

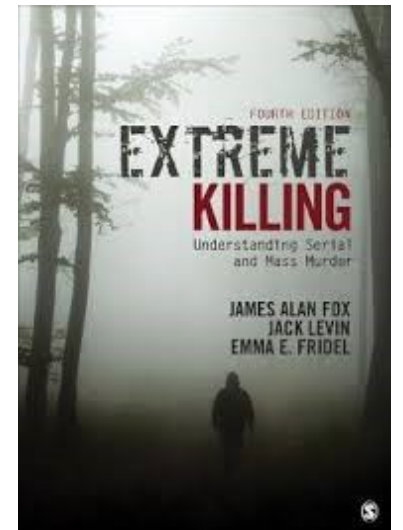
Mass Shootings: Risk and Response

James Alan Fox

Lipman Family Professor of Criminology, Law, and Public Policy
Northeastern University
j.fox@northeastern.edu

Advanced Development for Security Applications

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What's the risk and the appropriate response?

- Epidemic of mass shootings or epidemic of fear of mass shootings?
- Trend in deadly mass shootings and intersection with terrorism
- Mass confusion and misleading statistics concerning the risk
 - An alternative view of mass shootings
 - Conflating injuries and fatalities
 - FBI Active Shooter Events
- Special concern for schools
 - More misleading statistics
 - Seeing is believing
 - Favor low key and unobtrusive approaches
- Right things to do but for the wrong reason
 - Expanding mental health services
 - Gun restrictions
- Still problematic even though risk is overstated

A mass shooting epidemic?

“We Are In The Midst Of An Epidemic Of Mass Shootings”

Joe Scarborough, *Morning Joe*
MSNBC, 2/15/2018

“America’s mass shooting epidemic is f*ed up”**

Beto O’Rourke

CNN 9/1/2019

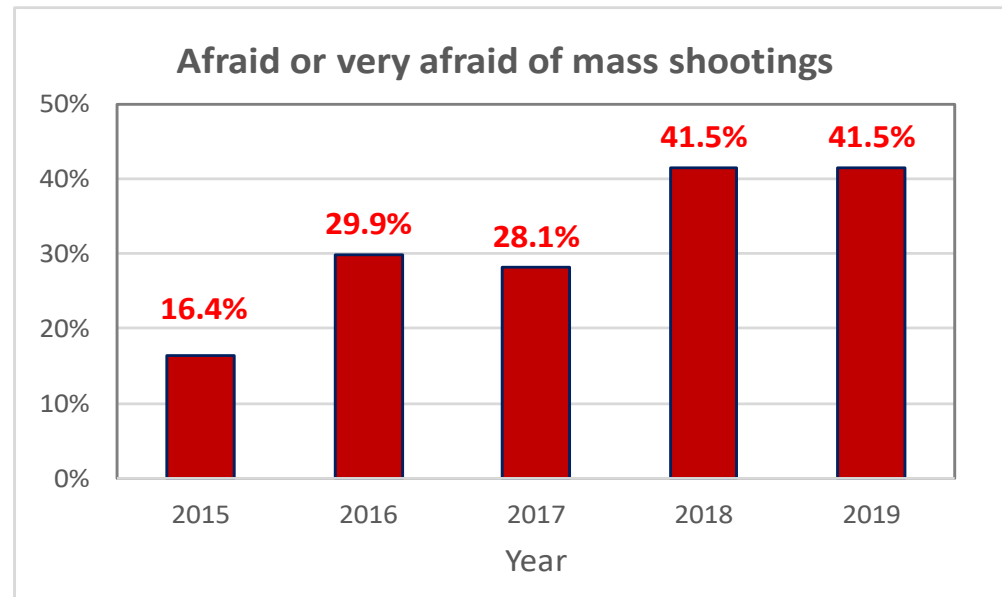
One-third of Americans Avoid Certain Places Because They Fear Mass Shootings

