, he used the word “schizophrenic”). But this was a typical instance of “begging the question” in its literal (and seldom correctly used) meaning—of basing a conclusion on an *assumed* but untested premise. All the judge was saying was: “the man is crazy; therefore, we must send him to the place for crazy people.” As a mitigating factor in the judge’s mistake, the psychiatrist who presented the case in court was himself unacquainted with the nature of sexual sadism, and also

concluded that the man must have been “schizophrenic.” Only he was not. The case was one of sexual sadism in a nonpsychotic man—as well described by Hazelwood and Michaud (2001) in their excellent treatise on sexual violence. The man in question had no stigmata of schizophrenia at all (no delusions, no hallucinations, no formal thought disorder, etc.), but was rather a profoundly narcissistic and obsessive man who experienced *sexual arousal* while castrating and then murdering his victim (acts that meet the definition of “sexual sadism”). The man showed a serious personality disorder, but not a psychosis.

I believe that it is preferable and logically more sound to confine the term “mentally ill” to persons exhibiting a psychosis as defined more rigorously in standard psychiatric and psychological texts. “Mentally ill” would then encompass such conditions as schizophrenia, manic-depressive (bipolar) disorders with accompanying delusion, schizoaffective psychosis, delusional disorder, severe forms of autistic-spectrum disorders, and psychoses resulting from serious head injury or from abuse of psychotomimetic drugs. The red thread running through all such conditions is a significant impairment in reality testing. But a word of caution is in order here as well. Within the ranks of mass murderers, for example, are many whose crime was prompted by bigotry—against various groups: blacks, whites, Asians, Jews, Muslims, women, gays, communists, and so on. But the beliefs of most such bigots often exist as a kind of narrowly circumscribed paranoia in an otherwise nonpsychotic man (they are all men) who retains at least a modicum of social and occupational skills, allowing them to live in society either largely unnoticed or, at worst, regarded as a bit cranky and hard to get to know. To call all such men *mentally ill* (i.e., psychotic) simply because they went on to commit mass murder is, again, to “beg the question”—by making the premature assumption that to commit such an act is *eo ipso* to be crazy/mentally ill/psychotic. Some of these men, as I hope to demonstrate, were indeed mentally ill (by my narrower definition), though many others were not.

I also recognize a gray zone in which the degree of paranoid ideation may have spread more widely in their psychological functioning as to justify inclusion among the mentally ill. And, as Ramsland and Saborsky (2013) have pointed out, in the analysis of mass murderers one is often left with the risks of relying on what they have labeled as “distance diagnosis” based on the reports of others, media stories, and the like, in the absence of direct experience with the perpetrator. All the greater a problem when dealing with mass murderers, about half of them either commit suicide or are killed by the police as the finale to their rampage, foreclosing any possibility of direct psychiatric evaluation. I have had to indulge in this scientifically imperfect exercise also. Two of the aforementioned mass murderers committed suicide (Page and Lanza); we know little about their psychological background apart from reports in the media, few of which were based on psychiatric records released to the public.

The Database

Before getting down to individual cases, a word is in order concerning the database I have relied on in writing this article. The information I have gathered to form a database

of mass murderers stems from a variety of sources. These include biographies of noted mass murderers, written by “true-crime” authors, such as that of Patricia Martinelli (writing about the Ingenito massacre) (2010). In addition, briefer accounts of a larger number of mass murderers were culled from several books and encyclopedic works devoted to the general topic of mass murder. Included here are the books of Grant Duwe (2007), James Fox and Jack Levin (2012), Brian Lane and Wilfred Gregg (1994), Ronald and Stephen Holmes (2001), John Liebert and William Birnes (2011), and Katherine Ramsland (2005). I gathered additional vignettes from Internet websites devoted to the subject of mass murder, such as Murderpedia, NextMassacre, European Massacres, List of Rampage Killers, US/Wikipedia, and LordGón List of Mass Murderers. Reports in magazines and newspapers constitute another source, which overlaps to some extent with the more detailed descriptions in books. From these sources I was able to create two tables (Tables 1 and 2): one with 235 examples from mass murderers in the US based on more complete descriptions from books and from lengthier accounts from the Internet; the other (Table 2), from over 300 examples focusing on the recent increased use of semiautomatic weapons.

Regarding the issue of mental illness, there are, in addition, a number of commentaries from Internet sources by experts who have turned their attention to the supposed frequency of mental illness within the ranks of persons who have committed mass murder. These authors usually rely upon the FBI definition, requiring four deaths at the same time as a minimum criterion for “mass murder” (though some accept the simultaneous killing of three or more as a criterion; Katsavdakis et al. 2011).

The impressions of these commentators are by no means uniform. Criminologist Grant Duwe, for example, stated during a September 23, 2013, interview on *Here & Now* that mass murder rates and mass public shootings have been on the decline, noting also that only 0.2% of all homicides in the United States are mass murders—of which 10% qualify as mass public shootings, such as those committed by Holmes, Lanza, and—in September 2013—by Aaron Alexis in the Washington, DC, Navy yard. Duwe added that the most common variety of mass murder is familicide (such as in the famous case of accountant John List, who killed his mother, wife, and three children, and then hid out for 18 years from the authorities). Duwe claimed that 60% of those who commit mass public killings suffer from a serious mental illness—a rate he stated was six times higher than in the general population. Another criminologist, Professor Gary LaFree of the University of Maryland, voiced the opposite impression: shooting sprees are on the rise and probably won’t be ending anytime soon. He did not offer an opinion as to the percentage of mass murderers who were also mentally ill. As to the number of victims, Ronald Dicker of the *Huffington Post* mentioned that the number of persons killed in clusters of four or more (i.e., *victims* of mass murders as defined by the FBI) averaged 163 per year between 2006 and 2008, adding that the country seems to be getting a specialized strain of violence (mass murder) at a time when other forms of murder are in decline. A toll of 163, at all events, constitute 1% of the murder victims per year in the United States currently. But since each mass murderer has killed four or more persons, Duwe’s comment that mass murderers make up only 0.02%

TABLE 1. MASS MURDER TABLE

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
1913	Walter Jones	M	12				And William Jones (accomplice)	Suicide both	18, 20
1914	Julian Carlton	M	7	Fire from gasoline	Grudge, was fired from job	Disgruntled	Servant at Frank Lloyd Wright's Wisconsin home doused dinner guests with gas; set fire	Starved in jail	30 B
1915	Monroe Phillips	M	6	Rifle	"His life not going well"		Atlanta businessman kills 6, wounds 32; killed by cops	Suicide	
1916	Arthur Akers	M	7	Pistol			A man in Arkansas kills people in the street randomly with a pistol	?	?
1923	Joe Pullen	M	4	Gun	Anger at white boss	Disgruntled	White boss came to collect debt; tenant farmer, who in a rage kills 4 or more whites	Suicide	? B
1926	John Goins	M	6	Gun	Wife died during 1926 divorce		Shot 6 prominent people in Stockton, California; was married with 4 kids; motive ?	Suicide	49 B
1927	Andrew Kehoe	M	45	Explosive	Paranoid, vengeful	Paranoid personality	School treasurer about to lose farm mortgage; sets wife on fire and bombs school, then self	Suicide	55
1928	Leung Ying	M	11	Rifle, hatchet	Teased, rejected	Humiliated	Tong narcotics peddler angry at family who prevented him from marrying Nellie Wong	Suicide	29 CH
1928	Owen Oberst	M	7	Automatic pistol	Anger at dad	Familicidal outburst	Mad at dad who wouldn't let him have the car, so he shot the family and burned down the house	Life sentence	17
1932	Harry Lyman Young	M	6	Rifle	Criminals killing police	Antisocial personality	With brother Jennings, both thieves who were cornered by cops in Missouri; kills 6 cops	Suicide	27,35
1932	Julian Marcelino	M	6	Knives	Declared "insane"	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Goes berserk and kills 6 on streets of Seattle due to rage at a man who owed him money; ex-army	Life sentence	30 FIL
1933	Herman Klink	M	5	Pistol	Dementia praecox diagnosed	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	"Maniac" who shoots 5 random strangers dead on the street, then is killed by cop	Suicide	40

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TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
1935	Charles Layman	M	6	Gun	Mentally ill	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Persecutory notions about coworkers keeping him from doing his job; fired and "avenged"	NGRI	44
1944	Robert Dale Segee	M	168	Arson	Antisocial personality disorder (ASPD), violent	Antisocial personality	Sets fire at Hartford circus killing 168; did previous murders and arsons because of sexual frustration	40 years: arson	15
1942	James Simececk	M	4	Revolver	ASPD, violent	Antisocial personality	Shoots and strangles a woman he raped and then kills her 3 kids to avoid detection	4 life sentences	25
1945	Clarence V. Bertucci	M	9	Machine gun	Called mentally ill, ?just angry	Probable mental illness	Army private kills 9 German POWs in Utah; angry he didn't get to kill during the war	NGRI	23
1948	Melvin Collins	M	8	.22 Rifle	ASPD, violent	Antisocial personality	Shooting rampage when enraged, kills 7 blacks and 1 white and himself; Chester, Pennsylvania	Suicide	38 B
1949	Howard Unruh	M	13	Luger PO8 semiautomatic	Paranoid	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	28-year-old veteran paranoid about neighbors; put in hospital for mental illness	Died at 88	28
1950	William Cook	M	6	Pistols	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Shoots a family of 5 whose car he took, and 1 other, in California; executed 1952	Executed	21
1950	Ernest Ingenito	M	5	Rifle, 2 pistols	ASPD, hatred	Antisocial personality	Cheated on wife, angered her dad who threw him out; kills 5 in her family	Life sentence	26
1950	James Lammers	M	4	Strangulation, fire	Didn't want so many kids	Familicidal outburst	Wife expecting another kid; kids got on his nerves; he strangles her and sets fire	Hanged 1/52	27
1955	Jack Gilbert Graham	M	44	Bomb	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	To speed inheritance and relieve debt, gives mom an X-mas-wrapped bomb on plane	Executed	23
1959	Paul Harold Orgeron	M	5 and self	Bomb	ASPD, obsessive, grandiose	Antisocial personality	Brings bomb to his son's school (to force his admission) but it explodes, killing son and 4 others	Killed by bomb	47
1959	Dick Hickock	M	4	Rifle, knife	ASPD/robbery	Antisocial personality	With accomplice Perry Smith, kills Clutter family in rural Kansas; "In Cold Blood" case	Executed	28

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TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

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1963	Luis Jose Monge	M	4	Poker, knife	Fear/exposure of incest	Familicidal outburst	Denver salesman with 10 kids had incest with 13-year-old daughter; when exposed, he kills wife and 3 kids	Executed	45 H
1964	Edgar Ray Killen	M	3	Gun	Racist bigot	Bigotry	Ku Klux Klan Mississippian kills 3 civil rights workers; sentenced 41 years later	In prison	39
1966	Charles Whitman	M	13	Bolt-action rifle; 357 M	Rage, tumor	Intense rage	Marine from dysfunctional family kills mom, wife, then strangers from Texas Tower	Suicide	25
1966	Rob't Benjamin Smith	M	5	.22 Pistol	Schizoid, sought "fame"	Intense rage	18-year-old high school student makes 5 women and 2 kids lie on floor, only 2 survive	In prison	18
1966	Richard Speck	M	8	Knife	Psychopath, head injury	Psychopathic personality	(Killed 8 nurses)	Died/prison	24
1967	Leo Held	M	6	Semiautomatic pistols	Paranoid, disgruntled	Paranoid personality	Angry 39-year-old man, paranoid, kills 5 supervisors and 1 other; killed by cops	Suicide	39
1968	Eric Emmanuel Pearson	M	7		Insufficient data			Life sentence	56
1969	Rob't Kenneth Smith	M	2		Insufficient data		And injured 10	Suicide	31
1970	Jeffrey R Macdonald	M	3	Knife, blunt instrument	Rage (caught in the act)	Intense rage	Army doctor caught molesting daughter by pregnant wife; kills wife and two daughters; blames "hippies"	In prison	27
1970	Eugene Everette	M	7		Insufficient data			Arrested	32
1970	John Linley Frazier	M	5	.38 Revolver	Paranoid schizophrenic (Sz) on LSD	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Santa Cruz hippie killed hippie-hating doctor, his wife, and 3 kids; death row	Suicide 2009	24
1971	John List	M	5	.22 Target pistol	ObsComp	Familicidal outburst	(Familicide in face of debt)	Died in prison	46
1972	Harvey Glenn McLeod	M	4	.22 Rifle	Impulsive anger, bigotry?	Intense rage	Killed 4 at a shopping mall where a senator was campaigning, unbeknownst to McLeod	Suicide	23 B
1972	Edwin James Grace	M	6	Sawed off .22 rifle	Disgruntled worker	Disgruntled	Anger with a New Jersey employment agency; he had worked as a Pinkerton guard	Suicide	33

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TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

