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2019

A report from the Center on Extremism

# Murder and Extremism

in the United States in 2018

## **Our Mission:**

**To stop the defamation of the Jewish people  
and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.**

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## **ABOUT THE CENTER ON EXTREMISM**

The ADL Center on Extremism (COE) is one of the world's foremost authorities on extremism, terrorism, anti-Semitism and all forms of hate. For decades, COE's staff of seasoned investigators, analysts and researchers have tracked extremist activity and hate in the U.S. and abroad — online and on the ground. The staff, which represent a combined total of substantially more than 100 years of experience in this arena, routinely assist law enforcement with extremist-related investigations, provide tech companies with critical data and expertise and respond to wide-ranging media requests.

As ADL's research and investigative arm, COE is a clearinghouse of real-time information about extremism and hate of all types. COE staff regularly serve as expert witnesses, provide congressional testimony and speak to national and international conference audiences about the threats posed by extremism and anti-Semitism. You can find the full complement of COE's research and publications at [ADL.org](https://www.adl.org).

ADL is a leading anti-hate organization that was founded in 1913 in response to an escalating climate of anti-Semitism and bigotry. Today, ADL is still the first call when acts of anti-Semitism occur and continues to fight all forms of hate. A global leader in exposing extremism, delivering anti-bias education and fighting hate online, ADL's ultimate goal is a world in which no group or individual suffers from bias, discrimination or hate.

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Front cover image source: ADL H.E.A.T. map  
([www.adl.org/heat-map](http://www.adl.org/heat-map))





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2018

Each year, ADL's Center on Extremism (COE) tracks murders perpetrated by all types of extremists. The 2018 Murder & Extremism report provides key insights into the crimes, including motivations behind these violent attacks.

2018 was a particularly active year for right-wing extremist murders: Every single extremist killing — from Pittsburgh to Parkland — had a link to right-wing extremism.

### KEY FINDINGS:

- Every year adherents of a variety of extreme causes kill people in the United States; ADL's COE tracks these murders.
- In 2018, domestic extremists killed at least 50 people in the U.S., a sharp increase from the 37 extremist-related murders documented in 2017, though still lower than the totals for 2015 (70) and 2016 (72). The 50 deaths make 2018 the fourth-deadliest year on record for domestic extremist-related killings since 1970.
- The extremist-related murders in 2018 were overwhelmingly linked to right-wing extremists. Every one of the perpetrators had ties to at least one right-wing extremist movement, although one had recently switched to supporting Islamist extremism. White supremacists were responsible for the great majority of the killings, which is typically the case.
- Deadly shooting sprees were a major factor in the high death toll. Five of the 17 incidents involved shooting sprees that caused 38 deaths and injured 33 people.
- The perpetrator of one of 2018's deadly shooting sprees, at a yoga studio in Tallahassee, was connected to the misogynistic incel/manosphere movement. In the wake of this attack and a similarly-motivated killing spree in Toronto, Canada, ADL's COE now tracks such incidents as extremist-related killings and has updated its database to include an earlier incel-linked incident, Elliot Rodger's 2014 shooting spree.
- Firearms remain the weapon of choice for extremists who kill. Guns were responsible for 42 of the 50 deaths in 2018, followed by blades or edged weapons.

2018 was a particularly active year for right-wing extremist murders: Every single extremist killing — from Pittsburgh to Parkland — had a link to right-wing extremism.





Image source: ADL H.E.A.T. map  
([www.adl.org/heat-map](http://www.adl.org/heat-map))







# Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2018

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*White supremacist Samuel Woodward appears in a courtroom for his hearing Wednesday, Jan. 17, 2018, in Santa Ana, Calif. Authorities arrested Woodward in the killing of a 19-year-old Blaze Bernstein. (AP Photo/Jae C. Hong)*





# MURDER AND EXTREMISM IN THE UNITED STATES IN 2018

From pipe bomb plots to violent clashes and demonstrations, extremists found a range of ways to make their presence felt across the United States in 2018, but none so shocking as murder. At American high schools, synagogues and on our streets, violent extremists killed children and adults alike, leaving communities and the country itself reeling.

The preliminary tally by the COE shows that domestic extremists took the lives of at least 50 people in 2018, a sharp increase from the 37 people killed by extremists in 2017. In fact, 2018 is the fourth-deadliest year since 1970, behind only 1995 (which saw 184 lives lost, most because of the Oklahoma City bombing), 2016 (72 lives lost) and 2015 (70 lives lost).<sup>1</sup>

## Five Most Deadly Years for Domestic Extremist Killings (1970-2018)



Year	Number of Deaths	Significant Incidents (5+ Deaths)
1995	184	Oklahoma City bombing (168 deaths)
2016	72	Orlando nightclub shooting (49 deaths)
2015	70	San Bernardino, Chattanooga, Charleston shootings (28 deaths total)
2018	50	Pittsburgh synagogue, Parkland High School shootings (28 deaths total)
2009	46	Ft. Hood shooting (13 deaths)

Note: Data is less reliable for 1970s-1980s and may undercount extremist related killings in those years.