APA/Harris Poll 8/15/2019

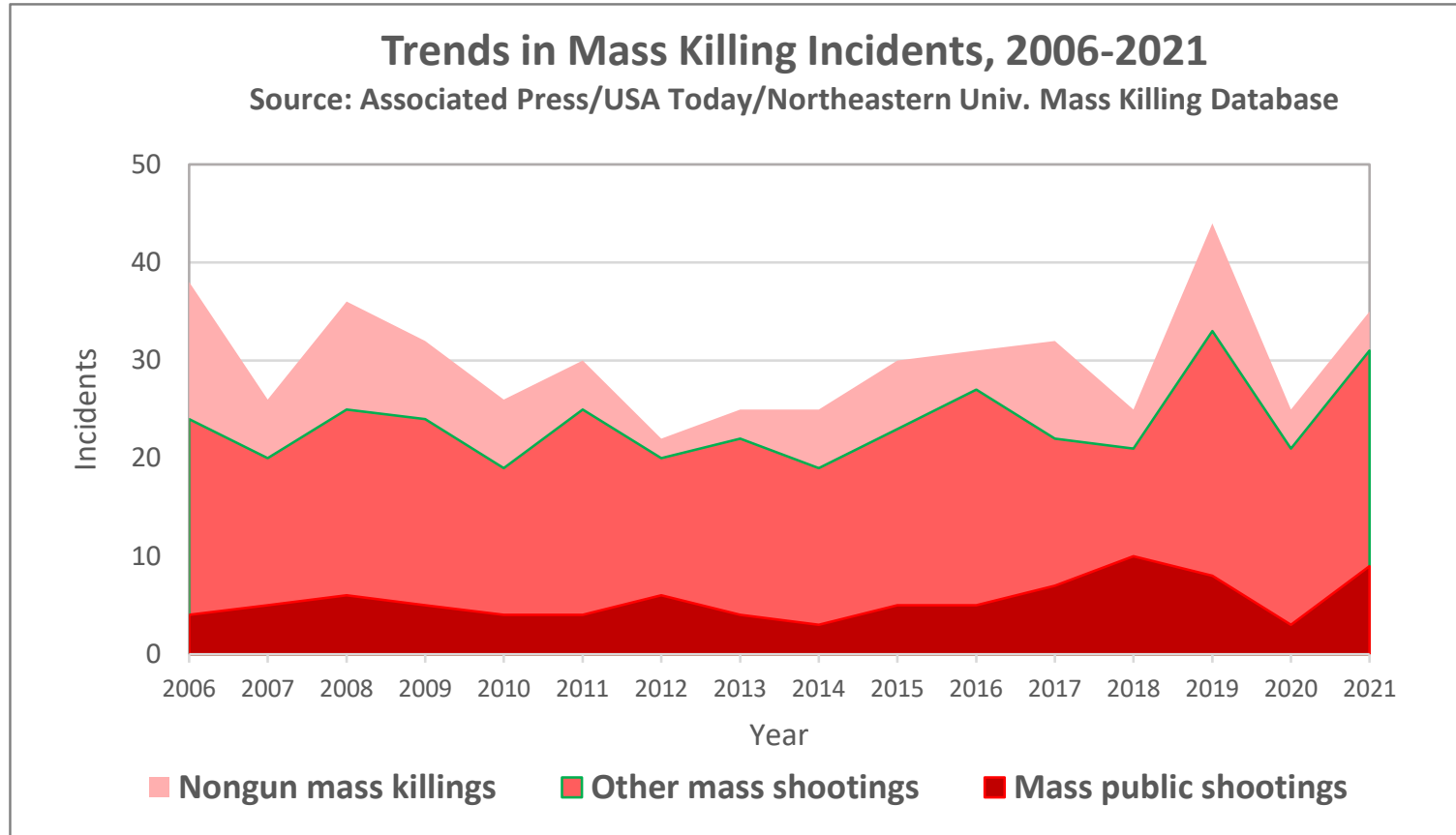
One-quarter believe mass shootings account for the most U.S. gun deaths—more than suicide or homicide generally.

APM Research Lab July 2019

Source: Chapman University Survey of American Fears



Perception v. reality



	Incidents	Pct of total	Pct of public
All	376	100%	
Public	88	23%	100%
Hate	10	3%	11%
Terrorism	3	1%	3%
Hate/Terrorism	13	3%	15%

Source: AP/USAT/NU Mass Killing Database

Very misleading

The New York Times

A Partial List of Mass Shootings in the United States in 2021

May 10, 2021

Here is an **incomplete list** of shootings with multiple victims in 2021. **It leaves out many more**, but offers a small glimpse of the gun violence the country has already suffered this year.

**But it is the complete list of mass killings!
Misleadingly implies the may others are like these.**

May 9: Colorado Springs
April 28: Boone, N.C.
April 15: Indianapolis
April 7: Rock Hill, S.C.
April 3: Allen, Texas
March 31: Orange, Calif.
March 28: Essex, Md.
March 22: Boulder, Colo.
March 16: Atlanta
March 13: Indianapolis
Feb. 2: Muskogee, Okla.
Jan. 24: Indianapolis
Jan. 9: Evanston, Ill.

Active shooters v. mass shooters

Illustrations used in FBI report gave misimpression:

- “Mass shootings on the Rise” (CNN)
- AG: Number of mass shootings tripled (AP)