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1973	Mark Essex	M	7	Semiautomatic rifle	Paranoid, racist	Paranoid personality	New Orleans ex-Navy black, hated whites, shot 7 in Howard Johnson's	Suicide	23 B
1973	Wm Ray Bonner	M	6	20-Gauge shotgun	Angry, belligerent, not crazy	Intense rage	During argument with male friend and girlfriend, kills girlfriend and 5 others before his capture	Life sentence	25 B
1973	Doug Gretzler	M	17	Guns	ASPD, amphet. psychosis	Antisocial personality	With accomplice Willie Steelman (mental patient) kills 17 in robberies in California and Arizona	Executed	22
1973	Willie Steelman	M	17	Guns	Mentally ill	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Accomplice of Gretzler		28
1974	Ronald DeFeo	M	6	.35-Caliber rifle	ASPD, rage	Antisocial personality	Probably with help of his sister Dawn, kills family (and Dawn); rage to violent father Amityville	Life sentence	23
1974	Anthony Barbaro	M	3	Remington .30-06 rifle	Depressed	Depression (severe)	Olean, New York, high school honor student and member of rifle team kills 3, hangs himself in prison	Suicide	17
1974	William "Tommy" Zeigler	M	4	.38 Pistol	Greed, insurance fraud	Familicidal outburst	Killed wife and her parents and another; took out insurance policy on wife's life	Death row	30
1975	James Ruppert	M	11	18-Shot rifle, 3 revolvers	Delusional disorder	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Hated his infantizing mom who made him feel "gay"; killed family	Life sentence	41
1976	Brad Bishop	M	5	Hammer	Rage/humiliation	Familicidal outburst	North Carolina ex-forserv officer heard voices; kills mother, 3 kids, and mother-in-law; never caught	Disappeared	39
1976	Edward C. Allaway	M	7	Semiautomatic rifle	Paranoid, depressed	Probable mental illness	Upset wife about to leave; hated gays; put in Atascadero as insane at first	Atascadero	37
1977	Dale Pierre	M	5	Drano, gun	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Black Airforce man in Utah; HiFi massacre in a store during robbery and rape	Executed	21 B
1977	Dewitt Charles Henry	M	6	Semiautomatic rifle	Motive unclear	Probable mental illness	Unemployed truck driver kills 6 in Klamath Falls, Oregon; an adoptee	Life sentence	26

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TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

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1977	Emile Pierre Benoit	M	6	Ruger semiautomatic rifle	Violent psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Ambushes and kills 6; son of local New Jersey politician; had been a Marine, Golden Gloves boxer	Suicide	20
1977	Fred Cowan	M	6	Shotgun	Paranoid, racist	Paranoid personality	New Rochelle black and Jew-hating bigot kills 6 and kills black puppy	Suicide	33
1978	Gary Gene Tison	M	7	Shotgun	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	High-IQ serial killer escapes Arizona prison, kills family of 4 and 3 others	Died escaping	42
1979	Brenda Ann Spencer	F	2	Semiautomatic .22 rifle	ASPD, on PCP, alcohol	Antisocial personality	Shot for "the fun of it" elementary school pupils, killing 2 and wounding 8, random shooting	25 years to life	16
1980	Priscilla Joyce Ford	F	6	Automobile	Paranoid Sz, IQ 140	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	53-year-old paranoid schizophrenic ex-teacher mows down 6 in Nevada; dies in prison	Died in prison	53 B
1980	Alvin King (Texas)	M	5	Semiautomatic rifle	Disgruntled, a PhD	Disgruntled	Ex-school teacher kills 5 in church because they wouldn't testify in his incest case	Suicide	45
1980	Ronald Crumpley	M	2	Uzi semiautomatic	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Black gay-hater kills 2 gays, wounds others, as if devils	Secure hospital	38 B
1981	Lawrence W. Moore	M	4	Semiautomatic pistol	"Brain defect"	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Bursts into an Oregon museum tavern, kills 4, wounds 19; mentally defective	Death sentence	25
1982	Leslie Lowenfield	M	5	22 Rifle	Jealousy	Jilted lover/abandoned spouse	Spurned by ex-girlfriend, he kills her, her daughter, mother, father, and step-father in Louisiana; Guyanese	Executed in 1988	27 B
1982	John Felton Parish	M	6	Semisut pistol, revolver	Disgruntled worker	Disgruntled	Felt cheated because of being fired at work and loses custody battle just before massacre; killed by cop	Suicide	49 B
1982	Carl Brown	M	8	Semiautomatic	Paranoid, bec psychotic	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Angry at poor repair of lawn mower, he kills 8 at the machine shop	Suicide	51
1982	Humberto de la Torre	M	25	Arson	ASPD, marijuana (mj) abuse	Antisocial personality	Torched apartment run by uncle he had dispute with, killing 25 residents	Life sentence	21 H

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

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1983	Louis D. Hastings	M	6	Gun (? type)	Out of work, motive ??	Probable mental illness	Kills half the people in a tiny Alaskan town; arrested, out of work computer programmer	Life sentence	39
1983	Eliseo H. Moreno	M	6	.357 Magnum pistol	Spurned by wife, rage	Intense rage	Estrangement from his wife; kills relatives for not helping find her, as well as state trooper	Executed	24 H
1983	Michael O. Perry	M	5	Beretta, .357 Magnum	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Schizophrenic Louisiana man stalks actress Olivia Newton-John and at 28 kills whole family	Life sentence	28
1983	George Banks	M	13	AR-15 semiautomatic	Paranoid, delusional	Probable mental illness	Hated whites and kills 5 of his own kids and 4 of their moms	Life sentence	40 B
1984	Michael Allen Silka	M	9	30.06 rifle, pistols	ASPD, drifter	Antisocial personality	Kills 9 in Alaska when hunted by police for previous murder; ne'er-do-well drifter	Suicide	25
1984	Christopher Thomas	M	10	Gun; shot in head	ASPD, drifter	Antisocial personality	Kills 8 kids and 2 women in the Bronx; was high on cocaine; had prior arrests	Life sentence	34 B
1984	Abdelkrim Belachheb	M	6	9 mm automatic pistol	Insulted by 2 women	Humiliated	Moroccan in Texas danced with girlfriend, then shoots her and 5 others; gives himself up	Life sentence	39
1984	James O. Huberty	M	21	9 mm Uzi semiautomatic	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Violent family (wife also); disgruntled welder and ex-embalmer: SanIsidro Macdonald's	Suicide	41
1985	Steven Wayne Benson	M	2	Pipe bomb in car	Greed	Psychopathic personality	Heir to tobacco fortune, in debt, bombs mom's car killing 2, injuring 1; hoped to inherit fortune	Life sentence	34
1985	Sylvia Seegrist	F	3	Semiautomatic	Paranoid schizophrenic	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Shoots 3 to death at Philadelphia shopping mall; had been hospitalized many times	Life sentence	25
1986	Patrick Sherrill	M	14	Two .45-caliber pistols	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Disgruntled postal worker mad at being disciplined by boss	Suicide	44
1987	David Burke	M	43	Pistol (fired 6 shots)	ASPD, violent, disgruntled	Antisocial personality	Black Jamaican shoots boss who fired him, on plane; killing boss, self, and 40 others	Suicide	35 B

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TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

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1987	Howard Franklin Stewart	M	6	Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid "Rambo"-man	Paranoid personality	Hitchhiker in Missouri killed wife plus 2 others and self; motive unclear	Suicide	37
1987	James Schnick	M	7	.22 Pistol	Greed (?)	Familicidal outburst	Missouri farmer killed pregnant wife, her brother, and his kids—maybe for insurance money	Life sentence	36
1987	Daniel P. Lyman	M	7	?	Insufficient data	Familicidal outburst	36-year-old Tacoma man kills parents, wife, kids, in-laws, and then himself	Suicide	36
1987	William B. Cruse	M	6	.223 Semiautomatic rifle	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Delusional Florida retired librarian felt people called him queer; arrested	Death row	59
1987	Ronald Simmons	M	16	Handgun, strangulation	Narcissistic	Familicidal outburst	Kills 16 family members after wife wanted divorce; had incest with daughter	Executed	37
1988	Laurie W. Dann	F	1	Gun	Paranoid MDP	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Bipolar crazy woman invades Winnetka kindergarten, kills 1 boy, injures others	Suicide	31
1988	Richard Farley	M	7	Semiautomatic rifle and others	Paranoid, obsessive love	Paranoid personality	Stalks Laura Black, kills 7 at their firm, wounds her	Death row/San Quentin	39
1989	Joseph Wesbecker	M	8	AK-47	Depressed	Depression (severe)	Kentucky depressed man kills 8 coworkers and self	Suicide	47
1989	Lawrence DeLisle	M	4	Drowning	Depressed, debts	Depression (severe)	Detroit store manager in debt drives car with wife and 4 kids into Detroit river; 4 kids die	Life sentence	28
1989	Ramon Salcido	M	7	.22 Ruger semiautomatic pistol	Jealousy	Familicidal outburst	About to lose job and wife, he kills 7 in family, sodomizing 2 before killing	Death row/San Quentin	28 H
1989	Patrick Purdy	M	5	AK-47	Paranoid, drug abuse, ASPD	Probable mental illness	Mentally ill flophouse habitue hates Asians, kills 5 Cambodians and himself	Suicide	24
1989	Jeff Lundgren	M	5	Pistol	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Kills "disloyal" followers; was paranoid, psychopathic, charismatic cult leader	Executed	39

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

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1990	Julio Gonzalez	M	87	Arson	Jealousy	Jilted lover/abandoned spouse	Cuban émigré felt jilted by girlfriend; spreads gasoline in Happy Land dancehall (girlfriend survives)	Life in prison	35 H
1990	James Edw. Pough	M	10	.30 Caliber M-1 rifle; pistol	Paranoid, revenge	Paranoid personality	Mad when his car is repossessed in Florida, hot tempered/disgruntled; kills 8 at GM workplace	Suicide	42 B
1990	Juan Gonzalez	M	2	Machete	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Crazy man kills 2 with knife on Staten Island ferry	Deport/Cuba	37 H
1991	Thomas McIlvane	M	4	Sawed off .22 rifle	Paranoid, "prickly" nature	Paranoid personality	Postal worker fired (insubordinate); kills 4 employees	Suicide	31
1991	Gang LU	M	5	Handgun	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Iowa Chinese physics student mad at not getting prize	Suicide	28
1991	Joseph Harris	M	4	9 mm Uzi, .22 machine gun	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Aggrieved New Jersey postal worker kills ex-boss and her fiancé, then kills 2 postal workers	Died in prison	35 B
1991	George Hennard	M	23	Ruger P89 semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Killeen, Texas, mass murderer, hated women; shoots 50, kills 23, then fled as cops came	Suicide	35
1992	Robert Coulson	M	5	Gun, strangulation	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Adoptee, worried he would get cheated out of inheritance; kills whole family	Executed	24
1992	Eric Houston	M	4	Sawed-off shotgun	Paranoid/depressed	Paranoid personality	Disgruntled 20-year-old fails to get GED or good job, angry at teacher; shoots at high school	Death row	20
1992	Lynwood Drake	M	6	Pistol	Angry at being evicted	Intense rage	Evicted for not paying rent; kills landlord and 5 others in San Luis Obispo, California	Suicide	43
1992	Wayne Lo	M	2	Rifle	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	18-year-old Chinese-American student in Massachusetts hates minorities; kills 2 (then gun jams)	Life in prison	20
1993	Gian Luigi Ferri	M	8	Semiautomatic .45 pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Failed San Francisco businessman kills 8 lawyers, then himself	Suicide	56

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murderer perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
1993	Paul Calden	M	3	9 mm pistol	Disgruntled, out of work	Disgruntled	Fired from job at Fireman's Fund Insurance in Tampa; kills 3 and himself; wounds 1; loner; 0 friends	Suicide	33
1993	Alan Winterbourne	M	4	12-gauge shotgun	Disgruntled, out of work	Disgruntled	7 years out of work as computer analyst; kills 4 (including a cop) at employment agency	Suicide	33
1993	James Buquet	M	4	12-bore shotgun	Depressed angry loner	Depression (severe)	Wrestler with knee injury, loner preoccupied c Satan and murder; kills 4 at health club	Suicide	19
1993	Kenneth French Jr.	M	4	Pump shotgun	Paranoid, angry at world	Probable mental illness	While drunk in North Carolina restaurant, kills 4; hated gays (1 victim female, though)	Life sentence	22
1994	Colin Ferguson	M	6	Ruger 9 mm pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Jamaican émigré to U.S., hated whites; kills 6 whites on Long Island railroad train in 1993	Life sentence	35 B
1994	Dean Mellberg	M	4	MAK90 assault rifle	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Discharged from Army (mentally ill); kills 4 and is then killed by military police	Suicide	20
1994	Michael T. Stevens	M	5	Mail bomb	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	NYS ann angry at neg. reaction for girlfriend's parents	Life in prison	53
1995	Geoff Ferguson	M	5	Gun, fire	Rage	Intense rage	Connecticut landlord from hell kills 5 tenants in rent dispute; suicide in prison in 2003	Suicide	44
1995	Albert Petrosky	M	3	Assault rifle and 3 others	ASPD, predatory killer	Antisocial personality	Wife left him, lost custody of his son; kills her, another woman, and a cop; wounds 3 before capture	Suicide in prison	35
1995	Christopher Green	M	4	Handgun	Desperate	Desperation (intense)	Heavily in debt ex-postal worker robs \$5,000 from post office; kills 4; wounds 1	Life sentence	30
1995	Bruman Alvarez	M	5	Club, knife	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Potomac 20-year-old man goes berserk and kills doctor, his 3 daughters, and a housepainter	Life sentence	20 H
1995	Damell Collins	M	7	.22 Pistol	Psychopath, jilted lover	Psychopathic personality	Ex-con stalked and killed ex-girlfriend because she got an order of protection on him; he kills his mother and 5 others	Suicide	33 B

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
1995	James Simpson	M	5	Ruger 9 mm semi, .32 revolver	Paranoid, depressed	Paranoid personality	28-year-old Texan disgruntled ex-worker returns and shoots boss, boss's wife, and 3 others	Suicide	28
1995	Willie Woods	M	4	Glock semiautomatic	Paranoid/disgruntled	Paranoid personality	Disgruntled fired electrician "avenged" his "insult;" kills 4 in his Los Angeles workplace	Life sentence	42 B
1995	Leonardo Morita	M	5	Arson	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	46-year-old California electrician set home ablaze to kill family and get insurance; dies in flames	Suicide	46
1995	Roland James Smith	M	7	Gun; arson	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Black anti-white activist kills 7 in Harlem store; burns white-owned store, kills self	Suicide	51 B
1995	Timothy McVeigh	M	168	Bomb	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	"Retaliation" for U.S. government destruction of Waco, Texas, cult of David Koresh	Executed	27
1995	Michael Vernon	M	5	Gun	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Mentally ill Bronx 22-year-old in botched robbery kills 5 in a shopping mall	Life in prison	22
1996	Jillian Robbins	F	1	Rifle	Paranoid Sz, hallucinated	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	19-year-old girl kills 1 and wounds 1, Penn State campus	Secure hosp	19
1996	Clifton McCree	M	5	Semiautomatic	Paranoid, hated whites	Paranoid personality	Florida maintenance crewman, fired; gets revenge and kills 5 coworkers and then himself	Suicide	41 B
1996	Barry Lujaitis	M	3	Semiautomatic pistol	ADHD, depressed, bullied	Depressed (less severe)	Student with mood swings kills 3 at school; maybe feeling suicidal; folks split year before	Life sentence	15
1996	Josh Jenkins	M	5	Club, fire	Familicide	Familicidal outburst	15-year-old adoptee, mad at being sent to home for troubled youth; kills family	Arrested	15
1996	Shane Harrison	M	5	Tec 9 mm semiautomatic pistol	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	New Mexico man and woman accomplice kill 5 in botched armed robbery	Life sentence	26
1996	Wayne Coy Westbrook	M	5	.36 Hunting rifle	Rage	Intense rage	Humiliated by ex-wife having sex with 2 men at once, he kills her and 4 others, Texas	Life sentence	38