Source: ADL

*A Jewish emergency crew and police officers at the site of the mass shooting that killed 11 people and wounded six at the Tree Of Life Synagogue on October 28, 2018 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Suspected gunman Richard Bowers, 46, has been charged with 29 federal counts in the mass shooting that police say was fueled by antisemitism. (Photo by Jeff Swensen/Getty Images)*

Extremist-related killings are few when compared to the total number of homicides in the U.S. each year. Nevertheless, such killings, especially when they are conducted as hate crimes or terrorist attacks, can send shock waves through entire communities—and beyond. When white supremacist Robert Bowers entered the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh in October to launch a killing spree against Jews attending services, taking 11 lives and wounding seven more, his senseless and hate-fueled violence directly impacted not just the victims' families, friends and neighbors, but all residents of Pittsburgh—and communities nationwide and around the world.

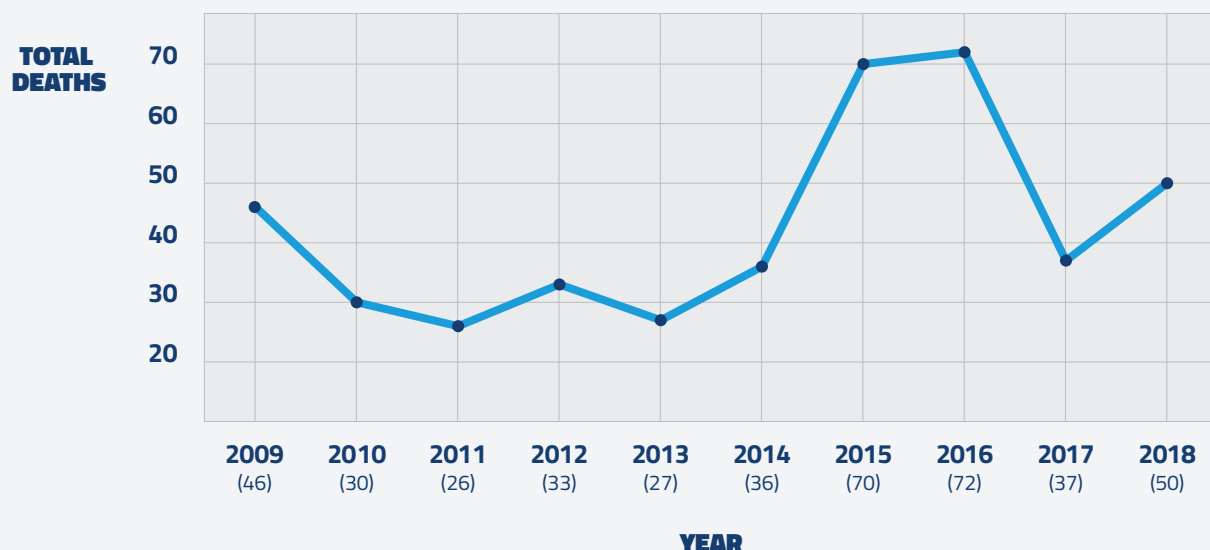
Moreover, the deaths described here represent merely the tip of a pyramid of extremist violence and crime in the United States; for each person killed by an extremist, many more are wounded or injured in attempted murders and assaults. Extremists engage in a wide variety of other crimes related to their causes, from threats and harassment to white collar crime. Every year, police uncover and prevent a wide range of extremist plots and conspiracies with lethal intentions.

In terms of lethal violence, 2018 was dominated by right-wing extremism. Every one of the 50 murders documented by the COE was committed by a person or persons with ties to right-wing extremism, although in one incident the perpetrator had switched from white supremacist to radical Islamist beliefs prior to committing the murder.

In fact, 2018 saw the highest percentage (98%) of right-wing extremist-related killings since 2012, the last year when all documented killings were by right-wing extremists. Right-wing extremists also killed more people in 2018 than in any year since 1995. For comparison, only 62% of extremist killings in 2017 were committed by right-wing extremists, and only 21% in 2016.

The year's high death toll is due in large part to the number of shooting sprees by extremists. In 2017, only one extremist-related shooting spree occurred; in 2018, there were five shooting sprees collectively responsible for 38 deaths and 33 non-fatal casualties. There were fewer lethal incidents in 2018 than in 2017 (17 compared to 21), but the events were significantly deadlier—and shooting sprees were responsible for most of the deaths.

