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Chapter 8

Sometimes they come back: Examining the threat of Associated and Non-Associated and/or Mentally Ill School Violence Perpetrators

Gordon A. Crews, Ph.D.

Introduction

Americans must realize that K-12 school violence and its potential cannot be dealt with by simply removing the troublesome or problematic students from classrooms and schools. The expelling, suspending, or placing of a juvenile in an alternative school setting may only increase their anger against their former school and teachers. This may be part of the reasons for the growing trend of students who have failed or continued to have negative issues in their lives returning to their former school and committing acts of violence.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the potential threat of *Associated* and *Non-Associated and/or Mentally Ill* school violence perpetrators. For this research, *Associated and/or Mentally Ill* school violence perpetrators were identified as offenders who were generally older than more traditional types of offenders and targeted a school of which they have *past or current involvement*. These are most often former students who return to their previous school to commit a violent act. This violence may be against a former teacher, coach, or principal, or simply against the school as a whole. For most of these types of school violence perpetrators, the K-12 school was the place where they experienced their first failures, abuse, and mistreatment.

The *Non-Associated and/or Mentally Ill* school violence perpetrator, on an intellectual level, may be the most interesting of all types of offenders. They are also the type of offender who is most reluctant to offer any true insight into way they chose the K-12 school as a target for their violence. A great deal of this is obviously due to the high percentage of these offenders who were and remain mentally ill. These are not past students who returned to their previous school to commit a violent act, but, instead, targeted an unfamiliar school for other reasons. These reasons range widely from one seeing the school as a “symbol of innocence” or a location to harm others at a time in their lives where all of their hopes and dreams are still alive and possible. These types of offenders feel they are no longer at that level nor will they ever be so again.

Background Research

This chapter resulted as part of a comprehensive on-going research project investigating the causes of K-12 school violence and disturbance in America. Between 2008 and 2012, all publicly available lists and news reports were scoured to obtain a population of names of perpetrators who committed violence on Kindergarten to 12th grade school property or at a school function since the 1700s (approximately 500+ incidents initially identified). Then the deceased, released, un-adjudicated, and otherwise un-locatable individuals were eliminated from the sample (decreasing cases to approximately 120 incidents). Finally, state correctional systems were extensively searched to determine the number of these offenders who were still alive, incarcerated, and able to be contacted. This resulted in a list of 78 school violence incidents and offenders who committed their acts of violence in 33 states across the United States between 1979 and 2011.

Portraits and Typologies

Next, descriptive data from publicly available secondary sources (*e.g.*, court transcripts, news reports, journal articles, etc.) related to the resulting 78 identified incarcerated perpetrators

of school violence (mostly *school shooters*) were gathered. This was conducted to analyze their acts of school violence and to the aftermaths of their acts to develop a comprehensive portrait of K-12 school violence in the United States. It was also to provide this profile through the separating of them by “type” of school violence perpetrator for more in-depth analysis. From extensive review of the cases, surveys, and interviews, four (4) types of offenders were identified:

Traditional School Violence Perpetrators

(42 of the 78 offenders in this sample)

Gang Related School Violence Perpetrators

(24 of the 78 offenders in this sample)

Associated School and/or Mentally Ill School Violence Perpetrators

(7 of the 78 offenders in this sample)

Non-Associated and/or Mentally Ill School Violence Perpetrators

(5 of the 78 offenders in this sample)

Traditional school violence perpetrators are defined as those who were current students and essentially “striking back” at the students and school which they attended at the time of the violent act. *Gang related* school violence perpetrators are defined as those who were identified (self-identification and law enforcement identification) involved in the gang lifestyle and committed their acts as part of such lifestyle on school grounds or at school functions. As stated above, *Associated* or *Non-Associated and/or Mentally Ill* school violence perpetrators are identified as offenders who were generally much older and targeted a school of which they may (*Associated*) or may not have (*Non-Associated*) any past or current involvement. These are either past students who returned to their former school to commit a violent act or targeted a school in

which they had no association, but targeted it for other reasons (*e.g.*, as a symbol of innocence or revenge against society as a whole).

From the Thoughts of the Perpetrators

Finally, a secondary part of the overall research project focused on the results of a 200-question scenario-based survey, entitled, “School Violence Prevention Questionnaire,” distributed in early 2013 to the 78 identified incarcerated school violence perpetrators who committed acts of violence across the United States between 1979 and 2011. This survey questionnaire was developed in late 2012 with assistance from Dr. Angela W. Crews and the *Themis Center for Justice Policy, Practice, and Research* (Huntington, WV), and the collection and analysis of the surveys was conducted by *The Veritas Group* (Huntington, WV).