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murderer perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
1996	Jorjik Avanesian	M	7	Arson	Paranoid, religious zealotry	Mentally ill	California Armenian immigrant jealous of wife sets fire, kills whole family; near delusional	Suicide	42 IR
1996	Girtley Logsdon Crum	M	5	Knife	Ex-con	Psychopathic personality	Ex-con in Oregon slits throats of 5 in ex-girlfriend's family, a few days following his release from jail	Life sentence	34
1996	Frederick Davidson	M	3	Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	36-year-old graduate student in San Diego kills 3 professors who were hearing his thesis	Life in prison	36
1996	Kenneth Tornes	M	5	Semiautomatic assault rifle	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Mississippi fireman kills wife and 4 supervisors; hated the "bosses."	Died in prison	32 B
1997	Arthur Hastings Wise	M	4	Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid/disgruntled	Paranoid personality	Ex-con fired because of violent confrontation with boss; kills 4 coworkers with semiautomatic pistol	Executed	43 B
1997	Reco Jones	M	5	Knife	Rejection rage	Intense rage	23-year-old Detroit man kills girlfriend, her 2 kids, and 2 cousins the day she left him; stabs all	Life sentence	23 B
1997	Mark Storm	M	5	Semiautomatic	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	West Virginia riverboat pilot mentally ill; kills wife, mom, brother, and 2 daughters, then self	Suicide	?35
1997	Michael Carneal	M	3	AR-15 semiautomatic	Rebellious youth, mocked: "gay"	Humiliated	Small-town Kentucky student kills 3 and wounds 5 other students; from good family	25 years	14
1997	Carl Drega	M	4	Gun	Paranoid/eccentric	Probable mental illness	Long-time battle with government officials; New Hampshire man kills 2 state troopers and 2 others; had bombs	Suicide	67
1997	Danny Keith Hooks	M	5	Knife	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Rapist kills 5 women in 1992, not identified till 1997	Death row	34
1997	L. Woodhan and G. Boyette	M	3	Marlin .30-.30 rifle	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Michigan loner/Kroth-cult 18-year-old kills mom and 2 schoolmates	Life sentence	16

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
1998	Mitchell Johnson	M	5	Rifle	Jilted by girlfriend; rage	Jilted lover/abandoned spouse	13-year-old, with 11-year-old Andrew Golden, kills 4 students and a teacher in Arkansas	Released at 21	13
1998	Kipland Kinkel	M	4	Glock 9 mm, .22 rifle	Avenge expulsion from school, violent	Humiliated	High school student in Oregon kills parents and 2 students with guns dad bought him	Life sentence	15
1998	Matthew Beck	M	5	Semiautomatic pistol	Depressed/paranoid	Depression (severe)	Paranoid Connecticut accountant bitter at not being promoted kills boss and 4 others, then himself	Suicide	35
1999	Larry Gene Ashbrook	M	7	Semiautomatic	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Jobless loner/exhibitionist kills 3 adults and 4 teens in Texas Baptist church	Suicide	47
1999	Richard Gary Beach	M	5	Gun, ? type	Revenge	Intense rage	56-year-old limo driver kills crack-dealer nephew and 4 others; fed up with drugs	Life in prison	56
1999	Mark Barton	M	12	9 mm Glock, .45 Colt	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Failed day-trader in Atlanta kills wife, son, daughter, and 9 brokers at office	Suicide	44
1999	Zane Floyd	M	4	Shotgun	ASPD	Antisocial personality	Ex-marine raped a woman the night before, then shoots 4 to death in Las Vegas supermarket	Death row	23
1999	Larry Robison	M	5	Gun, knife	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Gay schizophrenic Texan decapitates roommate and 4 others; also on illicit drugs	Executed	25
1999	Seth Privacky	M	5	.22 Pistol	Rage at family; mj, LSD use	Intense rage	18-year-old with history of depression mad at father for kicking him out of house; kills family	Killed escaping	18
1999	Susan Eubanks	F	4	Gun	Depressed	Probable mental illness	Vista, California, divorced mother, drunk and depressed; kills her 4 children	Death row	35
1999	Buford Furrow	M	1 & wounded 5	Glock 9 mm handgun	Paranoid, bigot	Paranoid personality	38-year-old California white supremacist tried to kill Jews but kills postman and wounds 5 others instead	Life sentence	38

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
1999	Eric Harris & Dylan Klebold	M	13	67H pump-action	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Littleton, Colorado, massacre of 12 students and a teacher	Suicide	18
		M	—	Shotgun	Depressed	Depression (severe)	Klebold was a “follower” of the more assertive, psychopathic Harris	Suicide	18
1999	Bryan Uyesugi	M	7	9 mm pistol	Paranoid, delusional disorder	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Disgruntled Hawaii Xerox worker with persecutory delusions	Life sentence	40
2000	Craig Godineaux	M	7	.38 Semiautomatic pistol	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	With John Taylor, executes Wendy’s employees in Queens, New York	Life sentence	30 B
2000	Joseph Palczynski	M	4	Magnum pistol	Bipolar, ASPD, viol. with girlfriends	Probable mental illness	Baltimore antisocial/bipolar man kills 4, takes 2 hostages; cops finally kill him	Suicide	31
2000	Richard Bauhammers	M	5	.357 Handgun	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Immigrant-hating lawyer shoots Jewish, Indian, Asian, and black person; mentally ill	Death row	35
2000	Larry Dame	M	5	Hammer, knife	Paranoid Sz/ ASPD	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Minnesota ex-con kills sister a day after release, as well as her husband and 3 kids	Life sentence	28
2000	Dexter Levingston	M	5	Gun	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Tampa man, deaf, psychotic, and developmentally delayed kills grandmother and 4 others because of 6 years in mental hospital	Life sentence	25 B
2000	Michael McDermott	M	7	Semiautomatic rifle	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Software technician angry at IRS garnishing his wages; kills 7 coworkers	Life in prison	42
2001	Joseph Ferguson	M	5	AK-47, shotgun	Paranoid and loss of job and girlfriend	Paranoid personality	Sacramento security guard, age 20, jilted by girlfriend; kills her and 4 others	Suicide	20
2001	Christian Longo	M	4	Strangulation	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Indebted Jehovah’s Witness kills wife and 3 kids; escapes to Mexico, takes up with a woman	Death row	27
2001	Wm D. Baker	M	5	5 guns, including semiautomatic	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Employee/thief kills 5 and self as he was about to go to jail	Suicide	66

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2001	Andrea Yates	F	5	Drowning	Postpartum depression	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Psychotically depressed wife forced to live in bus snaps and drowns her 5 kids	Life sentence	36
2001	Adam Moss	M	7	Hammer and knife	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Violent Iowa man of 23 kills girlfriend, her 5 kids, and another man (to steal car)	Suicide	23
2001	Nikolay Soltys	M	7	Knife	Paranoid, persecutory delusion	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	27-year-old Ukrainian immigrant kills pregnant wife and 6 other relatives in California	Suicide in prison	27
2002	Peter Odighizuwa	M	3	.38 Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Nigerian 43-year-old psychotic law student kills dean, professor, and one other	Life sentence	43
2002	Edward Morris	M	5	Gun and knife	Depressed	Depression (severe)	Debt-ridden evangelical Christian man kills pregnant wife and their 3 kids in Oregon	Life sentence	37
2002	John Wolfenbarger	M	5	Gun (type unspecified)	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	With Dennis Lincoln, kills a family during a Detroit robbery	Life sentence	31
2002	Robert J. Flores Jr.	M	3	Had 5 handguns	Paranoid, depressed	Paranoid personality	Failing 41-year-old nursing student kills 3 nursing professors	Suicide	41 H
2002	Robert Bryant	M	6	Shotgun	Depressed	Depression (severe)	Former Jehovah's Witness in Oregon, because business failed; kills whole family and self	Suicide	38
2002	Darrell Brooks	M	6	Arson	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Baltimore drug dealer kills anti-drug mom and her 5 kids	Life sentence	21 B
2003	Douglas P. Williams	M	6	12-Gauge shotgun	Racist hothead, paranoid	Bigotry	Mississippi Lockhead worker—bigot and hostile—kills 5 blacks and 1 white before killing himself	Suicide	48
2003	Salvador Tapia	M	6	Semiautomatic pistol	Disgruntled, fired worker	Disgruntled	With 12 priors for weapons and assaults because he was fired from job, job, shoots 6 coworkers to death	Suicide	36 H
2004	Nathaniel Gale	M	4	Gun (type unspecified)	Paranoid Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Kills guitarist and 3 others, imagining they'd "stolen my song;" disgruntled black man	Suicide	25 B

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2004	Chai Sousa Vang	M	6	Saiga 7.62x39 semiautomatic	Paranoid at racial slurs	Paranoid personality	Kills 6 hunters during angry episode; was called a "gook" because of Hmong background	Life sentence	36 LAO
2004	Marcus Wesson	M	9	Ruger Mkii semiautomatic	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Black patriarch kills 9; had incest with daughters and nieces; with .22	Suicide	58 B
2005	Jeff Weise	M	7	2 Semiautomatic pistols	Paranoid, accumulated rage	Paranoid personality	American Indian student in Michigan kills a teacher, guard, and 5 other students	Suicide	16 NA
2005	Terry Ratzman	M	8	9 mm Beretta pistol	Depressed	Depression (severe)	Brookfield, Wisconsin, single churchgoer fired from job, worried about "end/days;" kills 7 and himself	Suicide	44
2006	Jennifer Sanmarco	F	7	Smith and Wesson 9 mm	Paranoid, delusional	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Postal worker, flop at everything, kills neighbor and 6 others and then herself; bigoted, killed minorities	Suicide	44
2006	Desmond Turner	M	7	AK-47 and SKS rifle	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	28-year-old Indiana robber kills 7 family members; was an ex-con and a psychopath	Life sentence	28 B
2006	Kyle Huif	M	6	Semiautomatic Ruger and rifle	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Antisocial twin from Montana kills 6 at Seattle dance, then himself	Suicide	28
2006	Charles Carl Roberts	M	5	Shotgun	Depressed	Depression (severe)	Amish school massacre; mad at life; possible pedophilic tendency; daughter died in 2003	Suicide	32
2007	David Garvin	M	3	9 mm semiautomatic, .357 p	Paranoid, work failures	Paranoid personality	Dishonorably discharged from Army; fired bartender kills 2 cops and another bartender	Suicide	42
2007	Eiken Elam Saimon	M	3	9 mm semiautomatic and two .22s	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	Missouri immigrant rapes 14-year-old girl and kills 3 others in a church	Life sentence	52 MIN
2007	Tyler Peterson	M	6	AR-15 Semiautomatic	Jealousy	Jilted lover/abandoned spouse	20-year-old Wisconsin deputy sheriff kills 6; motive probably jealousy	Suicide	20

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murderer perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2007	Robert Hawkins	M	8	Semiautomatic rifle	Mentally ill, ADHD, depressed, paranoid	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Because he was fired from job, kills 8 and himself at Westroads Shopping Mall in Omaha, Nebraska	Suicide	19
2007	Kirby Archer	M	4	Weapons not found	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	“Hired” Miami boat with crew of 4; kills all 4, hoping to go to Cuba to evade law	Life sentence	35
2007	Seung-Hui CHO	M	32	2 Semiautomatic pistols	Paranoid, autistic	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Autistic paranoid misogynistic Virginia Tech Korean American student, Asperger’s	Suicide	23 K
2008	S. Kazmierczak	M	5 and self	9 mm Glock semiautomatic and 3oth	Depressed	Probable mental illness	Student at Northern Illinois University kills 6 students and himself; was depressed/ girlfriend problems	Suicide	27
2008	Jesse Dotson	M	6	Semiautomatic pistol, knives	ASPD, paranoid	Antisocial personality	Memphis black man kills brother and 5 others in argument; was an ex-con/antisocial	Death row	35 B
2008	Nicholas Troy Shelley	M	8	Blunt force to head	Psychopath	Psychopathic personality	An ex-con kills 8 in Illinois and Missouri	Life sentence	28
2008	Isaac Lee Zamora	M	6	Rifle, knife	Mentally ill	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Unemployed man who lived in woods; said God told him to kill evil; couldn’t afford psychiatric medication	Life sentence	28 H
2008	Bruce J. Pardo	M	7	4 Semiautomatic handguns	Rage 1 week after divorce	Intense rage	Divorced man storms home of ex, kills 7 and himself, burns down house	Suicide	45
2008	Charlies Lee Thomson	M	6	Revolver, pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Disgruntled Missouri man loses lawsuit; kills 6 officials	Suicide	48 B
2009	Jiverly Wong	M	13	2 Berettas: 9 mm and 45 caliber	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Vietnamese immigrant, lost job, divorced, hated the U.S.; kills 13 people and then himself	Suicide	41
2009	Dr. Nidal Hasan	M	14	Pistol	Jihadist	Bigotry	Ft. Hood psychiatrist/Muslim jihadist shoots 14 to death, radicalized by Yemen imam	Death penalty	39 AR