## Domestic Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Year (2009-2018)







*Police keep the campus secure as students arrive at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on the first day of school on August 15, 2018 in Parkland, Florida. Former student Nikolas Cruz, 19, is accused of killing 17 students and faculty members at the school on February 14, 2018 during the last school year. (Photo by Joe Raedle/Getty Images)*

**Shooting sprees are largely responsible**  
for the higher death totals in recent years.



# THE PERPETRATORS



The COE tracks extremist-related murders connected to all forms of extremism, including right-wing extremism, left-wing extremism and domestic Islamist extremism, as well as less common forms.

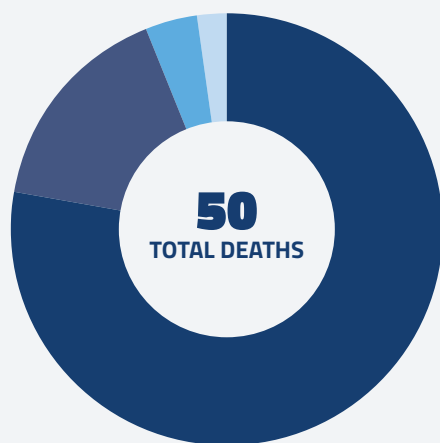
When extremists adhere to or are influenced by more than one extremist movement, they are categorized here by their apparent “primary” ideology, i.e., the ideology that seems to be most important to them, is the most recently followed or, if applicable, that seems most directly related to the murders they committed.

The case of Corey Johnson is an example of someone with a history of multiple extremist affiliations. In March 2018, Johnson, a 17-year-old high school student from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, carried out an allegedly

premeditated stabbing rampage during a sleepover at another house, killing a 13-year-old child and severely injured two other people.<sup>2</sup>

Johnson reportedly had a history of fascination with white supremacy and Nazism. One police report from an earlier incident involving Johnson characterized him as liking “extremists, Fascists, Hitler” and referred to the teen as “a White Supremacist.” However, by late 2016, Johnson had become enamored with radical Islamist ideas and allegedly converted to Islam. Johnson even reportedly attempted to reach out to ISIS, attracting the attention of both local and federal law enforcement, who also linked him to a threat to kill “Infidels” at a British school. After his arrest, Johnson reportedly told police he had committed the stabbings because his victims “disrespected” his religion.<sup>3</sup>

## Domestic Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Perpetrator Affiliation, 2018



**Almost all**  
of the 2018 extremist-related  
murders were committed by  
**right-wing extremists.**

- White Supremacy: **78%**
- Anti-Government Extremism: **16%**
- Incel Extremism: **4%**
- Domestic Islamist Extremism: **2%**

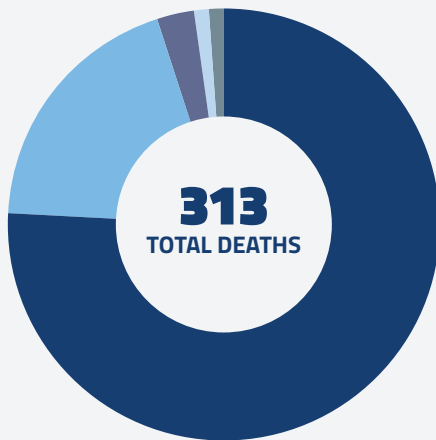
Note: Total deaths include both ideologically and non-ideologically motivated killings.

Source: ADL

Corey Johnson. (Photo: Palm Beach Gardens Police Department)



## Right-Wing Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Perpetrator Affiliation, 2009-2018



**3** OUT OF **4**

**killings committed by right-wing extremists in the U.S. are committed by white supremacists.**

- White Supremacy: **76%**
- Anti-Government Extremism: **19%**
- Incel Extremism: **3%**
- Anti-Abortion Extremism: **1%**
- Other Right-Wing Extremism: **1%**

Notes: 1. Anti-government extremism includes militia, sovereign citizen, tax protester, “patriot” movement and anti-government survivalists. 2. Total deaths include both ideologically and non-ideologically motivated killings.

Source: ADL

To be included in the tally of extremist-related killings, it is not enough for an incident, by its nature, to seem as if it could have been committed by an extremist. Rather, there must be positive evidence connecting the murderer to an extremist group or movement. This is why one deadly incident that many have speculated had ties to white supremacy is not included in this report: the Kroger grocery store shootings of October 2018.