It was determined early that a *projective technique* was the survey method to be used given the research population (*i.e.*, incarcerated individuals, many facing the appellate process and/or denying their guilt). It was determined that this would be the most effective way to help the respondents’ unconscious speak, without directly commenting on their own criminal cases and/or culpability. Often, respondents are assumed to hold things back in order to protect their *self-image* in a research situation. When investigated by means of a projective technique, focus is moved away from the respondent and “projected” at hypothetical others and/or situations/scenarios. Therefore, respondents are supposed to *open up* to the survey purpose and actually reveal more about themselves than if asked directly. This is very often the case when conducting research about the criminal behavior of an individual. The “Prevention of School Violence Questionnaire” was constructed and administered in this fashion.

With this questionnaire, respondents were asked to put themselves *in the shoes of* John/Jane, a person similar to themselves at the time they committed their acts of violence and to

answer questions about John's/Jane's thoughts, feelings, and experiences at four different time periods: 1) *prior to deciding to commit violence*; 2) *after the decision to commit violence and during the planning phase*; 3) *during the act of violence*; and 4) *immediately after the act of violence*. For each part of the survey, respondents were asked if this hypothetical person agreed or disagreed with a statement provided. The level of agreement with the statement posed was rated 0 to 4 with the following options for response:

John/Jane is *definitely not* thinking, feeling, or experiencing this

John/Jane is *probably not* thinking, feeling, or experiencing this

I am *not sure* whether John/Jane is thinking, feeling, or experiencing this

John/Jane is *probably* thinking, feeling, or experiencing this

John/Jane is *definitely* thinking, feeling, or experiencing this

All 78 offenders received a survey with 36 of them agreeing to participate in this research and responding with their completed survey. This resulted in following final sample for survey responses:

Traditional School Violence Perpetrators (18 of the 36 offenders in this sample)

Gang Related School Violence Perpetrators (13 of the 36 offenders in this sample)

Associated School Violence Perpetrators (4 of the 36 offenders in this sample)

Non-Associated School Violence Perpetrators (1 of the 36 offenders in this sample)

Findings

This chapter presents this information in chart form to offer an overview percentage of the type of perpetrator who falls into a particular category/response/finding as dictated by each chart. As for the survey responses, responses of “probably thinking, feeling, or experiencing this” and “definitely thinking, feeling, or experiencing this” were combined and only used in the

calculations. The charts also divide the findings as they pertain to the two (2) different types of school violence perpetrators (*i.e.*, *Associated and/or Mentally Ill*, and *Non-Associated and/or Mentally Ill School Violence Perpetrators*).

The School

The first part of the overview deals with the factors involved in this type of school violence as it relates to these two types of perpetrators.

Location and Time of Events of School Violence Incident

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Incidents by U.S. Census Bureau Regions	Northeast: Mid-Atlantic Region	West: Pacific Region
Type of Developed Environment	Suburban	Suburban and Urban
Month of Incident	February and August	May and October
Day of Week	Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday	Monday and Friday
Time of School Day	Between 7:00 and 12:00pm	Between 8:00 to 12:00pm

Most of the *associated* type offenders will commit their acts in the Northeast: Mid-Atlantic Region (*i.e.*, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania). There attacks will often occur in suburban areas of these states and occur in either February or August. Their acts will most often occur later in the school week (*i.e.*, Wednesday through Friday), but will almost always happen as the school day begins to lunch time.

Non-associated and/or mentally ill school violence types of offenders are most likely to strike in the West: Pacific Region (*i.e.*, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington). Of course this is an overstatement; in like all forms of school violence, these attacks can happen anywhere at any time. Generally they will be in suburban or urban areas and occur most often in

May and October. These incidents can happen any day of the week but seem to occur most often between 8:00 and 12:00pm.

The School Environment in Which They Occur

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Level of School	High School and Elementary	Elementary and Preschool
Public vs. Private School	Public	Public
Was SRO Present At Incident?	No	No
Were Metal Detectors Present At Time of Incident?	No	No
Student Population	300 to 500 students	20 to 100 students
Faculty Student Ratio	12 to 20 students per teacher	7 to 10 students per teacher
% of White Students	91 to 99%	11 to 24% or 91 to 99%
% of Black Students	2 to 10%	0 to 1% and 2 to 10%
% of Hispanic Students	0 to 1%	0 to 1% and 2 to 10%
% of Other Students	0 to 1%	0 to 1% and 60 to 70%

Most of this type of violence will occur in public high schools, but can occur even at the elementary level. There will most often be no school resource officer or metal detectors at the school. This type of offender is more likely to commit their acts at relatively smaller schools (300 to 500 students). The schools will have the traditional number of 12 to 20 students per teacher, but with student populations which are 91 to 99% White. There will be very few minority students attending these schools.