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murderer perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2009	Rob't Kenneth Stewart	M	8	.22 Rifle	Jealousy, paranoid, alcohol	Jilted lover/abandoned spouse	Tries to kill ex-wife at work in nursing home, kills 8 others there; bad temper, out of work 1 year	Life sentence	45
2009	Ervin Lupoe	M	6	Gun	Desperate, fired from job	Acute depression	Medical technician fired from Kaiser Permanente in California; shoots wife, 5 kids, and himself	Suicide	40 B
2009	Michael McClendon	M	10	AR-15 semiautomatic	Depressed/disgruntled	Depression (severe)	27-year-old Alabama man, disgruntled with coworkers, depressed at failures; kills his mom, 9 others, and himself	Suicide	27
2009	George Sodini	M	3	3 Semiautomatic pistols	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	48-year-old North Carolina loser unable to make relations with women; shoots up dance class, kills 3 and himself	Suicide	48
2009	Guy Heinze Jr.	M	8	Blunt instrument	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	22-year-old Georgia man kills whole family of 8 in mobile home	Arrested	22
2010	Stanley Neace	M	6	12 g pump-action shotgun	Paranoid, hot-tempered	Paranoid personality	Kentucky trailer home man kills wife, stepdaughter, 3 neighbors, and self	Suicide	47
2010	Ballard, Michael	M	4	Knife	Extreme jealousy	Antisocial personality	37-year-old ex-con did 15 years for a 1991 murder; then kills lover, her dad, granddad, and neighbor; jealous	Death row, Pennsylvania	37
2010	WU, Huanming	M	9	Cleaver	Rage over property disput	Disgruntled	48-year-old man in Hanzhong kills 7 kindergarten kids and 2 adults because of dispute with admin man	Suicide	48
2010	Amy Bishop	F	3	9 mm handgun	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Atlanta professor shoots 3 colleagues to death for not giving her tenure	Facing trial	44
2010	Omar Thornton	M	9	Ruger SR-9 semiautomatic	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Disgruntled beer employee caught stealing; kills 8 coworkers and then himself	Suicide	34 B
2011	Michael Hance	M	7	.357 Magnum pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	51-year-old Ohio man kills girlfriend and 6 others in estate dispute; killed by cops	Suicide	51

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2011	Jared Loughner	M	6	Glock semiautomatic	Paranoid, "Sz" on drugs	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Arizona 22-year-old expelled student kills 6 in attempt to kill congresswoman; drug arrest history	Facing trial	22
2011	David S. Laffer	M	4	.45 Handgun	Desperate drug addict	Desperation	33-year-old Medford, Long Island, drug addict kills 4 in pharmacy, stealing opiates in June 2011	Facing trial	33
2011	Rodrick Damtzieler	M	7	Stolen Glock 9 mm pistol	ASPD, drug abuse; wif av to leave	Antisocial personality	Grand Rapids ex-con kills current and past families; abused alcohol and cocaine; many violent offenses	Suicide	34 B
2011	Tan Quoc DO	M	5	Gun (type unspecified)	Rage at wife divorcing	Intense rage	Vietnamese immigrant in Texas kills estranged wife, 4 of her relatives, and then himself	Suicide	35
2011	Eduardo Sencion	M	4	Gun (AK47)	History of mental illness	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Hispanic man in Nevada kills 3 in an IHOP restaurant, including 2 National Guards; kills himself	Suicide	32
2011	Scott Dekraai	M	9	.45 Semiautomatic pst	Paranoid/rage	Paranoid personality	Bipolar man in custody battle kills wife and 8 others in a beauty parlor	Life sentence	41
2011	Aziz Yazdanpanah	M	7	9 mm and 40 caliber pistols	Despair, honor killing	Familicidal outburst	Iran immigrant with marital and debt troubles in Texas kills wife, 2 kids, 3 relatives, and himself	Suicide	56
2012	T.J. Lane	M	3	.22 Handgun	Psychotic; callous-unemotional	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Chardon, Ohio, school shooter kills 3 in February; loner, dad in prison (for assault), "Goth"	Life sentence	17
2012	One L. Goh	M	7	.45 Handgun	Paranoid schizophrenic	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Korean 43-year-old nursing student recently fired from California school; kills 7, captured soon	? Psychiatric hospital	43 K
2012	Daniel Sanchez	M	3	Semiautomatic Glock	Jilted, rageful, revengeful	Jilted lover/abandoned spouse	Jilted violent man released on trivial bond p assaulting his girlfriend; immediately kills her and 2 relatives	Suicide	31 H

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murderer perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2012	Jeong Soo Paek	M	5	Semiautomatic pistol	Desperate	Familicidal outburst	Korean man with family-owned Georgian spa; money worries leads to shooting 2 sisters and their husbands	Suicide	50 K
2012	Stawicki, Ian Lee	M	5	.45 Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid, Sz?	Probable mental illness	Seattle psychotic paranoid man argued in café, returned; kills four there and then himself	Suicide	40
2012	Kevin Cleeves	M	3	Gun (type unspecified)	Rage	Intense rage	Estranged 35-year-old man of Pennsylvania kills wife, her boyfriend, and mom; he was arrested and jailed	Life sentence	35
2012	James Holmes	M	12	AK-47	Paranoid, schizotypal	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Aurora, Colorado, 24-year-old man shoots people at opening of Batman movie on July 19. A "loner" and graduate school dropout, dyed hair red to look like Batman's "Joker"	Awaiting trial	24
2012	Wade M. Page	M	6	Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	40-year-old neo-Nazi of Wisconsin invades Sikh temple; alcoholic and lost job and house and girlfriend	Suicide	40
2012	Jeffrey Johnson	M	1	.45 Handgun	Dsgruntled worker, loner	Disgruntled	Friendless loner, mad at ex-boss who fired him from garment distributor job; kills boss, wounds 11	Suicide	58
2012	Thomas Caffall	M	2	Semiautomatic gun	Mentally ill	Probable mental illness	Texas mentally ill divorcee, unemployed and evicted; kills 2, wounds 4, then cops kill him	Suicide	35
2012	Radcliffe Houghton	M	4	Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid	Paranoid personality	Milwaukee man kills wife, 2 other women, and himself; she wanted divorce; years of menacing	Suicide	45 B
2012	Andrew Engeldinger	M	6	9 mm Glock pistol	Paranoid, ?mental illness	Probable mental illness	Minneapolis loner fired from Accent Signage job; kills 5 at work and himself, had 10K bullets	Suicide	36

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murderer perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2012	Adam Lanza	M	27 and self	AK-47	Asperger's	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	20-year-old high-IQ loner with Asperger's in Newtown, Connecticut; shoots mom and 26 others, including 20 children	Suicide	20
2012	Jacob Tyler Roberts	M	2	Semiautomatic rifle	Broke c girlfriend	Jilted lover/abandoned spouse	Oregon mall shooter kills 2 and self, wounds 15-year-old girl; "quiet soft-spoken guy"	Suicide	22
2012	William Spengler Jr.	M	4	AR-15 and others	Mentally ill	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	62-year-old ex-con (hammer-grandmother) kills his sister, 2 firemen, and himself	Suicide	62
2013	Nehemiah Griego	M	5	AK-47	Rage	Intense rage	15-year-old New Mexico boy kills pastor-father, mom, and siblings; hoping to kill even more; arrested	Arrested	15 H
2013	Chris Dorner	M	4	Semiautomatic pistol	Paranoid, rage	Paranoid personality	Disgruntled LAPD cop charges racism and kills white cops and himself as cops close in	Suicide	33 B
2013	John Zawahri	M	5	Semiautomatic rifle	Mentally ill	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	California man with history in mental hospital; kills 2 family members, 3 others, and then himself	Suicide	23
2013	Aaron Alexis	M	12 and self	Pistols, semiautomatic	Paranoid schizophrenic	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Fired from Navy because of gun incidents, unemployed; on rampage in Washington, DC, kills 12	Suicide	34 B
2013	Paul Ciancia	M	1, wounded 2	Semiautomatic rifle	Depressed, paranoid, Sz	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	New Jersey man paranoid about TSA workers wanted to "instill fear in their traitorous minds"	Shot in head	23
2013	Ali Akbar Moham. Rafie	M	3 and self	.308-Caliber rifle	Paranoid, depressed	Paranoid personality	Disgruntled Iranian band-player kicked out of band, avenges "slight"; was in the U.S. for 2 years	Suicide	29 IR
2014	Ivan Lopez	M	3 and self	Semiautomatic pistol	Depressed, disgruntled	Depression (severe)	Pissed that Army didn't let him go to his mom's funeral from Iraq; kills 3, Ft. Hood, and then himself	Suicide	34 H

(continued)

TABLE 1. (CONTINUED)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Mass murder perpetrator</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>No. killed</i>	<i>Weapon</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Mental illness</i>	<i>Brief summary</i>	<i>Suicide or killed in action</i>	<i>Age at murder</i>
2014	Frazier Glenn Cross	M	3	Shotgun	Paranoid, racist, antisemite	Antisocial personality	Ku Klux Klan bigot kills 3 at Kansas Jewish Center (victims all Christian); said Heil Hitler	Arrested	73
2014	Elliot O. Rodger	M	6 and self	Semiautomatic pistols	Aspergers, paranoid, sex conflict	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	Son of British movie director; paranoid loner hated Santa Barbara coeds who rejected him	Suicide	22
2014	Ronald Haskell	M	6	Gun (?type)	Paranoid, mentally ill	Mentally ill: clearcut psychosis	In rage because of divorce, kills sister/brother-in-law and their kids in Texas; tried earlier to kill wife and mother	Arrested	33
2014	Jaylen Fryberg	M	4 and self	Beretta semiautomatic	Rage, rejected by girlfriend	Intense rage	15-year-old Chippewa rejected by girlfriend because of his violence; kills 4 and himself in Seattle-area high school	Suicide	15 NA
2015	Jonathon Walker	M	3 and self	.45-Caliber gun	Domestic violence	Intense rage	Educated, athletic bouncer in midst of domestic disharmony kills family and self. He felt his partner had been cheating on him with other men. He killed her and then their daughter and her mom (and wounded the older daughter by a different mom) saying he wanted to kill the girls also so they wouldn't be raised in foster-care.	Suicide	34 B

For Table 1 of mass murderers surveyed in the United States: 1913 to January 2015. **Sex ratio** of the 235 mass murderers: males, 226 (96.2%); females, 9 (3.8%); **Suicides**: 110 (47%); **Mentally ill** (strict standard: psychosis present): 46 (19.8%); **Use of semiautomatic weapon**: 1913 through 1970, 9%; 1971 through Jan. 2015, 53%; **Race and ethnic background**: Caucasian, 73.6%; Black, 15.3%; Hispanic, 6%; Others, 5.1% (including, by number: Arab, 1; Chinese, 1; Filipino, 1; Iranian, 2; Korean, 3; Laotian, 1; Miconesian, 1; Native American, 2). **ASPD**, antisocial personality disorder; **MDP**, manic-depressive psychosis; **mj**, marijuana.

TABLE 2. CHRONOLOGY OF MASS MURDERS COMMITTED WITH A SEMIAUTOMATIC WEAPON

										Jordan		
										USA		
										Brazil		
										Russia		
35										Tasmania		
										Yemen		
										USA		
										China		
										USA		
30										USA		
										USA		
										USA		
										USA		
25										USA		
										USA		
										Canada		
										USA		
									Canada	Scotland		
20									<u>USA</u>	USA		
									USA	France	<i>USA</i>	
									USA	Sweden	<i>USA</i>	
									USA	Germany	USA	
									USA	USA	USA	
15									Australia	USA	USA	
									Australia	USA	USA	
									England	France	USA	
									USA	USA	Canada	
									USA	Canada	USA	
10									Scotland	USA	USA	
									England	USA	USA	
									USA	USA	China	
									Canada	USA	France	
									USA	Australia	USA	
5								USA	USA	USA	USA	
								Canada	USA	USA	USA	
								England	USA	USA	N Zealand	Germany
								USA	USA	USA	USA	
								USA	USA	USA	USA	
								USA	USA	USA	USA	
		Italy							USA	USA	USA	
		USA							USA	USA	USA	
	Sweden	USA	USA	Japan	USA	USA	USA	Canada	USA	USA	USA	
	1900–1909	1910–1919	1920–1929	1930–1939	1940–1949	1950–1959	1960–1969	1970–1979	1980–1989	1990–1999	2000–3/2008	
N	1	2	1	1	1	2	5	6	21	39	19	

Boldface, rifle; italics, semiautomatic pistol; underline, AK-47; all others, unspecified.

of all homicides—that is, of all individuals committing murder—is probably an accurate assessment.

In their book on mass murder in the United States, Holmes and Holmes (2000) agree with Duwe that familicides (“family annihilators”) are the most common type of mass murderer, but they differ in declaring that the psychotic killer (my “mentally ill” killer) is “very much in the minority of mass killers” (p. 108). This, in contrast to the viewpoint of forensic psychiatrist Park Elliot Dietz, who asserted that “Of all crimes, the one most closely associated with serious mental illness is mass murder....They are not schizophrenic, but they all show signs of depression and paranoia” (cited in the Murderpedia article on James Daniel Simpson, p. 3). But here again we are in that shady territory where, to descend for a moment to gallows humor, if you have three experts, you have four opinions. Not all psychiatrists use even their technical terms in quite the same way. Dietz, for example,

may be conflating paranoia with *paranoid personality*. Some may say this is a distinction without a difference. But *paranoia* is usually confined to cases where there is a break with reality, that is, where the mistrustful, suspicious, grudge-holding, and persecutory attributes of personality reach *delusional* proportions, and therefore pass beyond *paranoid personality* into the realm of *paranoia*. As in any spectrum of mental peculiarities, there is admittedly a gray zone where there is room for disagreement.