In this incident, Gregory Bush, a white man, opened fire in a Kroger’s supermarket in a suburb of Louisville, Kentucky. He killed one person, then killed a second person in the parking lot outside. Both victims were African-American. Bush has been charged with federal hate crimes in this case, in part because of a surveillance video showing Bush unsuccessfully attempting to enter a historically African-American church shortly before the Kroger’s attack. Bush also allegedly told a witness of the shootings during the incident that “whites don’t kill whites.”<sup>4</sup>

Bush does allegedly have a history of making some racist remarks—including against his ex-wife, who is African-American—but so far, no evidence has emerged to connect him to the white supremacist movement or its ideology (nor would it be common for a full-fledged white supremacist to marry an African-American person or raise a biracial child). Because of this, Bush’s crimes are not included here—although if evidence of white supremacist ties on his part were to emerge in the future, he would be added at that point.<sup>5</sup>

The Bush attack notwithstanding, white supremacists were responsible for the great majority of extremist-related killings in 2018, which is the case almost every year. Right-wing extremists were responsible for 49 (or 98%) of the 50 domestic extremist-related killings in 2018, with white supremacists alone accounting for 39 (or 78%) of those murders. Anti-government extremists (primarily sovereign citizens) were responsible for eight (or 16%) of the deaths.

The remaining two 2018 deaths, both stemming from a single incident, are worth special mention. In November 2018, Scott Paul Beierle opened fire inside a yoga studio in Tallahassee, Florida, killing two people and wounding four more. Beierle also pistol-whipped someone who tried to intervene. He then killed himself. In the wake of the attack, BuzzFeed and the Associated Press revealed that Beierle had made a series of racist and misogynistic YouTube videos—one titled “The Rebirth of My Misogynism”—that revealed deep-seated hatred towards women, particularly women in interracial relationships who had ostensibly betrayed their “blood.” In one of these videos, Beierle referenced Elliot Rodger, whose 2014 stabbing and shooting spree in California left six dead and 14 wounded and was motivated primarily by misogynistic rage.<sup>6</sup>

Beierle appears to have identified with the so-called “incels,” or involuntary celibates, a movement that consists primarily of men who externalize their rage and unhappiness over their inability to form meaningful relationships with women. Incels are part of a larger universe of mostly online right-wing misogyny, sometimes called the “manosphere,” which includes sub-categories such as “men going their own way” and “pickup artists.” Rodger’s 2014 murders were the first known example of deadly incel-inspired violence and he continues to inspire like-minded men today. In April 2018, self-described incel Alek Minassian conducted a vehicular attack in Toronto, Canada, killing 10 and injuring 16 more. In a Facebook post made just before the attack, Minassian referenced Rodger.

The COE is now tracking incel-inspired acts of violence in its murders and terrorism databases—and has added Rodger’s 2014 spree to its records, as well.

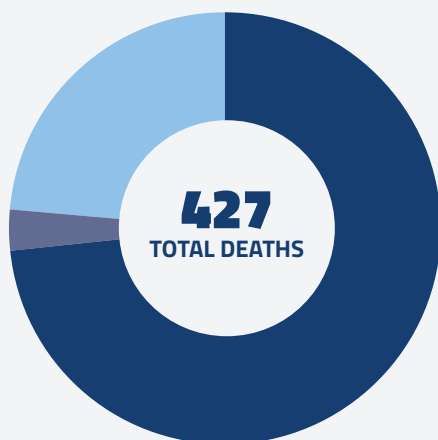
While some of 2018’s right-wing related murders received considerable publicity, with the tragedy at the Tree of Life garnering attention worldwide, other killings remained largely under the radar. This includes another white supremacist-related murder in Pittsburgh, which occurred not long before the synagogue shooting. In August, white supremacist Joden Rocco was charged with homicide for stabbing an African-American man to death outside a bar where Rocco was denied entry. Prior to the incident, Rocco made an Instagram video in which he discussed how he and friends were planning to go from bar to bar to see how many times they could repeat the “n-word” to bartenders before being thrown out.<sup>7</sup>

This incident is noteworthy not just for the shocking and unprovoked nature of this attack, but also because Rocco used social media to announce his racist bar-hopping plans. Robert Bowers, the Tree of Life shooter, used the social media site Gab to broadcast his attack on the synagogue, proclaiming “Screw your optics, I’m going in.” As noted above, Beierle used YouTube as a platform for his misogyny and Minassian used Facebook to publicize his own attack. As social media has become ubiquitous, extremists have grown more likely to use these platforms to announce their beliefs and plans, including even deadly acts. In 2015, Dylann Roof created a website to host the manifesto he used to justify his murderous attack on the Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina—the next Dylann Roof may simply post his intentions to his social media feeds.<sup>8</sup>



*Scott Paul Beierle in a Leon County Sheriff's Department Booking Photo.*

## Domestic Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Perpetrator Affiliation, 2009-2018



### Right-wing extremists

are responsible for the vast majority of extremist-related murders over the last decade.

- Right-Wing Extremism (all movements): **73.3%**
- Left-Wing Extremism (including anarchists & black nationalists): **3.2%**
- Islamist Extremism: **23.4%**

Note: Total deaths include both ideologically and non-ideologically motivated killings.