Frighteningly, this is the only type of offender who actually targets preschools and elementary schools. These schools will most often be public schools with very little or no security. This is probably an additional attraction these schools have to this type of offender. The schools targeted will be small with less than 100 students and the inherent smaller class sizes of 7 to 10 students per teacher. Interestingly, and probably simply due to the geographical location this type

of offender finds themselves in, there is either a very high percentage of White students or relatively few.

The School Violence Event

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Why Was School Chosen?	Specific target(s) at school	School was a symbol or incidental
Stated Reason for Incident	Yes	Yes
Length of Planning Period	1 week	1 week
Was Event Gang-Related?	No	No
Informed Other of Intentions	May or may not tell others of plan	May or may not have
Did Shooter Have Co-Conspirators?	No	No
Did Perpetrator Have List Of Targets?	Yes	No
If List Existed, How Many On List?	1	0
Targets: Individual, Group, Multiple, or Random	Individual target	Random targets
Location of Incident in School	Hallway	Inside school grounds
Length of Incident in Minutes	3 to 5 minutes	1 to 60 minutes
Number of Shots Fired	1 to 5	1 to 5
How Did Incident End?	Apprehended by police after struggle	Apprehended by police after struggle

For associated type perpetrators, they will have specific targets at the school where they commit their act and will ultimately offer explanations for why they committed their act. This type of offender is the first to put more planning into their acts often doing so for a week in advance. Their motivation will have nothing to do with the gang lifestyle and they will have a list of targets even if it is only one person. They will most often begin their act of violence in a school hallway

but may do in the school gym. Most of this is due to these being locations where their targets were found.

For this type of school violence perpetrator, the school will be chosen as a symbol or incidental to their choice to commit violence. Some will target preschools and elementary schools in that there are many young and innocent lives present to harm or they might simply be the closes school with the lowest level of security. Almost all will offer a reason for their attack at some point and may have or not informed others of their plans. When they commit their act they will do so alone and have random targets. Most of their violence will occur outside of the school building on school property and last up to an hour or more. If they have a firearm 1 to 5 shots will be fired. Almost all will be apprehended at the scene of their crime by police or others at the scene.

The Perpetrator

The next section examines in more detail these particular types of offenders.

Who is the Perpetrator?

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Relationship to School	Outsider with connection to school	Outsider with no contacts
Age of Perpetrator	19 to 27	16 to 55
Sex of Perpetrator	Male	Male
Race of Perpetrator	White	White
Socioeconomic Status of Perpetrator	Lower and Middle	Middle to Upper Middle
Grade at Time of Incident	Some had and some had not graduated, none in school	Completed high school
Body Build of Perpetrator	Average	Slight to Average
Birth Order of Perpetrator	Youngest	Youngest and Middle
Number of Siblings Living With Perpetrator	0	0
On Probation at Time of Incident	May or may not be on probation	No

This type of school violence perpetrator, by definition, will be an outsider with some type of former connection to the school. They will be older than the other offenders with ages ranging from 19 to 27 years of age. They will most often be White males coming from lower to middle class socioeconomic circumstances. They will have had some schooling, but may not have actually graduated from high school. They will most often be the youngest in their family, but not living with any family members at the time of their violence.

All of these types of offenders will have no connection to their targeted school and have the largest age range in offenders of 16 to 55. They will most often be White males, but is also one of the groups to have the most female offenders. They will also be more likely to come from middle to upper middle class socioeconomic background. They will be the youngest or middle child in their families and be of slight to average build. At the time of their attack they will very often be living alone and not on any type of probation.