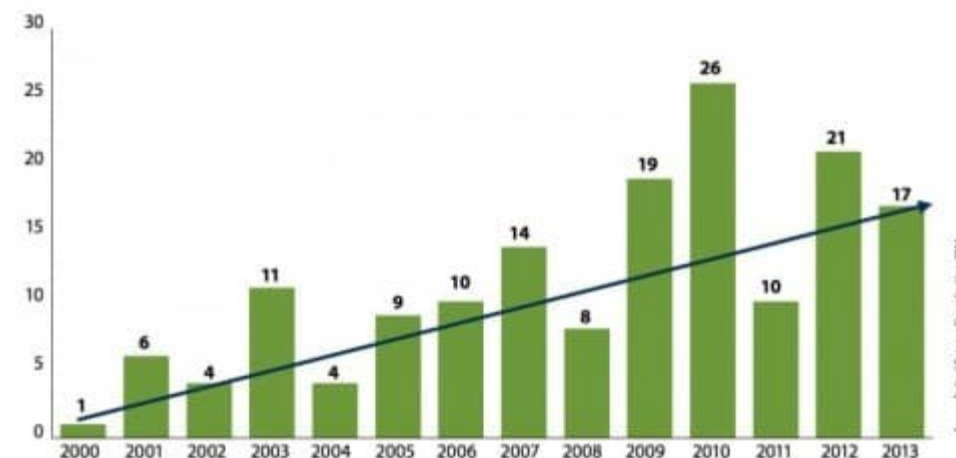
MISSING DATA BIAS

- In the five years since the FBI began surveying active shooter events (2014-18), **37.0%** of assailants failed to kill anyone. In the first five years of the FBI database (2000-04), only **7.7%** killed no one.
- Either active shooters of recent vintage are poorer marksmen, or the less serious cases of earlier years were not identified.

An active shooter is “an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.”

“This is not a study of mass killings or mass shootings”
FBI, 2014

A Study of 160 Active Shooter Incidents in the United States Between 2000 - 2013:
Incidents Annually



What is a school shooting?

312 School Shootings In America Since 2013

Everytown for Gun Safety on May 25, 2018

“America averages about one school shooting each week, report says” *WCVB Boston, 2/15/18*

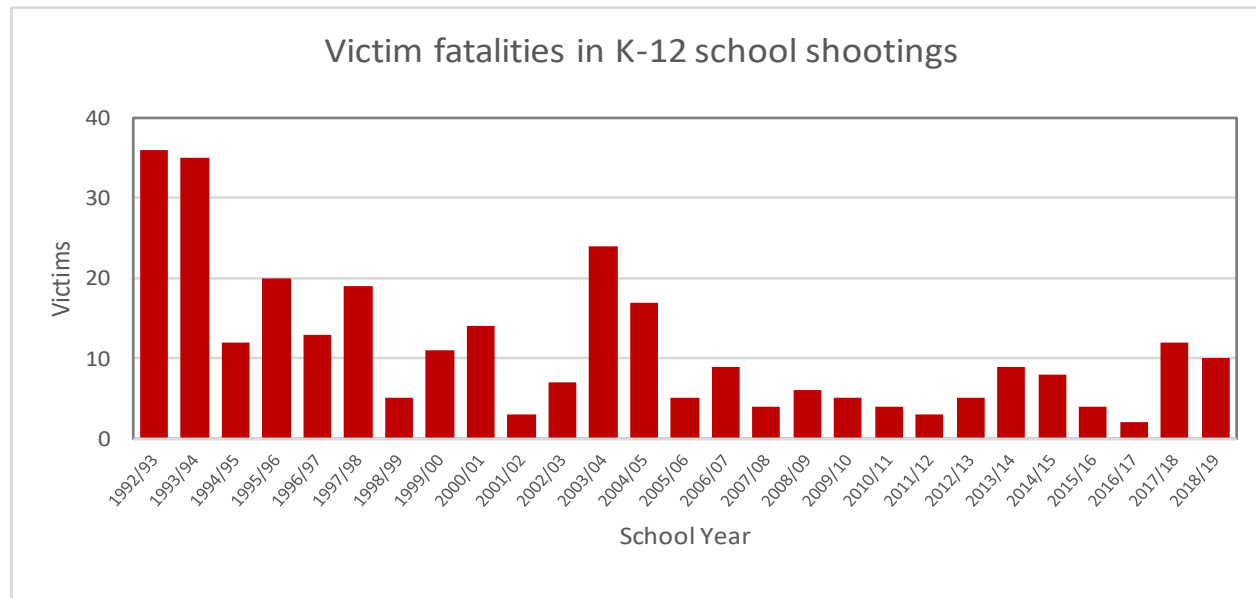
“School Shootings Are Becoming the New Normal”
TIME, 5/22/18

School shootings, 2013-2018

Incidents	361
K-12 incidents	220
Attacks w/ casualties	105
Fatal attacks	25
Students killed	40
Others killed	69

Source: Analysis of Everytown data

On average, 6.7 students killed by an armed assailant annually.



Now a nation watches



Right thing to do but for the wrong reason

- Improve access to mental health services
- Array of gun restrictions
 - Universal background checks
 - Banning large capacity magazines

“We need to help people struggling with mental health problems get the treatment they need before it is too late”

Barack Obama, 4/8/13

Unwelcomed support

That there is not an epidemic of mass shootings doesn't mean there isn't a gun problem. We do need stronger gun laws as well as a better support system for troubled Americas. But the reasons for doing these things are the thousands of gun deaths that occur annually, not the hundreds who die in a mass shooting.

August 15, 2019

The Washington Post

Politics

Trump promotes views of criminologist who says there's no evidence of a mass-shooting 'epidemic'



President Trump stops to talk to members of the media as he walks to Marine One to depart from the South Lawn at the White House last week. (Jabin Botsford/The Washington Post)

Thank you.