Source: ADL

Domestic Islamist extremists were responsible for only one of the 50 killings documented in 2018, a sharp drop from recent years and the lowest figure since 2012, the last year when no such killings took place. Unlike the last several years, there was no domestic Islamist extremist mass casualty event such as a shooting spree or vehicular attack in 2018. Compared to right-wing extremists, domestic Islamist extremists in the U.S. have been involved in far fewer lethal incidents—but a number of those attacks have been high-casualty events, including most notably the Pulse nightclub attack in Orlando, Florida, in 2016, which left 49 dead.

The fact that only one person was killed by a domestic Islamist extremist in the U.S. in 2018 should not be taken as an indication that the threat posed by this form of extremism has diminished. A number of domestic Islamist extremists were arrested in 2018 for a variety of

crimes, from terrorist plots to providing material support to terrorism.

Finally, it should be noted that we report no killings in 2018 related to left-wing extremism, a category in which we include traditional left-wing extremism, left-wing single-issue movements, anarchists and black nationalists. In a sense, this is not unusual, in that left-wing extremists have not been particularly violent over the past 20 years, and most of the violence that has emerged from that quarter has been directed at property rather than people. ADL's data shows just 15 murders linked to left-wing extremism over the past 20 years, with 13 of the 15 fatalities occurring in 2016 and 2017, all linked to black nationalists. It should be noted that Tierre Guthrie, the perpetrator of one of 2018's anti-government extremist-related murders, may have also had black nationalist leanings.<sup>9</sup>