Perpetrator's Traits and Issues

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Evidence of Prior Mental Health Issues	Yes	Yes
Taking Medications for Mental Health	Yes	No
Evidence of Physical Health Issues	No	No
Parental Situation at Time of Incident	Not living with parent	Not living with parents
Any Evidence of Family Dysfunction?	Yes	May or may not have family dysfunction
Any Evidence of Physical Parental Abuse or Neglect?	Yes	No
Any Evidence of Sexual Abuse?	No	No

Marital Status of Perpetrator at Time of Incident	Single	Single
Perpetrator Involved Regularly In Religious Activities?	No	No
Evidence of School Disciplinary Problems	Not in school	Not in school
Any Evidence of Recent School Difficulties?	Not in school	Not in school
Any Evidence of Perpetrator Being Bullied?	No	No
If Bullied, Why?	Intelligence	None
Any Evidence of Recent Broken Relationship?	May or may not have a recent broken relationship	May or may not have a recent broken relationship
Perpetrator on Drugs/Alcohol at Arrest?	No	No
Perpetrator Possessed Drugs at Arrest?	No	No
Any Evidence of Past Drug or Alcohol Use?	No	No
Any Evidence Perpetrator Regularly Watched Violent Movies?	No	No
Any Evidence Perpetrator Read Books With Violent?	No	No
Any Evidence Perpetrator Played Violent Video?	No	No
Any Evidence Perpetrator Writing/Drawing Material with Violent Themes?	No	No

The vast majority of this type of offender will have evidence of past and current mental health issues and will be currently taking prescribed medicine for their issues. They will generally not have any other significant physical problems and be living alone and unmarried. They most often will have a history of being physically and emotionally abused by their parents. These offenders will have the traditional current problems at school in that they will not be currently

enrolled. They may or may not have had a recent breakup of an important relationship and will not have any evidence of unhealthy interest in violent music or media. Opportunities for insight into their thoughts will generally not be available in their writings or drawings around the time of the incident.

This type of offender will most likely have evidence of significant past mental health issues, but not on any prescribed medicine. They will be living alone and having no significant physical health issues. There may or may not be signs of current dysfunction in their families, but will be single and some are recently divorced. They will not have the traditional issues at school in that they will not be currently enrolled in school, but may have had the breakup of a significant personal relationship. As with many of the other types of offenders, there very well may be no sign of significant past alcohol or other drug abuse and they will not be under the influence of anything at the time of their attack.

Characteristics of Weapons Used and Injuries Incurred

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Were Weapons Readily Available To Shooter?	Yes	Yes
Where Was Gun/Weapon Obtained?	Stolen, gifts, legally owned	Gift from family or legally owned
Number of Weapons	1	1
Rounds of Ammunition Available	1 to 10	1 to 200
Types of Weapons Used	.22 caliber pistol, .45 caliber pistol, AK-47, 12 gauge Shotgun, .44 caliber rifle, Machete, and baseball bat	.22 caliber pistol, .22 caliber rifle, knife, vehicle, and propane tank
Number of Potential Victims	41 to 50	21 to 300
Killed or Injured Anyone outside School before or After School Incident	No	no
Number Killed	0	0
Number Injured	1	1 to 5

This type of offender is the first group of offenders to use varying types of weapons from handguns to baseball bats. Their weapons are easily found and are very often legally owned and given as gifts by others. Interestingly, they seem to be much more prevalent at smaller student bodies with lower amounts of potential victims. They will have not injured anyone prior to their act of school violence but will injure at least one during the event.

In regards to the weapons used and harm caused, this type of offender will have easy access to weapons in that they generally use items which they legally own. If it is going to be a firearm it is often a .22 caliber pistol or rifle, but most often it is a vehicle in which they use to crash into school property locations and then attacked students with other items such as propane tanks and machetes. When they do use firearms they are the one group to bring the most of extra ammunition. Again, they most often attack smaller schools with smaller numbers of potential victims. They are often the group to do the most harm and injuries to others at 1 to 5.

Charges, Trials, Pleas, Convictions, and Sentences

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Number of Different Charges	1 to 5	1 to 5
Type of Trial	Jury Trial	Jury Trial
Was There A Plea Bargain?	No	No
Not Guilty By Reason Of Insanity as Defense at Trial or In Plea Agreement	Yes	Yes
Guilty but Mentally Ill As Defense at Trial or In Plea Agreement	No	No
Conviction Counts	1 st Degree Murder	Attempted Murder, Kidnapping, and Other Charges
Number of Conviction Counts	1	1 to 5

Original Sentence Received	Terms of years and Life without Parole	Terms of years and Life without Parole
Minimum Number of Years Sentenced	16 to 20	21 to 35
Maximum Number of Years Sentenced	Life	21 to Life
Eligible for Parole	May or may not be eligible	May or may not be eligible

As with the other offenders, they will generally receive 1 to 5 initial charges and seek a jury trial. Very often this type of offender will offer the “not guilty by reason of insanity plea” to charges of 1st degree murder if such occurred. These individuals will generally receive a term of years in their sentencing with a minimum of 16 years up to life without parole. This group is one of two to have the greatest percentage of offenders who are not eligible for parole.