Concentrating on mass murder in the United States, I have as of this writing (January 2015) cataloged 235 examples where there were fairly considerable data available to permit estimates of the murderers’ mental state and personality configurations (Table 1). A key to the abbreviations used is also included, along with some important statistics regarding sex ratio, suicide, mental illness, use of semiautomatic weapons, and race and ethnic differences.

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF VICTIMS AND CASES OF MASS MURDER

<i>No. of victims</i>	<i>No. of cases</i>
1	1
2	3
3	8
4	8
5	44
6	21
7	22
8	12
9	5
10	2
11	1
12	3
13	5
14	1
15	2
16	3
17	1
18	0
19	0
20	0
21–25	1
26–29	1
30–35	2
36–40	1
41–50	2
>50	2

I have included cases as shown in Table 3, where there were fewer than four victims, but where the intent to kill many persons was unmistakably clear from their actions. Of the eight female mass murderers, for example, the death toll was less than four in five cases thanks to some welcome deficiencies in their marksmanship. This deficiency was particularly notable in the case of Laurie Wasserman Dann (Kaplan et al. 1990), a woman of 30 whose psychopathology covered a wide array of diagnoses: borderline, antisocial, and paranoid personality disorders; bipolar manic-depression with delusions; and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Vengeful in the wake of her husband divorcing her, she at first tried (unsuccessfully) to stab her “ex” to death; later she barged into the kindergarten of a school in a Chicago suburb, shooting at the children. She killed one and wounded five, then tried to run away, but as the police then closed in on her, she killed herself with the same pistol. She obviously intended to kill as many children as she could, for which reason I consider her what I call a “mass murderer *manqué*.” It is equally obvious that she was mentally ill, since she was psychotic, not just disordered in personality. The year before her rampage, her behavior had deteriorated to the point where she would ride up and down elevators for hours on end, wear rubber gloves to touch metal, and leave meat to rot in sofa cushions. She attempted to murder with arsenic a number of persons with whom she had previously interacted, including her former husband and a former psychiatrist.

Among the male mass murderers, who account for almost 97% of the entire group, only 23 (10.5%) killed fewer than 4 victims. Most recently (in November 2013), Paul Ciancia marched into the passenger-screening area of the Los Angeles airport, carrying a concealed semiautomatic rifle, and killed a security agent, also wounding two others before he

was shot and immobilized by other guards. The 23-year-old Ciancia had donned a bullet-proof vest, and so there is reason to suppose that he may have intended to emerge alive after his planned massacre. But he left a note in his duffel bag referring to TSA guards that he wanted to “instill fear into their traitorous minds” and felt, delusionally, that the TSA was part of a plot that there was a New World Order conspiracy to create a “totalitarian one-world government.” Again, as with Laurie Dann, he was a mass murderer *manqué* who was clearly mentally ill (paranoid schizophrenic, as far as one can determine), but who was thwarted in his attempt to kill the minimum-four as defined by the FBI. Dann and Ciancia happened to satisfy Dietz’s assumption that mass murderers “all show signs of depression and paranoia.”

But just as there is a spectrum pertaining to suspiciousness that spans the range between mild mistrustfulness to paranoid personality and on to the extreme of psychotic/delusional form of “paranoia,” there is also a spectrum of depressive conditions, from mild depression, through dysthymia, all the way to delusional depression at the far end. In my review of the 235 cases, only a few had been characterized as suffering from severe depression. One was that of Andrea Yates (Spencer 2002), who suffered actually a psychotic depression, complete with hallucinations. Forced by her extraordinarily insensitive husband to live, while pregnant with her fifth child, in a 350-square-foot converted Greyhound bus with her husband and the four children, Andrea, who had had a postpartum depression after the fourth child, became overwhelmed and now psychotically depressed, wavering between suicide and killing all the children. Her mother had finally persuaded her son-in-law to move from the bus to a proper house—which is where Andrea drowned all five children some six months after the birth of their daughter.

These cases represent the extreme, however; not the norm among mass murderers. More typical are rampage killers like Steven Kazmierczak—who in 2008 entered the auditorium stage of a large classroom in Northern Illinois University (where he had previously been a graduate student), and proceeded to kill five students before finally taking his own life. He had been depressed on and off for some time, partly in relationship to “girlfriend problems,” and had stopped taking his Prozac. Not psychotically depressed like Yates, his condition was in the penumbra of “mental illness”: short of psychosis, but pronounced enough to have warranted psychiatric attention and medication. He was not paranoid and was known as gentle, sensitive, caring, and devoted to the welfare of other people.

More typical still are rampage killers who are paranoid (short of “paranoia”) but not notably depressed. These are the disgruntled men with paranoid personality whose rampage was triggered by a life event that aroused murderous rage (in the case of nondepressed paranoid men) or murderous rage accompanied by a sudden feeling of utter hopelessness and suicidal despair—for which the only “solution” appears to be the murder of as many others as possible by way of avenging a “wrong.” Men (or the rare woman) in this group can be said to have exercised their free will (they were not engulfed in psychosis), choosing to redress their humiliation by killing either persons associated with the “wrong” done to them (being fired from a job, jilted

by a lover, exposed for some wrongdoing, etc.), or else killing strangers—whose only function is to be the victims in an *après moi le deluge* scenario whose deaths serve to draw public attention to the plight of the killer. The mass murderer wishes (in these cases) to make a strong statement so that the whole world will (via the media) know of his maltreatment and outrage—a goal that could never be realized just with a quiet suicide in the bedroom of one's own house. Ari Schulman (2013) went so far as to claim that “Mass killings are not ‘senseless.’ The perpetrators want all the world to see their anger and resentment.” Schulman cites further on the work of Michael Kelleher, who commented in his 1997 book *Flashpoint* that mass killers are rarely insane and don't typically have delusions or the psychotic fantasies of the paranoid schizophrenic; instead, they usually have personality disorders—with narcissistic and paranoid traits such as entitlement, self-righteousness, and resentment. I am in agreement with Kelleher's position, and in the following section, hope to illustrate these points by analysis of the 235 American mass murderers in my series.

It should be understood that these 235 cases represent a subset of all mass killers known to the FBI, since, as dramatic as massacres and rampage murders tend to be, not all are dramatic enough to warrant inclusion in books and Internet articles on the topic. Fox and Levin (2012, p. 137) in their wider survey of all mass killers in the United States during the years 1976 and 2008 allude to 852 massacres; in my series, based upon the more newsworthy cases of that genre, there were 140 mass killers during those years. The majority of cases presumably achieve only brief mention in local newspapers. Many of these probably involve familicides, since less fear (hence less newsworthiness) is generated in the public by the story of a man who kills his family (and perhaps himself) than by a man who kills strangers at random. John List's violence, for example, was limited to the members of his family; he did no additional violence during the 18 years he was at large after he fled his home and lived under an assumed name until his eventual capture. It is rare for persons committing familicide to kill strangers. The exception in my series was Michael McClendon, a 28-year-old man from Alabama, disgruntled and depressed over the failure in his aspiration to become a marine and over his failure in the jobs he held subsequently, who then killed 10 people during his rampage and then himself. The victims included seven family members, but also three strangers.

Mental Illness in Mass Murderers

The 235 mass murderers consisted of 226 men and 9 women. These figures include, however, those who had the intention of committing mass murder, but who killed fewer than four victims (other than themselves). Among the men, 26 killed fewer than 4 (2 instances of just 1 victim; 7 of just 2 victims; the other 17 of 3 victims). The number of victims was unknown in two cases. In 87% of the male perpetrators, the death toll was 4 or more. In the latter, there is no meaningful average, apart from the fact that the usual toll is under 10. In 27 instances, the victim number ranged from 10 to 168. As a coincidence, both the Hartford circus fire set by Robert Segee in 1944 and the bombing of the government building in Oklahoma by Timothy McVeigh in 1995 caused 168 deaths. The next greatest toll (of

87) resulted from the fire set by a disgruntled Cuban émigré, Julio Gonzalez, in the *Happy Land* disco in the Bronx—which killed everyone there except for the intended victim—the woman who had jilted him. These men were not mentally ill if we accept psychosis as the key ingredient in making that distinction. McVeigh and Gonzalez were men of a paranoid personality caste, animated by vengeful feelings. Segee was an antisocial young man of low IQ (78) who had been brutalized by a cruel father who would punish him by holding his fingers over a flame. Besides killing several children, Segee was basically a pyromaniac, setting innumerable fires, including several other circus tents that did not result in fatalities, before the Hartford fire.

Paranoid personality in disgruntled men was the psychiatric disorder in two men who used bombs to avenge life reverses: losing a farm mortgage in the case of Andrew Kehoe in 1927, and being fired from a job in the case of David Burke in 1987. Their acts led to over 40 deaths, as did the attempt on the part of Jack Graham in the 1955 to unburden himself from debt by accelerating his inheritance: he gave his mother a bomb wrapped as a Christmas present, as she boarded a plane to visit relatives. The bomb killed his mother and 43 others. Graham was a psychopath, whose callousness was evident in his final words before his execution. When asked if he felt any remorse for the other victims, he said: “as far as feeling remorse for those people, I don't. Everybody pays their way and takes their chances. That's just the way it goes.”

Gender Difference in Mental Illness Among the Mass Murderers

Of the 235 mass murderers 226 were men and 9 were women. If we were to insist on FBI criteria (of 4 or more victims) there would be 191 men and 4 women. The death tolls in those 4 women were 4, 5, 6, and 7. Thus, no woman was responsible for even 10 deaths, let alone the extravagant numbers reached in the rampages of their male counterparts. In the current, as in all previous surveys, mass murder is essentially a male phenomenon: 98% using FBI criteria; 96% using the broader criteria where *intended* mass murders are also counted. The percentages are only a bit less than the sex ratio in cases of serial sexual homicide—which is exclusively a male phenomenon, related to certain tendencies peculiar to male *sexuality*. Mass murder, in contrast, related more to the greater inclination in males to resort to *violence*—of a sort that is seldom connected with sexual matters. The Hartford circus fire might be an exception inasmuch as Segee later confessed that he had an “unfortunate” sexual encounter (presumably one of impotence) with a girl, the arson having been prompted by anger over his failure.

In my review of the 235 cases, I estimated that among the men evidence for mental illness was present in 46: strong evidence in 35, and data suggestive of at least probable mental illness in the remaining 11. This meant that, including the weaker cases, 22% of the men could be considered “mentally ill.” As there were only nine women altogether, the results were less clear-cut, although six were mentally ill (five clear-cut examples and one questionable instance) out of the nine. This is a small sample for statistical analysis, owing to the rarity in general of mass murder carried out by women. The difference is that female mass

murderers are more likely to be mentally ill than males (in whom 46 were mentally ill, but 180 were not), nevertheless appeared significant by chi-square: $p=0.008$ with Yates correction.

As for the rarity of women committing mass murder, even if we included data from the 73 mass murderers of other countries whose histories I reviewed, that would add only 2 women—both of whose massacres were prompted by jealousy in women who were not mentally ill. One concerned a Vietnamese woman who set fire to the house of a married man with whom she had had an affair. The other was a Kuwaiti woman, Nasra al-Enezi, who set fire to the women's tent during the wedding ceremony of her ex-husband—hoping to kill his new bride. The bride survived, but about 60 other women died. À propos these conflagrations, there appears to be a species-wide psychological connection between jealousy and fire, not only in the trite metaphors of being “burned up” over being jilted, and being “afire with passion,” but in the widespread propensity of persons (of both sexes) to convert the fires of thwarted passion into revenge by fire.

Varieties of Mental Illness Encountered in the Mass Murderers

The 46 cases of mental illness, having been drawn from 235 instances of mass murder stretching over the century between 1913 and 2015, could not all be categorized accurately by contemporary standards, owing to the brief and perfunctory nature of some of the earlier descriptions. About one man, for example, there was mention merely of “many hospitalizations for psychosis,” but no description of the type of psychosis involved. Another man was described as having been found by psychiatrists as “incompetent to stand trial,” which usually correlates with a psychotic condition that grossly interferes with the defendant's ability to communicate appropriately with his attorney.

Given that the majority of mass murderers are men of a decidedly hostile nature, animated by avenging what they conceived as victimization by others, not surprisingly those in the grips of a psychotic condition were most often depicted as “paranoid schizophrenic.” This was so of 26 of the mentally ill mass murderers (23 men and 3 women). Persecutory delusions were a prominent feature of an additional eight (all male). The latter could be considered as falling within the schizophrenic “spectrum.” In two additional cases, schizophrenia was diagnosed, but the psychosis in question appears to have been set in motion primarily by severe abuse of psychotomimetic drugs. Finally, in one of the recent cases, the psychopathology could best be characterized as “schizotypal personality.” All told, at least 33 of the 46 cases can be viewed as disorders within the schizophrenic spectrum.

In the remaining cases, there were seven men with marked paranoid features that included transient delusory ideation, such that psychosis was present at the time of the rampage. Three men fell within the autistic spectrum, originally having been described as exhibiting Asperger's syndrome, though the latter has now (under the aegis of DSM-V) been reframed as an example of an “autistic spectrum disorder” (ASD). One of the women had a psychotic illness with delusions—within the context of a bipolar disorder. Depression with psychotic features was

present in another two: a woman who experienced hallucinations alongside her depression, and a man with the kind of “depression and paranoia” emphasized by Dietz. An “amphetamine psychosis” was noted in another. One man was described as having a combination of mild mental retardation, attention-deficit disorder, and “paranoid schizophrenia” (the latter not well documented). Another man was characterized as having a psychotic disorder for which there was an “underlying brain defect” (not clearly defined).

Mentally Ill Mass Murderers: Clinical Vignettes

The following clinical vignettes illustrate the variety of psychotic conditions for which the designation of a mass murderer as “mentally ill” appears altogether appropriate.