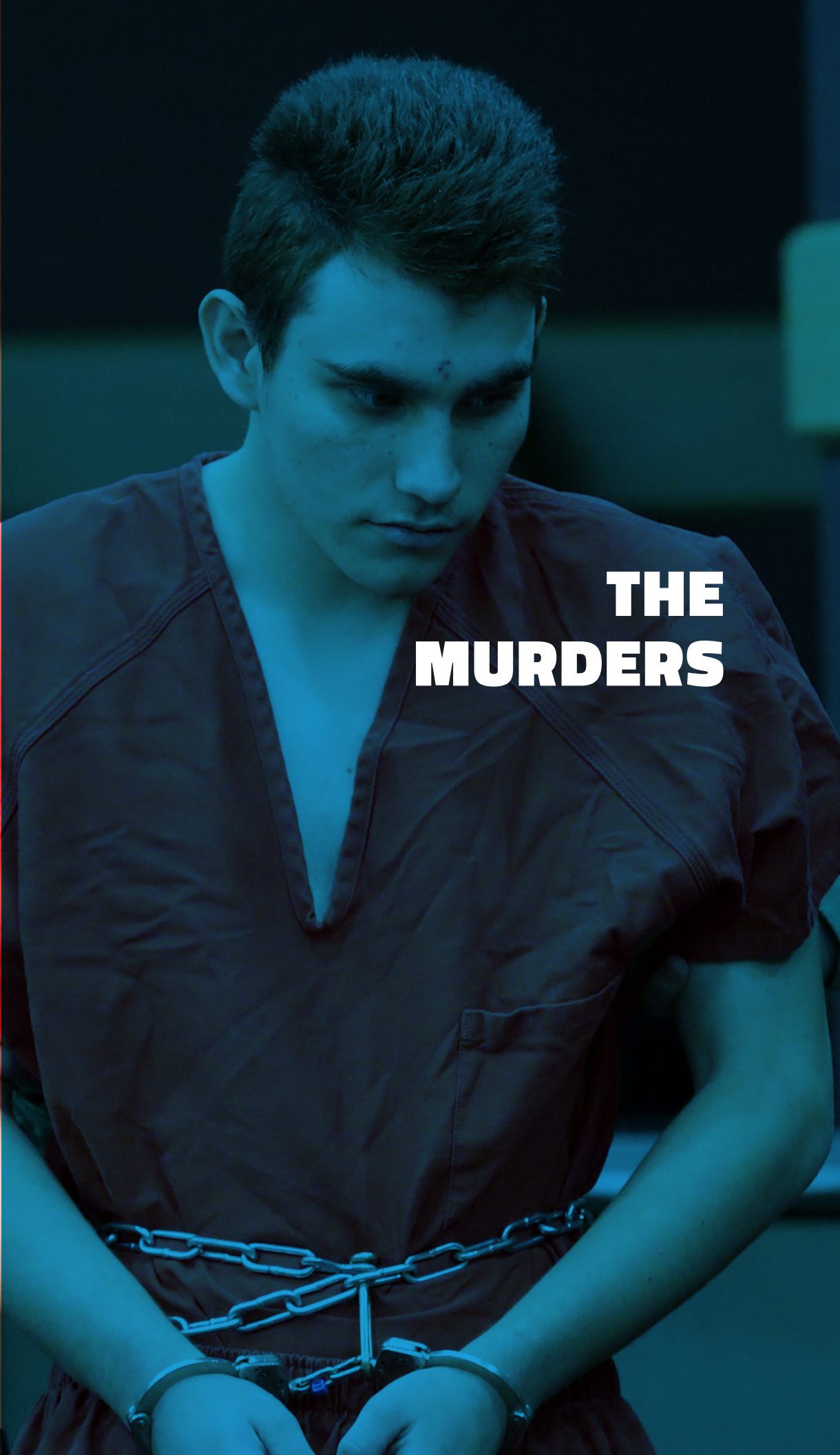


## Domestic Islamist Extremist Killings in the United States by Year, 2009-2018

Year	Number of Incidents	Deaths
2009	2	14
2010	0	0
2011	0	0
2012	0	0
2013	1	4
2014	3 (all by one perpetrator)	4
2015	2	19
2016	1	49
2017	2	9
2018	1	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

**Only 12 lethal domestic Islamist extremist incidents have occurred in the past 10 years, but those incidents have resulted in 100 deaths.**

Source: ADL



# THE MURDERS

Each of the past five years has seen at least 36 domestic extremist-related killings, producing a higher total than any other five-year period since 1970...

The 50 extremist-related killings that occurred in 2018 represent a 35% increase from 2017, itself a year with a significant number of extremist murders. Each of the past five years has seen at least 36 domestic extremist-related killings, producing a higher total than any other five-year period since 1970, including the five-year period around the Oklahoma City bombing.

The primary reason for the higher totals? High-casualty attacks—mainly through shooting sprees. Each of the last five years has been marked by shooting sprees by right-wing, domestic Islamist or left-wing extremists.

In high- and low-casualty attacks, U.S. domestic extremists used guns in 42 of the 50 murders they committed in 2018, far outpacing edged weapons or beatings. Over the past 10 years, firearms were used in 73% of domestic extremist-related killings in the U.S. Guns, not bombs, anthrax or vehicles, are the weapon of choice among America's extremist murderers, regardless of their ideology.

Ideological motives appear to have played a primary or secondary role in 19 of the 50 extremist murders (38%) in 2018. In the remaining murders, either the role that ideology may have played is unclear, the motives in general are unclear or the murders were likely committed for non-ideological reasons. Over the past 10 years, 51% (216 out of 427) of domestic extremist-related murders have had a primary or secondary ideological motivation, so the 2018 proportion of ideologically-related killings is somewhat lower than average.

The February 2018 shooting spree at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, illustrates

the complexity of the issue of ideology. In this incident, Nikolas Cruz, a former student there, opened fire at his old school, killing 17 people and wounding 17 more.

Cruz made two cellphone recordings just before the attack, but neither provided much insight into his motives, including any ideological motivation, though Cruz did refer to classmates as having been “brainwashed by these fucking political government programs.”<sup>10</sup>

Considerable information emerged about Cruz after the shootings, shedding light on his behavioral problems and his fascination with violence, but also on his white supremacist leanings. Immediately after the attack, the leader of a tiny Florida-based white supremacist group falsely claimed that Cruz had been a member of his group. The statement was quickly revealed to be a hoax, and the white supremacist was arrested for knowingly making a false statement to law enforcement.

However, further investigation by journalists and law enforcement revealed that Cruz was, in fact, sympathetic to white supremacist ideology. Cruz belonged to a private Instagram group where he and others posted hundreds of racist comments, memes and videos. Cruz's classmates and acquaintances reported his bigoted remarks against African-Americans, LGBTQ people and Jews. Cruz allegedly claimed that Jews wanted to destroy the world and said he wished “all the Jews were dead.” Cruz also allegedly said his birth mother was Jewish and he was glad he never met her.<sup>11</sup>

According to the extensive report on the shootings by the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission, which was released in December

*Nikolas Cruz is escorted into the courtroom for his arraignment at the Broward County Courthouse March 14, 2018 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Cruz is accused of killing 17 students and adults at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland on February 14, 2018. (Photo by Amy Beth Bennett-Pool/Getty Images)*



2018, Cruz had an interest in Hitler, Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan, was known to use phrases such as “white power” and drew swastikas on his personal belongings. His cell phone contained numerous images related to Nazis and the Ku Klux Klan. Cruz even etched swastikas into the ammunition magazines he used in his shooting spree.<sup>12</sup>

The evidence is very strong that Cruz was a budding white supremacist—but did his white supremacist beliefs play a role in the attack? The school itself was not a likely white supremacist target, nor did Cruz seem to target his victims by race, religion or ethnicity. Cruz primarily seemed to have a primal interest in causing death and destruction. However, the fact that he went to the trouble of etching swastikas onto his ammunition magazines cannot be discounted as a possible indicator of some degree of ideological motive.