The *non-associated* offenders, as with the other types of offenders, generally receive 1 to 5 initial charges and also seek jury trials. The reason for the jury trial in almost all of the cases is that these offenders see plea bargains after entering pleas of “not guilty by reason of insanity.” This is the one type of offender who most often receives the most variation in charges from attempted murder to kidnapping. They will receive sentences of terms of year up to life without the possibility of parole.

The Thoughts

The final section is an overview of this type of offender’s thoughts and feelings before, during, and after their act of school violence.

Before the Decision to Commit Violence

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
View of Self	Little concern or compassion for others	Issues with conflict and authority
Lack of Self Confidence	Romantic relationships	Lack of self-confidence with all
Unsure Of Role	Unsure of role with peer ground	Unsure of role with all

Perceived As a Leader	Does not feel anyone sees them as a leader	Does not feel anyone sees them as a leader
Perceived Importance	Does not feel important to others	Does not feel important to others
Feelings of Being Threatened	Feels Reputation is threatened	Threatened by all
Feelings of Being Ignored	Feels ignored By family	Feels like they are ignored by everyone
Needs Ignored	Feels ignored By friends	Feels ignored by all
Feelings of Being Ridiculed	Feels ridiculed For physical appearance	Feels ridiculed by all
Feelings of Not Being Valued	Feels not valued By family	Feels not valued by anyone
Issues in Suffering	Depression and suicidal thoughts	Suffering from multiple psychological issues
Isolation	Feels Isolated from friends and family	Feels isolated from everyone
Disrespect	Feels Disrespected by students	Feels disrespected by everyone
Feeling Labeled	Labeled as Geek/weirdo by many	Reports being labeled in many ways by others
Feelings about Parents	Unsupported and dominated by parents	Disrespected and unsupported by parents
Bullying	Not bullied	Bullied in school
Punished Unfairly	Feels punished By parents	Feels punished By teachers and parents
Physical Abuse	Family member	By family member
Sexual Abuse	Family and stranger	By family member
Emotional Abuse	Report from a family member	Report from a stranger
Influences	Not influenced	Slight media influence
Under The Influence	Another person's prescription medication	Marijuana, hard drugs, and alcohol
Dealing with Loss	Loss of special relationship and family member	No loss
Fighting	Other students in past	Fighting with all
Seeking Revenge	Revenge for family	No revenge mentioned
Seeking Personal Respect	Seeking respect From friends and family	No
Gang Involvement	None	No
Happiness Issues	Unhappy with society	Unhappy with all

Before the associated type of offender decides to begin planning an act of school violence, they will very often have little or no concern for others and be lacking most in self confidence in

their romantic relationships. They will be unsure of their role with their peers and feel unimportant to and neglected by almost everyone in their lives. If they are ridiculed or bullied in their current lives it will most often be due to their physical appearance. Often significant physical, emotional, and sexual abuse will have been experienced by these individuals and most often at the hands of strangers who had access to them as children. Interestingly they are often taking prescription medicine from another person but not under any other type of physical influence. They will often state that the motivation for this act was to get revenge upon those who had harmed them in the past and may be seeking respect from family and friends in some fashion. There will be no gang involvement but a very deep sense of anger and unhappiness with their current lives.

As with all types of school violence perpetrators, these offenders will be suffering from a multitude of issues. They will have significant issues with conflict and be anti-authority. They will have a sense of a lack of confidence in all areas of their lives. They will also be unsure of their role with everyone and in everything. There will be no self-perception of being important to others and completely ignored causing them to feel various types of threats from all as well. These offenders will be suffering from multiple mental health issues and feel totally disrespected and neglected by everyone. They will probably have a past history of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse by family members in their past. This is the only group in this study where significant information was discovered involving the significant impact of violent music and other media on the offender. Also, this group was the only group to have a significant percentage of offenders under the influence of alcohol and other drugs at the time of their attack. Often these offenders will not mention that any type of revenge was sought, only that they were intensively unhappy and angry at life.

Planning the Violence

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Concerned about during planning stage	Concerned about loved ones	No concerns
Thoughts about Plans	Act must be done	Must be done and worried plans are good enough
Second Thoughts about Plans	Feeling nervous	Afraid and nervous

While planning their violence this type of offender will be very concerned about future ramifications for their loved ones, but very committed that their planned act must occur. A great sense of nervousness will be present, but it is often in regards to worrying if their plans for revenge are adequate enough.