Paranoid schizophrenia

Richard Baumhammers was born in Pittsburgh of Latvian immigrants. Known as gregarious and a good football player in his high-school days, he went on to become an immigration attorney. Suffering emotional problems of an ill-defined nature in his late 20s, he was admitted voluntarily to a psychiatric hospital on two occasions. After a vacation in eastern Europe in 1993, he returned in a morbidly suspicious state, convinced that the FBI was monitoring the home where he lived with his parents. He would converse with them only notes scribbled on notepads, lest the FBI “overhear” their conversations. This led to his first hospitalization, where he was diagnosed variously with “paranoid schizophrenia” or else “delusional disorder.” He ended up an alienated recluse who developed a consuming hatred for immigrants who were either non-Christian (e.g., Jewish) or nonwhite. This preoccupation culminated in his April 19, 2000, murder of a Jewish woman, a grocer from India, a Chinese restaurant manager, a Vietnamese cook, and a black man exercising at a gym. He was sentenced to life without parole in an Allegheny County prison, where he remains to this day.

Familicide by a man with paranoid schizophrenia

Michael Owen Perry is a schizophrenic man who had been stalking actress-singer Olivia Newton-John. He had targeted her because her eyes (in various photographs) resembled those of his mother, whom he hated. He labored under the delusion that Newton-John was responsible for the “dead bodies” he imagined were rising up through the floorboards of the New Orleans home where he grew up (which was supported on stilts). In 1983 after an unsuccessful attempt to kill the actress, he returned to New Orleans and killed five family members, including both parents. He shot his parents through the eye, by way of avenging his father's cruelty (as he experienced it): His father used to warn him about his bad behavior by saying, “When I go to work, I leave my eyes at home!” He also intended to kill Supreme Court judge Sandra Day O'Connor, owing to his conviction that “no woman should be above a man.” Though obviously psychotic, he was sentenced to death—as frequently happens when psychotic persons commit mass murder, since the public is often outraged at the notion that a killer with so many victims could simply be confined in a mental institution. But

because he is now recognized as mentally ill, he cannot be treated with medications that might alleviate his psychosis—since that would put a psychiatrist in the role of executioner: “restoring” someone so that he could then be executed.

Drug-induced paranoid schizophrenia

Born in 1988 as the only child of a working-class Arizona family, Jared Loughner was developing in a seemingly ordinary fashion—until at 14 he was rejected by a girl he had been dating. He then began abusing drugs heavily: alcohol and marijuana at first; subsequently adding hallucinogenic agents like LSD, psilocybin (“mushrooms”), and salvia divinorum (“bath salts”). Thereafter, he underwent a radical personality change, becoming paranoid and progressively more bizarre in his behavior. His speech became disorganized and rambling; his former friends were nonplussed at what was happening to him. He had to drop out of college because of his disruptive behavior, and developed a marked distrust and dislike of government. When Congresswoman Gabriella Giffords spoke at a meeting in 2007, Loughner felt angry when she did not answer his incomprehensively phrased question: “What is government if words have no meaning?” His delusory ideation grew more bizarre over time.

By January 2011, he determined to kill Giffords, to which end he purchased a semiautomatic pistol, as a supplement to the rifle he already possessed. Concealing the rifle in a cloth cover (making it clear he planned the rampage in advance), he accosted Giffords where people were gathered to hear her speak. He shot her, wounding her severely, and killed six others. After his arrest, he was declared incompetent to stand trial and was diagnosed, because of his delusory ideation, as a “paranoid schizophrenic.” His symptoms subsided following his (court-ordered) treatment with antipsychotic medication, following which he pled guilty and was sentenced to life in prison without parole. As for his family history, there were apparently two distant relatives with what was called bipolar disorder. It may be that Loughner carried “risk genes” for a bipolar illness and was to that extent a “vulnerable” person (*vis-à-vis* psychosis) as became more apparent during adolescence. But his heavy drug abuse is very likely the major precipitant of his psychosis—which took on the *appearance* of schizophrenia, without necessarily being of the hereditary type. One sees this clinical picture often among adolescents who abuse marijuana and other drugs heavily, whether their innate predisposition is to schizophrenia, bipolar disorder—or to neither. That is, heavy marijuana abuse before age 18 can induce a psychosis mimicking the positive signs of schizophrenia (delusions and hallucinations) though without the formal thought disorder or the constricted affect. In such cases, the psychosis tends to abate after about two months of drug cessation (Caton 2011). When (as in the case of Loughner) the psychosis remains evident even after two months without drug use, one suspects an underlying “primary” (hereditary) psychosis.

Heavy drug use appears able in certain young persons to set in motion a more lasting psychosis, even where there had been no signs of mental peculiarity (extreme shyness, social awkwardness, or, in those with vulnerability to an affective psychosis, either serious depression or aggressivity). Marijuana abuse can nevertheless aggravate an underlying

psychosis or else advance the timing of onset—such that an adolescent becomes clinically psychotic at 15 rather than at, say, 19 or 20 (Verdoux 2004; Konings et al. 2008; Large et al. 2011). While we have no way of knowing whether Loughner was destined to emerge in early adulthood either with a bipolar illness or with (a hereditary) schizophrenia, it is clear from the histories of many patients in forensic hospitals that early abuse of marijuana (which usually is followed by abuse of other psychotomimetic drugs) can provoke paranoid reactions with persecutory delusions that culminate in a murderous outburst. This seems to have been the case with Loughner, who may very well *not* have committed a mass murder were it not for his heavy and multiple drug abuse.

Schizotypal personality disorder

James Holmes, the 24-year-old man who opened fire with a semiautomatic rifle in an Aurora, Colorado, movie theater, killed 12 and wounded 70 others. Holmes was regarded as a highly intelligent man who was dropped from a graduate-school program apparently because he failed an important exam and had also made threats. Embittered by the expulsion, he prepared during the ensuing weeks leading up to the 2012 massacre the booby-trapping of his room on campus and the acquisition of weapons. The ensuing rampage can best be understood as a revenge against the college authorities and against people in general. He wore an armored vest and a helmet, planning to survive the attack (which he did), unlike so many mass murderers, half of whom commit suicide or are killed by the police during the attack. Well before his days at the university, he showed many of the peculiar personality traits now subsumed under the heading of “schizotypal personality disorder” (STPD).

Genetically, STPD is in the penumbra or “spectrum” of full-blown schizophrenia; many persons with STPD have close relatives with schizophrenia. Despite the secretiveness that still surrounds the court’s dealing with the media in his case, some things are known about Holmes’s behavior going back to his high school days that constitute criteria for the disorder, namely, odd speech, odd thought, odd or eccentric behavior, odd affect, and absence of friends or confidantes. His dressing up as “Batman” and coloring his hair orange before the massacre presented a bizarre figure at the time, certainly qualifying as “odd behavior.” While still in high school at age 18, he lectured a group of students, telling them how he was working his brain in order to *change the past*. Shortly before the massacre, Holmes was noted to ramble incoherently by the director of a gun club and to be using a false voice with odd intonations. Coupled with his having sent a letter near the day of the massacre, indicating violent impulses to a campus psychiatrist, there are indices of a mental breakdown—of the sort where he remained quite capable of carefully planned action, thus legally “sane,” even while mentally ill.

Affective psychoses

Mild affective disorders, in which the main symptoms are those of depression or hypomania, without a cognitive psychotic component, are common. These conditions fall short of constituting “mental illness,” in the sense I am

using it here. Where mood disorders are accompanied by delusions (including those of a persecutory type) or hallucinations, or by extreme aberrations of behavior, it becomes legitimate to speak of *mental illness*. Such was the case of Laurie Wasserman Dann, and also of Andrea Yates (Spencer 2002), alluded to above.

The controversial issue whether there are intermediate conditions deserving a separate category of “schizoaffective psychosis” has been addressed (and seriously questioned) in a recent article by Kotov et al. (2013) and in a commentary about that article by behavioral geneticist Kenneth Kendler (2013) in the same issue. For our purposes, if a person committing mass murder had been in the throes of a depression in which persecutory delusions were an accompaniment, one could make the case that a bona fide mental illness existed, independent whether the cognitive psychosis (as manifest by the delusions) antedated or merely accompanied the outbreak of a profound depression. The clinical picture of Edward Allaway partook of both aspects: severe depression (proximate to the time of the mass murder) and a cognitive psychosis, apparently of long standing.

In 1976, Allaway, 37 at the time, was working as a janitor at California State University/Fullerton, and had been brooding over problems with his wife. Allaway began to suspect that homosexual men in the bathroom that it was his job to clean were plotting to kill him, and that in addition, his wife had been recruited to appear in pornographic movies that were to be shown in the college basement. Seeking revenge for these imagined wrongs, Allaway killed seven professors and employees of the college in July 1976. By virtue of his symptoms at the time, plus a history of “mental illness” (not further specified), he was declared not guilty by reason of insanity and was remanded to Patton State Hospital in San Bernardino.

Other affective disorders that fall in the middle ground between moderate depressive or bipolar-II conditions and the affective psychoses are those where drug abuse precipitates total loss of inhibitory control, transforming a depression with disgruntlement over some life reversal into an uncontrollable rage, leading to murder (including, at times, mass murder). The element of *mental illness* might not have surfaced apart from the concomitant drug abuse. This appears to have been the case with Susan Eubanks, an unemployed, debt-ridden nursing assistant who was also furious at the father of three of her four children—who had just abandoned her and by whom she felt betrayed. In that setting she abused alcohol and opiates, which apparently converted a (nonpsychotic) depression into a state of Medea-like vengeance and rage in which she shot to death all four of her children. Though her defense attorneys argued that she had “blackened out,” and was in a “diminished state of mind...not in control of her actions,” she was given a death sentence in a San Diego court. No woman having been executed in California in over 20 years, she will most likely remain in prison for life.

Autistic spectrum disorders

Following the unusually large-scale massacres by Seung-Hui Cho in 2007 and Adam Lanza in 2012, accounting for 32 deaths in the Virginia Tech campus in the earlier in-

stance, and 27 in the Newtown, Connecticut, school shooting in the latter, autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) began to occupy a distinct spot on the mental map of people throughout the United States. Both were described at first as exhibiting Asperger’s syndrome—which has recently been subsumed under the rubric of ASD. The pertinence of the Asperger designation in these two cases was predicated on the adequacy of language development, side by side with lack of empathy or social-communicative skills, along with a monomaniacal preoccupation with only one interest, such as train schedules or video games. Unlike psychopaths, who also lack empathy but have marked propensity to violence, and whom Simon Baron-Cohen (2011) has characterized as “zero-empathy/negative,” persons with ASD appear as “zero-empathy/positive,” in the sense that they usually preserve a good moral code and are not prone to violence. The author also points to MRI studies showing underactivity of the dorsomedial prefrontal cortex and of the amygdala and of the “mirror-neurons” in the insula (p. 101) in ASD—brain regions important in the mediation of our capacity for empathy. In contrast to psychopaths, *persons with ASD tend not to be violent*. But there are exceptions, such as Cho and Lanza.

Lanza was unable to make eye contact with people, and toward the end did not speak at all, communicating with his mother for the last 2 years of his life only via e-mail, though living in the same house. Both mother and son were paranoid, Mrs. Lanza believing in the need to prepare for the “end of the world” (she was an ardent *Doomsday Prepper*), imagining that the end of the world might come on December 21, 2012—according to her understanding of the Mayan calendar (a week after the massacre).

Adam lived in a basement room whose windows were obscured with black garbage bags. He had access to the five semiautomatic rifles his mother had accumulated over the years (she even sought to buy him another as a Christmas present). She at times compared Adam to Ryan, his successful (and psychologically normal) brother. There were intimations that she finally realized she was no longer able to care for him at home and was contemplating having him institutionalized. Concerns of this sort were most likely the seeds that fed his growing desperation and rage. He seems to have become increasingly envious of the normal children at the school he once attended—where his mother had earlier served as a volunteer teacher’s assistant with kindergartners. On the day of the massacre, Friday, December 14, 2012, Adam first shot his mother to death with 4 bullets from a semiautomatic rifle, before proceeding to the elementary school he had once attended—where he proceeded (armed with three of his mother’s semiautomatic rifles) to kill 6 teachers and 20 children (mostly 6-year-olds), before killing himself—as he is said to have warned he would do on the Internet the preceding Wednesday, adding that “it will make news.”

Shortly before the December 2013 anniversary of the massacre, Connecticut authorities issued a 40-page document stating that they were unable to ascertain any clear-cut motive for the attack. This report overlooks several important considerations. First, Adam had planned the mass murder with considerable care, as pointed out by Mary Ellen O’Toole (2012) of the FBI’s Behavioral Analysis Unit. She mentioned, for example, that he smashed his computers

ensuring that the data within them would not be retrievable. Second, his having murdered his mother while she slept—as his first victim—suggests that his rage was directed primarily at her. Joshua Flashman, a Newtown resident familiar with the Lanza family, believed that his mother was indeed planning to commit Adam to a psychiatric facility, leading Adam to imagine that she loved the school and the school children more than she loved him. Nancy, the mother, had been petitioning the court for conservatorship as a preliminary step to having him committed. As Flashman mentioned: “She probably just couldn’t take care of him by herself anymore . . . she was at her wit’s end.” As testimony to Lanza’s mental illness, besides being paranoid, reclusive, and uncommunicative, he was also self-mutilative in the final months, burning himself with cigarettes.

Mass Murderers Who Were Not Mentally Ill

Three quarters of the mass murderers in the present study appear not to have been mentally ill at the time of their rampage: that is, they did not suffer from a psychotic condition, nor did they belong to the subgroup of mass killers who rendered themselves temporarily psychotic, or else grossly impaired mentally, through abuse of alcohol or drugs (as was the case with Susan Eubanks mentioned above). The not-mentally-ill (NMI) group could be further compartmentalized for the most part according to personality type. Of the 189 persons in the NMI group, there was not sufficient information to permit adequate categorization in 21. The other 168 could be placed in one of several categories, as follows (with percentages reflecting the 168 cases):

- Antisocial personality: 20 individuals (11.9%)
- Depressive: 11 individuals (6.5%)
- Disgruntled: 10 individuals (6%)
- Rageful: 11 individuals (10.7%)
- Paranoid: 48 individuals (28.6%)
- Psychopathic: 25 individuals (16.1%)

The remainder consisted of persons who had experienced humiliation in the workplace, abrupt loss of a love relationship, or desperation (e.g., after being plunged suddenly into debt); others were motivated by profound bigotry. The subgroups enumerated here are not mutually exclusive. For example, “disgruntlement” is a common theme among many of the mass murderers, especially among those with marked paranoid personality traits. The following clinical examples reflect the variety of personality subtypes among the nonpsychotic mass murderers.