In the end, however, it is not clear to what extent Cruz’s white supremacist beliefs may have played a role in the killings. Because of this uncertainty, Cruz’s killings have been listed here as non-ideological, but like many killings listed this way, the possibility of some degree of ideological influence cannot be ruled out.

Some might wonder why the COE tracks both ideological and non-ideological killings by extremists, instead of just ideological killings. One important reason has been described above—it is often difficult to know for sure if ideology played a role, significant or otherwise, in a murder or series of murders.

Moreover, discounting non-ideological murders would provide a distorted idea of the nature of and dangers posed by extremist movements. Extreme causes often attract adherents with violent tendencies—tendencies

that are reflected not only in the violence that adherents commit for their cause, but also the violence they commit against others—including rivals, spouses, children and acquaintances.

White supremacists in the United States regularly commit murders in support of their hateful cause, but their violence—and thus the danger they pose to the country as a whole—extends far beyond that. To ignore non-ideological killings would be to discount a significant aspect of many of these extremist movements. Adherents of all terrorist and violent extremist movements, from Islamist extremists to narco-terrorists to anti-government militia groups, engage in both ideological and non-ideological criminal activity and violence. It is an inherent and integral part of the dangers they pose to society.

Consequently, the COE tracks all killings connected to domestic extremists, whether an ideological motive is clearly evident or not, but does distinguish those killings for which a primary or secondary ideological motivation seems likely.

Nearly every year, extremists kill at least one law enforcement officer in the U.S.; 2018 was sadly no exception. In February 2018, two Henry County, Georgia sheriff’s deputies attempted to serve a failure to appear warrant on Tierre Guthrie, an anti-government sovereign citizen. Chase Maddox, a Locust Grove police officer, arrived on the scene to help after Guthrie resisted arrest, but a shootout ensued. Guthrie shot all three officers and was shot himself. He died on the scene, while Officer Maddox died of his injuries at the hospital. The two deputies survived their injuries.

## Police Officers Killed in the United States by Domestic Extremists (1965-2018)

Years	By Left-Wing Extremists*	By Right-Wing Extremists	By Domestic Islamist Extremists	Total
1965-1970	3	0	0	3
1971-1980	25	1	2	28
1981-1990	5	6	0	11
1991-2000	1	16	0	17
2001-2010	2	25	0	26
2011-2018	8	11	1	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>106</b>

\*Includes anarchists, black nationalists.

Source: ADL



*Tierre Guthrie, left, an anti-government sovereign citizen, shot and killed Locust Grove Police Officer Chase Maddox, right, in Henry County, Ga. in February 2018. (Photos: Facebook, Georgia Bureau of Investigation)*



# THE INCIDENTS





## The 2018 extremist-related murders preliminarily documented by ADL include:

- **Tallahassee, Florida, November 2, 2018.** Scott Paul Beierle opened fire at a yoga studio, killing two people and wounding four others by gun-fire and a fifth by pistol-whipping before killing himself. Beierle had posted videos to social media containing racist and misogynistic commentary, expressing hostility towards women who engaged in interracial relationships and referring admiringly to misogynistic killer Elliott Rodger.<sup>13</sup>
- **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, October 27, 2018.** White supremacist Robert Bowers murdered 11 people and injured seven more, including four police officers, during services at the Tree of Life Synagogue. Bowers was a virulent anti-Semite who, among other things, blamed Jews for orchestrating the immigration of non-whites into the United States.<sup>14</sup>
- **Renton, Washington, September 19, 2018.** White supremacist Jeremy Shaw, who owned a small roofing business called Aryan Enterprises, was arrested along with his wife, Lorena, in connection with an alleged plot to murder Steven Morphis and steal his property through an adverse possession scheme. Morphis was beaten with a blunt instrument and his throat was slashed. Detectives who searched Jeremy Shaw's home found a number of Nazi- and white supremacist-themed items. He was charged with homicide, burglary and arson; Lorena was charged with burglary, arson and rendering criminal assistance.<sup>15</sup>
- **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, August 19, 2018.** White supremacist Joden Rocco was charged with homicide after stabbing an African-American man to death outside a bar after he and a friend were denied entry. Rocco allegedly made an Instagram video earlier that day discussing how he and his friends were going to go to bars to see how many times they could repeat the "n-word" before being kicked out.<sup>16</sup>
- **Sumter, South Carolina, August 11, 2018.** Demetrius Alexander Brown, a self-proclaimed Moorish sovereign citizen, was arrested for the fatal shooting of Sharmine Pack following a dispute about a vehicle sale at an auto repair shop.<sup>17</sup>
- **Robstown, Texas, July 27, 2018.** Richard Starry shot and killed four relatives at a local nursing center and at his home in an apparent act of domestic violence before killing himself. According to local media, Starry had been a member of a white supremacist group while in prison.<sup>18</sup>
- **Shawnee, Kansas, July 6, 2018.** Ronald Lee Kidwell, a tattooed white supremacist who liked to take photographs of himself wrapped in the Confederate flag, was arrested for the murder of an African-American woman, MeShon Cooper, who was stabbed to death. One neighbor claimed to reporters that Kidwell, who had a prior history of assaults, targeted victims based on race, pretending to be friendly, then attacking them. Kidwell himself allegedly told police that he killed Cooper because she had ostensibly threatened to tell others he was HIV-positive.<sup>19</sup>