As with most other types of offenders, this group had no concerns as they planned their act of violence. They were certain of what they were going to do and that it needed to happen. While nervous and afraid, the reasons for the feelings were over concerns that their plans might not be good enough to carry out their plans.

During the Violence

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Thoughts about Death	Wanting to die	Hoping to die
Negative Feelings	Will be praised by others	None reported
Not In Control	Not in control at all	Not in control at all
Worried About	Worried about School and community	Not worried

As with the traditional type offenders, during the actual event they will have great feelings of wanting to die before or during the event. In their minds they will have some type of feeling that they will actually be praised by others for what they are doing. This is the only group who will have actual concerns over future ramification for their school and community while committing the act.

This group of offenders was the most to report that a primary reason for this violence was that they wanted to be killed by someone during their act of violence. They also stated that they were not in control of their actions, thus their pleas in court, and had no worries at all during the commission of their violence.

The Aftermath

CHARACTERISTICS	ASSOCIATED	NON-ASSOCIATED
Placing of Blame for Act	Blames family	Blames Family, friends, and teachers
Feelings about Reality	Worried about unintended victims	Thinking a lot about past
Thoughts about Future	After release and how viewed by family	Not thinking of future
Views of Self	Sense of relief	All unreal and numb
Negative Feelings about Act	Did not achieve goals	Did not achieve goals
Negative Feelings about Self	Completing suicide	Should have forced them to kill them

This type of offender will most often blame their families for what they have done and be worried about any unintended victims that may have been harmed as they pursued their targeted individual at the school. Interestingly, this is the only group who will be worried about how they will be viewed by family at this point and upon release from prison. This group also will offer that they finally have a sense of relief in their minds, but will also state that they very often did not reach their goals in what they hoped to accomplish in their violent act. Many will continue to contemplate suicide as a solution to their current situation.

The non-associated type school violence perpetrator will blame everyone except themselves for this act of violence committed against a K-12 school. After the event some will be thinking about their past while others will not. Almost all will state that they are not thinking of the future and simply feel numb in their prison cells. They will offer though they are bothered that

they did not accomplish their goals of violence and wish they had forced someone to have killed them during the commission of their act.

Analysis and Recommendations

Surpassed by only *gang related* offenders, *associated* school violence perpetrators pose the most significant threat to a K-12 school. For a multitude of reasons, these individuals will begin to believe that someone at their former school is somehow responsible for their current failures and/or negative issues in life. They may also see their former high school as the first place where their troubles and failures began. This type offender in every incident examined, returned to kill a former teacher, athletic coach, or principal. They had no plans on harming any students or bystanders, just the person they had identified as being most responsible for their own failures in life. These students are also a unique threat too in that they are very familiar with the school grounds, layout of buildings, and class schedules. Therefore when they begin planning their violence, they will know what extra precautions they need to take to increase their likelihood of being “successful” in the attack.

This is a sobering reminder to all school personnel that how they treat a student may save or take their lives down the line. Many of these offenders return to their schools 4 and 5 years after they left the school. Many of these offenders were expelled or dropped out of their former school for a multitude of reasons. This speaks to the need for other types of policies in dealing with troublesome students than simply getting rid of them.

The *non-associated and/or mentally ill* school violence perpetrator is probably the most frightening type of offender that has been examined. These are individuals that a victimized school has not had any contact with, do not know, and have no warning they are going to attack. The *associated* type offenders will be former students that school officials will know and be cognizant

of future issues they might have with that individual. This is very true when this offender is one which was recently expelled or escorted off of a school property.

The non-associated on the other hand are individuals who have lost all hope in life and see that their own death may be the only answer. Some of these individuals are filled with so much hatred that they wish to attack a school in that it is a symbol of happy young people just beginning their lives. This is why this is the only type of offender in this study which targeted preschools and elementary schools.

This type of offender is the type of threat which involves a car crashing into school property or school buildings and the driver attacking the students with baseball bats, machetes, and even attempting to explode homemade explosive devices attached to propane tanks. Unfortunately, this type of officer is what is driving the designing of new school buildings as fortresses and many external security measures.

This type of offender is the same type of individual who attacks the audience of a movie theater or shopping mall. They are the type that opens fire on crowds outside of national monuments. Sadly they are also the type which attack preschool children on a playground.