Antisocial personality

Richard Hickock was one of the two 1959 “home-invaders” of a Kansas farm-family—the Clutters—whose “safe with \$10,000” they hoped to steal, except there was no safe. Hickock and his partner Perry Smith then murdered all four members of the family, as memorialized in Truman Capote’s (1965) famous story: *In Cold Blood*. Hickock grew up in a poor family, worked as a mechanic, married, and had three children. He did some petty crimes, like check fraud, to supplement his income, but landed in jail. There he met Perry Smith and joined him, upon their release, in the

home invasion, killing the entire family as if to eliminate any witnesses.

Depressive

The aforementioned Michael McClendon became depressed and suicidal after quitting his factory job and expressing bitterness about some of his coworkers. He had also become disillusioned about his hope of ever becoming a police officer or a full-fledged marine, though he had been discharged from the marines for providing false information. By the time his emotions had built up to the breaking point in March 2009, depression had gotten admixed with rage and disgruntlement, culminating in his shooting to death 11 people—half of them his relatives—and them himself. He was known as a reliable, dependable employee who kept to himself. His mother, with whom he lived and who was his first victim, had been suspended from her job. As both were suddenly without work, debts were piling up—which appeared to be another factor, over and above his grievances in the workplace. The combination of negative life events in this man, going beyond depression itself, contributed to what Meloy (1992) described as a *catathymic crisis* that often precipitates in violence. The nature of the crisis is discussed further below.

Disgruntlement

In a mass murder prompted by disgruntlement, with little in the way of admixture with other emotional states like depression, John Felton Parish was a Texan truck driver who in 1982 shot to death six coworkers—of whom the primary target was a supervisor, Eddie Ulrich. He had declined to award Parish with the “back-pay” he demanded, because Ulrich asserted that Parish had worked fewer hours than he claimed. Usually, Parish was easy-going and had never been in trouble at work or with the law. There had been another stress factor: Shortly before the rampage, he had lost a child-custody dispute with his estranged wife. Parish spoke of feeling “sick and tired of being treated like a fool at his job.” He had tried to escape in his truck after the sixth murder, but was soon shot to death by the police.

Rage

A crime of passion, as when one spouse inadvertently catches the other having sex with a different person, may incite a (murderous) rage, unaccompanied by depression, disgruntlement, paranoid mistrustfulness, or other of the common preludes to murder, including mass murder. All the more so if the betrayed partner were taken totally by surprise—such that one’s life is turned upside down in the space of a second. This was the case in the five murders committed on a November evening near Houston, Texas, by Coy Wayne Westbrook, whom I had occasion to interview in 2007 for the Discovery Channel’s TV series *Most Evil*. Ten years before, his estranged wife, Gloria, invited Coy to her house, as if for a reconciliation. But when he arrived, he found that she was in the bedroom having sex with two men at once. A man and a woman in the front room were then taunting him. At that point he went to his van, withdrew his rifle, re-entered the house, and shot all five persons to death,

each with a single shot. He then confessed to the police, saying, "I did it. Let's get it over with." Wesbrook had always been a hard worker and adequate provider, and had no previous trouble with the law or episodes of violence, and no psychiatric conditions. His rampage was sparked by a "catathymic crisis" wherein a violent act seemed the only way of restoring psychic equilibrium: in this case, "getting even" after the humiliating betrayal.

Paranoid personality disorder

Paranoid men form the largest group of mass murderers who were not clearly mentally ill—enough so to consider paranoid personality the "default position" of nonpsychotic mass killers, until proven otherwise. Many paranoid persons are of course deeply prejudiced, but one is hesitant to regard bigotry as a "mental illness" *per se*, unless accompanied by delusions or so pervasive as to prevent any sort of self-sustaining life in the community.

The case of George P. Hennard Jr. is illustrative. He was one of three children from a well-to-do family; his father was an orthopedic surgeon. His mother was described as high-strung and domineering. His brother and sister were apparently normal. At some point in his early years, there was an ugly confrontation between father and son, following which he became surly, cold, and combative. For reasons never made clear, he disliked his mother all his life, and at times spoke of wanting to kill her. He had no intimate relationships, though he stalked a neighbor woman and her two daughters. According to various media accounts, Hennard hated blacks, gays, Hispanics, but (with rare exceptions) women even more so—whom he described as "venomous vipers." His sister, Desirée, 28 at the time, when interviewed for the *Dallas Advocate* shortly after the event, however, denied that her brother was prejudiced or that he was depressed to any significant degree.

Hennard had been in the merchant marines but was kicked out for smoking marijuana. Around the time of his 35th birthday, he was out of work, living alone in an expensive home near Killeen, Texas, spending his time with a few drinking buddies—who noted that when alcohol was in his system, he became particularly angry and vituperative. Losing his post in the merchant marines was one trigger to the massacre in Luby's cafeteria in Killeen the day after Hennard's 35th birthday. Becoming 35 was itself a trigger. Another trigger appears to have been the news on TV about Anita Hill accusing supreme-court nominee Clarence Thomas of sexual harassment. He is said to have screamed at the TV: "You dumb bitch! You bastards opened the door for all women!" Though both were black, Hennard obviously felt sympathetic toward the beleaguered judge. At all events, the next day he stormed into the cafeteria, shooting 50 people with 2 semiautomatic weapons—killing 23 before killing himself as the police closed in. Though not psychotic in any meaningful sense of the term, Hennard appeared toward the end at the very border of mental illness (as is true of many persons with markedly paranoid personality traits), unable as he was to work at the level of other family members, or to fashion a meaningful sexual partnership with anyone. He needed less pressure on the trigger, as it were, before exploding into a murderous outburst following some otherwise not so devastating stressor (such as seeing Anita Hill on the

TV). Unfortunately, it is not easy to determine whether his sister's impressions are the more accurate, or whether her judgment of his personality was clouded by feelings for her brother.

Psychopathic personality

About one in six mass murderers is a psychopath. Among the psychopathic mass murderers, half killed their multiple victims in connections with an armed robbery where the killer felt it necessary to eliminate all the potential witnesses. Craig Godineaux, for example, in what was described as the most gruesome mass murder in New York City history, along with his mate, John Taylor, shot in the head at point-blank range all seven employees of a Wendy's fast-food restaurant in Queens in the year 2000. Their marksmanship not being totally effective even from that close, two survived and one called "911," notifying the police about the \$2,400 robbery.

An even more gruesome robbery was staged in Ogden, Utah, in 1974 by Dale Pierre and his accomplice, William Andrews (Kinder 1982). Intent on stealing expensive hi-fi equipment, they invaded a hi-fi shop, where they proceeded to tie up the two employees and two customers. The mother of one of the customers showed up later (wondering why her son was late for dinner), and she too was immobilized. Pierre then poured Drano (a lye-containing cleaning fluid) down the throats of the victims, raped one of the women, and shoved a pen into the ear of another victim. Three died; the two survivors suffered excruciating pain and lasting disabilities. Pierre, who was executed 13 years later, had earlier murdered an Air Force sergeant on the base where he worked as a member of the ground crew. He had stolen several cars, including one belonging to the sergeant he killed, so the man could not testify against him. In that effort Pierre was successful, since he was suspected, but never convicted, for that murder.

In the case of the psychopathic cult leader Jeff Lundgren (Sassé and Widder 1991), the motive for his 1989 killing of an entire family of five was not robbery (though he did insist they give him all their money). The motive was instead the elimination of followers who dared to question the authority of the leader—namely, the Averys and their three children, once Mr. Avery began to realize that Lundgren was a corrupt, dishonest, and grandiose false-prophet.

Other motives

There is a small number of mass murderers with motives that do not fit readily into the above-mentioned categories. One such is *familicide* (sometimes called "family annihilators" and placed in a category separate from that of mass murder), two examples of which were described above: Andrea Yates (the only female of this group known to me) and John List. *Bigotry* is another type, though could as well be understood as a subtype of the paranoid mass murderers.

Doug Williams was an employee in a Lockheed Martin plant in Mississippi who was known as a "racist hothead" by his coworkers, most of whom he alienated. Some said he was mad at the world, though his strongest prejudicial feelings were directed against blacks. He began his 2003 rampage in which he killed five workers (four of whom were black), and then himself, minutes after a manager at

the factory conducted a meeting urging the employees to get along with each other, regardless of sex or race. There may have been a better side to his nature, given that his girlfriend stood up at the community service for the victims, telling the audience that “He was human, too... he was a kind and loving human being.”

Jilted love and spousal rejection can be put together as another category. The 2009 murder of eight persons in a North Carolina nursing home came in the aftermath of Robert Wayne’s wife, Wanda, walking out on him after he pointed a gun at her head. Wayne had always been a loner with a bad temper, and extremely possessive—which had led to Wanda divorcing him for the first time when she was 20. They remarried after the failure of Wayne’s third marriage—but unsurprisingly his threat to kill her led to her divorcing him again. That, plus his being out of work for a year, touched off the rampage at the nursing home where Wanda was a nurse. Having hidden in a bathroom, Wanda, who was Wayne’s principal target, survived.

Discussion

There is universal agreement that mass murder is predominantly, to the point of being almost exclusively, a male phenomenon. Until recently, explanations for the large male excess not only in mass murder, but also in commission of other forms of violence, and in the antisocial and psychopathic personality types that predispose to aggression, have relied on the speculative comments from the domain of evolutionary psychiatry. A division of labor between the sexes evolved, it was claimed, in which males with their larger bodies and seemingly superior motor and visuospatial skills performed better at such tasks as guarding the perimeter of the small tribes, in which we all once lived, against animal predators and human enemies. Females, with their superior empathic and linguistic skills, performed better at tasks requiring social adeptness and caring for small children. Viewed in this light, murder of individuals, serial murder, and mass murder may be understood as excessive behaviors at the far end of the spectrum of aggressive behavior—where we would expect to find (and do find) an overrepresentation of men.

Recent studies in neuroscience are beginning to give substance to what has hitherto remained in the realm of speculation. Many of the pioneers in this research have been women. Annett Schirmer (2013), in her review of sex differences in emotion, commented on the tendency of girls to inhibit inappropriate responses, but show more fear, in contrast to boys, who show more externalizing responses to stress, ending up with a greater tendency to delinquent and aggressive behavior. Carried forward into adulthood, men outnumber women greatly in aggressive behaviors. Similarly, she points out (p. 598) that “Early surges of testosterone in males effect neuronal changes that promote later aggressive behavior” and that “In adulthood increases in testosterone have been shown to down-regulate GABAergic activity, thereby reducing the brain’s main inhibitory mechanism and increasing the immediate likelihood of physical attack.” Ragini Verma and Raquel Gur (Ingahalikar et al. 2013), using diffusion tensor imaging, demonstrated that male brains are optimized for *intra*hemispheric communication and female brains for *in-*

*ter*hemispheric communication. These changes are thought to underlie at the neurophysiological level male superiority in motor and spatial abilities. The sex differences they noted become more apparent as development proceeds—and are more marked in adolescence than in early childhood.

Testosterone levels correlate fairly well with respect to the inclination in men toward violence. Levels taper off gradually in men over the lifespan, such that by age 60 titers may be only a fourth of what they were at age 20 (Fig. 1). There is of course more to outbreaks of violence in men besides the testosterone titer, but it’s of interest nonetheless that among men in my series committing mass murder 75.5% were between the ages of 20 and 44. The percentages in other age brackets were (a) under 20, 9.5%; (b) 45–49, 7.3%; (c) 50–59, 6.4%; and 60 or older, 1.4% (just 3 men in that group). My figures are similar to those published by Fox and Levin (2012, p. 140), who found that 7.8% of the mass murderers in their series were under age 20, 87.8% were between 20 and 49 (as against 82.8% in my series), and only 4.5% were 50 or older.

Mass murderers usually come from working-class backgrounds. The only one in my series to have come from a distinctly wealthy family was Steven Benson, an heir of the Benson & Hedges tobacco family, who to alleviate his debt burden saw fit to grab an early inheritance by putting a bomb in his mother’s car. Having been arrested shortly after the murder(s), his ploy was not successful. Others from affluent families who were motivated by greed include Jack Graham and John List, already mentioned. Hennard, Dann, and Lanza also came from well-to-do families, but were motivated by rage rather than by hopes of monetary advantage. The more usual scenario was that of a factory or office worker suddenly fired from his job, who then became disgruntled and determined to even the score by killing the boss or coworkers. This will be particularly true of single workers, many of whom have been characterized in reviews on the subject of mass murder as “loners and losers”; that is, men with few or no social supports and with meager adaptive skills that might have facilitated finding work elsewhere.

Among those who were married with families, some have turned to familicide instead (cf. Fox and Levin, 2012, p. 163). An example is that of Ervin Lupoe, who, with his wife, had both been fired from Kaiser Permanente Medical

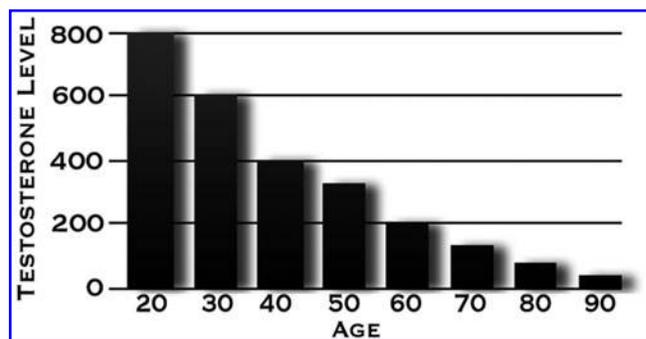


FIG. 1. Testosterone levels in nmol/L by age. The decrease in testosterone titer is approximately linear between the ages of 20 and 40, and then continues to decrease, though less abruptly, in the later years of life.

Center in West Los Angeles. Feeling destitute and unable to care for his family, Lupoe shot to death his wife and five children, and then himself. This occurred shortly after the depression of September 2008, when many workers were laid off and then found themselves in precarious circumstances. Parenthetically, unskilled workers and others at the lower end of the pay scale are also more vulnerable to suicide (Milner et al. 2013). Since about half of mass murderers commit suicide in the wake of their rampage, this connection between lower-skill occupation and suicide is applicable to the realm of mass murder also. An important factor in these drastic acts is that of feeling one has no options left for one's emotional or economic survival. It is this phenomenon that has sometimes been subsumed under the heading of the "catathymic crisis."

As Meloy (1992, p. 39f) has summarized, Wertham (1937) used the term *catathymic* to describe certain persons (usually men) in whom an emotion-laden idea becomes so entrenched as to acquire a paranoid and quasi-delusional force, where rational thought about alternative courses of action becomes sidelined and inaccessible. The process occurs in reaction usually to an overwhelming traumatic event that, for the person in this intolerable state, can have no resolution except in some violent action. The action—directed toward the outside world or to oneself (or both)—leads to the relief of tension and to the restoration of psychic equilibrium. At the extremes, murder or suicide, or both together, may result. Meloy further on explains that the stimulus to the catathymic crisis and to its violent "resolution" is often an intolerable blow to one's pride (p. 45).

Going back to what we said earlier about male versus female psychology, men are more likely to become rageful and to act out (i.e., out toward those in the environment) in such circumstances, whereas women are more likely to be "intropunitive," blaming themselves and becoming depressed. The violent and often murderous act precipitated during the catathymic crisis usually is preceded by an incubation period of some days or weeks (or even longer); the "payback" for the insult to one's pride is planned, that is, not spontaneous. The Columbine school massacre staged by Harris and Klebold in 1999 occurred, for example, on April 20th—Hitler's birthday—a day chosen as fitting for the retaliation by the perpetrators against those whom they felt had (for months before) bullied or mocked them. Usually, the interval between the intolerable crisis and progression to the emotional boiling point (with the implementation of the murderous retaliation) is a matter only of a few weeks or months. Salvador Tapia, for example, was fired from his job at an auto-parts warehouse in 2003. Loss of the job was the "final straw" that created the catathymic crisis. Not a loner, like so many disgruntled workers who seek vengeance for being fired, Tapia, who had a partner and four children, seethed for some six months before returning to his old workplace, where he proceeded to kill six employees before killing himself.

In the case of Richard Farley, in contrast, there was a gradual buildup of resentment when the coworker, Laura Black, he had been stalking for four years finally filed for a temporary restraining order. A court date was set for February 17, 1988. The day before, Farley showed up at her workplace with seven rifles and pistols, several of them semiautomatic, and a thousand rounds of ammunition. He

killed six employees, and though his main target was Laura, she was wounded only in the shoulder and survived. It was the threatened lawsuit that led to the crescendo of rage and vengeance-seeking in this socially inept man—who had once warned Laura, "If you don't love me, I'll kill you!" He accosted her the day before, urging her to cancel the restraining order. She did not. Now the interval between catathymic crisis and the violent denouement was less than 24 hours.

The Newtown massacre—in some ways the most dramatic of the recent mass murders (because 20 of the victims were little schoolchildren)—has led to much hand-wringing and soul-searching. What can be done to bring this terrible parade to a halt? Ari Schulman (2013), writing in the *Wall Street Journal* 11 months after the shooting, commented that "Mass killings are not senseless. The perpetrators want all the world to see their anger and resentment" (p. C-1). Schulman ends up suggesting we should "do more to deprive the killer of an audience" (p. C-2). Journalists, he argues, might hide the names and faces of the killers, might minimize specific and gory details, decrease the media saturation, omit photos or videos of the event, and so on.

While Schulman's sentiments are laudable, I can envision two factors that would militate against their efficacy. By no means do even the majority of mass murderers fit into that mold of publicity seeking. I was able to identify a number of such men in my series, as well as others—about whom our information is scanty—who appear to have sought such notoriety. Perhaps 15–20% meet this criterion. Some examples are of course unmistakable. Robert Hawkins, the 19-year-old "Omaha Mall Gunman," had been mentally ill and violent since his early teens. But after being fired from his job at McDonald's for theft, and after being jilted by his girlfriend two weeks before the 2007 incident, he shot eight people to death at a shopping mall before committing suicide. He left a note, saying: "I just want to take a few peices [sic] of shit with me...just think, tho, I'm gonna be fuckin famous." Robert Benjamin Smith, 18 at the time when he gunned down 5 women in an Arizona beauty college in 1966, replied when questioned by the police as to why he did it: "I wanted to make a name for myself. I wanted to get known." A loner who never dated and spent most of his time alone in his room, he seemed to have no feelings for others. Planning the massacre three months in advance, he had hoped to outdo his two "heroes" from earlier in the same year: Richard Speck, who killed the 8 nurses, and Charles Whitman, who shot 13 to death from his perch in the Texas University tower. This ambition for a "nobody" to become a "somebody" through violent action is not limited to mass murderers; the same motive lay behind David Mark Chapman, who gunned down the famous Beatles musician John Lennon in 1980. James Holmes may have nursed similar aspirations after failing at college—and then, dressed as Batman, killed 12 people in the Aurora, Colorado, movie theater. He has gone from obscurity to becoming a household word. But among mass murderers, these men are the exception, not the rule. And given the dramatic nature of mass murder, it is quixotic to suppose that the tendency to such crimes could be minimized in our culture by a downplaying on the part of the media to bring the news to the public.

The media have actually been admirably circumspect in not showing gruesome scenes of carnage at the sites of mass

murders. There is, I believe, room for improvement in the manner the media have dealt with the issue of mental illness and mass murder. Often, severe personality disorders and certain marginal cases (brief drug-induced psychoses in otherwise nonpsychotic persons; schizotypal persons or those with brittle paranoid dispositions short of clear-cut psychosis) have been conflated with “mental illness,” increasing (in the eyes of the public) the apparent degree to which mass murderers are at the same time mentally ill. This in turn affects rational discussion about how to prevent the mentally ill from acquiring guns—a genuine issue, to be sure—but one that gets blown out of proportion in the media and in the public. This is for several reasons. Mental illness, as I have been defining it, underlies a smaller percentage (perhaps a quarter) of mass murders than the media (with expressions like “nearly all”) tend to suggest. The actual number of victims claimed by the (properly defined) mentally ill who commit mass murder is, as mentioned above, tiny, when compared to the gun murder toll in the United States in any given year. From the standpoint of gun purchase, 25% of the mass murderers in my series (whether mentally ill or not) were under age 25. Those who were mentally ill (e.g., Seung Hui Cho, James Holmes, and Jared Loughner) had no previous arrest record and no record of psychiatric hospitalizations that would have been available to a gun dealer in the rare event that he could gain access to such confidential information.

Even if a mentally ill person has been hospitalized in the past, confidentiality rules may block a gun dealer’s access to such information. This was the case when Lisa Duy, a 24-year-old schizophrenic woman, an immigrant from Vietnam, sought to buy a semiautomatic pistol in a Utah gun shop in 1999. Absent any felony convictions or available mental health records, she easily made her purchase and promptly went to the local television studio, intent upon killing the newscaster whom Duy imagined, via her hallucinations, had been “broadcasting” information about her sex life (*New York Times*, April 11, 2000, pp. 1 and 24). A mass murderer *manqué* like Laurie Dann, Duy tried to kill dozens, but fortunately there was only one fatality. The *Times* went on to show how easy it is to acquire a gun, only 56 purchases out of the 100 studied having been made legally—mental illness being no stumbling block to the process, provided the person has a “clean” record.

To summarize briefly, mass murder is almost exclusively a male phenomenon; only about a quarter of mass murderers in the United States are clearly mentally ill (in the sense of being in the grips of a psychosis); the damage that *all* the mass murderers do is miniscule in proportion to the total gun murders in our country; the number of victims claimed by the *mentally ill* killers is smaller still; the mentally ill should not bear the burden of being regarded as the “chief” perpetrators of mass murder. Easy access to guns, especially the semiautomatic weapons that have been used in most of the mass murders in the United States over the past 30 years, is a greater problem than the problem of how better to spot and control the mentally ill. A number of typical profiles characteristic of subgroups of mass murderers have already been elucidated—such as the socially inept, reclusive, and occupationally disadvantaged male with paranoid traits who becomes disgruntled and embittered (and prone to rage and violent retaliation), if fired or otherwise humiliated. But

there is an incomparably greater number of such men in (and out of) the workplace who do *not* become mass murderers, than those who do. Our predictive ability as to which particular men with these attributes are at highest risk for mass murder is correspondingly weak as is our ability to prevent such rampages before they occur.

Concluding Remarks

In his commentary about the Adam Lanza massacre in Newton, Connecticut, David Kopel, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* (Dec. 18, 2012), asked whether the rate of random mass shootings has increased in the United States (Kopel 2012). Focusing on the past 30 years, his answer was “yes.” In this he is quite correct, but the evidence would have been even more striking, had he gone back over the past 65 years. The numbers I have relied on for the present study show the following pattern in mass murders, per decade, since 1950: in the 50–59 decade, 6; in the 60s, 8; in the 70s, 22; in the 80s, 32; and in the 90s, 60. Kopel cites the following as factors that may account for the increase in mass murders (even as the toll of deaths by murder in the United States has decreased since 1980 from 10/100,000/year to just under 5/100,000/year): the more widespread use of semiautomatic weapons, the deinstitutionalization of the violently mentally ill, and the media-driven “instant celebrity” status conferred upon the shooter (granted, half will be dead before they can reap the full “benefits” of their fame).

Kopel is correct about the increased availability of semiautomatic weapons. But violent men (and the occasional woman) released prematurely from mental hospitals rarely commit mass murder. The data from the present study point to only four such persons since 1980 (3 men and 1 woman). There are several others who *ought* to have been hospitalized involuntarily, but were not (Laurie Wasserman Dann and Aaron Alexis, for example). Deinstitutionalization has been every bit the disaster that Kopel suggests, but for the most part the prematurely released violently mentally ill persons—if they resort to murder—kill one or two persons and rarely at levels compatible with “mass murder.” A recent high-profile case was that of the 2008 murder of psychologist Kathryn Faughey in New York City by the prematurely released paranoid schizophrenic David Tarloff. He had sought to murder a psychiatrist, Dr. Kent Shinbach, in that office out of anger at the doctor’s having diagnosed him as schizophrenic some 17 years before. But Tarloff went after Dr. Faughey first, as she was alone in her office. Dr. Shinbach, the intended target, ran in to help her, and was slashed in the face and neck by his old patient. This is the usual scenario in murders by mental patients: one, perhaps two, victims.

To retain violent mentally ill patients for much longer periods, or even for life, would represent a salutary “re-institutionalization” in many cases, but would not make the already rare phenomenon of mass murder all that much rarer. Recall that the most dramatic of the recent mass murders by the mentally ill—those perpetrated by Loughner, Holmes, and Lanza—were by young men barely 20, with no record of previous mental hospitalizations and no compelling reason why they should not have been permitted to buy rifles. And I find it hard to fault the media for “sensationalizing” the truly sensational stories of such

murders: How is one not to report about the murder of 20 school children or a dozen moviegoers? A day after the Kopel article, a similar note was sounded by psychiatrist Dr. Torrey and Ms. Fuller (2012). The two inveighed against the release over the past few decades of thousands of formerly hospitalized mentally ill persons, many of whom end up in jails and prisons, where their conditions receive little in the way of adequate treatment. They argue that if we can ensure that the potentially dangerous persons with mental illness would be properly treated, then the likelihood of their committing future mass murders would be reduced significantly. But this overlooks the already-mentioned rarity of psychotic persons released from hospital going on to commit mass, as opposed to single, murders. There is also the large problem in released mental patients of their failure to comply with prescribed medications or to keep clinic appointments. Many lapse back into psychosis and, at times, into dangerous behaviors (including murder). “Proper” treatment is often prescribed and offered—a commitment too often honored in the breach by the patients.

Kopel drew attention to the predilection of mass murderers for “soft targets” like schools, restaurants, and movie houses. Some even suggested, after the Newtown massacre, arming teachers—a suggestion I consider too risible to require further comment. In New York, people’s bags are cursorily checked as one enters the Metropolitan Opera—but one does not pass through a metal detector and is certainly not X-rayed. Members of law enforcement might be able to ward off certain attempts at mass murder if metal detectors and armed guards were available more widely at schools, shops, theaters, and other places where people gather. But this would involve huge expenditure and uncomfortable incursions into the freedoms of ordinary law-abiding citizens. In some states it is now permissible to carry a concealed weapon (read: “pistol”). The idea is that perhaps Average Citizen could thwart the impending attack of a mass murderer. But imagine if you are that Average Citizen, with your loaded Glock, in the back of the movie house where a James Holmes is dancing around on stage with his AK-47, a moving target safe inside his Kevlar vest, shooting rapid-fire indiscriminately into the crowd. What are the chances that you, as Average Citizen, are going to be able to subdue the killer before the killer has taken the lives of many moviegoers as he fires into the crowd? Would it have helped to have a policeman (with a rifle) stationed strategically in the theater? Perhaps. But government is faced with the task of either multiplying enormously the number of armed guards to protect the citizenry, or to diminish access to semiautomatic weapons (in a country that already has 300 million guns in private hands). I am not sure what would be the optimal compromise concerning these two options, but this will be a task with which law enforcement must now grapple.

Author Disclosure Statement

No competing financial interests exist.

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1. Price James H., Khubchandani Jagdish. Firearm Violence by the Mentally Ill: Mental Health Professionals' Perceptions and Practices. *Violence and Gender*, ahead of print. [[Abstract](#)] [[Full Text HTML](#)] [[Full Text PDF](#)] [[Full Text PDF with Links](#)]