*Emergency personnel stationed outside the Hot Yoga Studio after Scott Paul Beierle killed two people and injured several others on November 2, 2018 in Tallahassee, Florida. Beierle died from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. (Photo by Mark Wallheiser/Getty Images)*

- **Camden, Michigan, June 30, 2018.** Anti-government extremist Joshua Daniel Miller was arrested for the shooting death of Eddie Coleman Heathcoe. Miller allegedly got into an argument with his ex-wife at the home she shared with Heathcoe. Miller was involved with militia and Three Percenter groups.<sup>20</sup>
- **Dothan, Alabama, June 4, 2018.** James Mathis, a member of the Georgia-based white supremacist prison gang Ghostface Gangsters, and his wife, Amanda Oakes, allegedly killed their six-month-old son and put his body in a freezer in a hotel room. The couple fled to Florida where they were arrested following a carjacking attempt.<sup>21</sup>
- **Athens, Georgia, May 11, 2018.** Following a family argument, Malachi Qaadir Dorns, 19, stabbed his mother and older brother multiple times, wounding his mother and killing his brother. In an earlier arrest, Dornss told police that he was a sovereign citizen.<sup>22</sup>
- **Abingdon, Virginia, May 4, 2018.** Roger Melvin Tackett was charged with first degree murder and other crimes after fatally shooting an acquaintance following a dispute. According to police, Tackett has multiple white supremacist tattoos.<sup>23</sup>
- **Nashville, Tennessee, April 22, 2018.** Travis Reinking opened fire inside a Waffle House, killing four people and wounding or injuring four more. Reports from co-workers and police officers who had previously known or encountered Reinking stated that he was a sovereign citizen. However, Reinking also has a serious history of mental illness and the shooting appears to have been non-ideological in nature; he has been ruled incompetent to stand trial.<sup>24</sup>
- **Murfreesboro, Tennessee, March 17, 2018.** White supremacist John Daniel Carothers was charged with first degree murder, eight counts of reckless endangerment and one count of aggravated arson after he allegedly deliberately set fire to his African-American roommate at a Veteran Affairs home. Carothers allegedly confessed to the crime in a letter to a white supremacist group.<sup>25</sup>
- **Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, March 12, 2018.** Corey Johnson, 17, killed a 13-year-old and severely injured two others in a stabbing spree during a sleepover. One victim was stabbed 32 times but survived. Johnson was charged as an adult with first-degree murder and attempted first-degree murder. He had a long history of violent tendencies and extremist beliefs, including an interest in white supremacy. However, in the year before the attack he had become interested in radical Islam (and had even been reported to the FBI by local law enforcement). After his arrest, Johnson reportedly told investigators he had stabbed his victims "because of his Muslim faith."<sup>26</sup>
- **Locust Grove, Georgia, February 19, 2018.** Tierre Guthrie, a Moorish sovereign citizen, shot and killed a Locust Grove police officer when the officer and two Henry County sheriff's deputies tried to take Guthrie into custody for a failure to appear warrant. Both deputies were wounded but survived. Guthrie, who was himself shot four times in the firefight, died at the scene.<sup>27</sup>
- **Parkland, Florida, February 14, 2018.** Nikolas Cruz launched a deadly shooting spree at his former high school, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, killing 17 people and wounding 17 more. According to CNN, Cruz, 19, belonged to a racist Instagram group and hated blacks and Jews, even claiming Jews wanted to destroy the world. Cruz also allegedly referred to women who engaged in interracial relationships as "traitors." A South Florida Sun-Sentinel article reported that Cruz had racist and Nazi symbols on his backpack and that he had etched swastikas onto ammunition magazines left behind at the school after the shooting. However, little evidence has so far emerged to suggest that the MSDHS shooting spree itself was conducted as a white supremacist attack.<sup>28</sup>
- **Orange County, California, January 2, 2018.** White supremacist Samuel Woodward, a member of the neo-Nazi group Atomwaffen, was arrested for the stabbing death of Blaze Bernstein, a former high school acquaintance. Woodward allegedly stabbed Bernstein 20 times in the face and neck before burying him in a shallow grave. Woodward was charged with first-degree murder with a hate crime enhancement (Bernstein was Jewish and gay).<sup>29</sup>

## Ten Deadliest Acts of Violence by U.S. Domestic Extremists (1966-2018)

Rank	Fatalities	Year	Ideology	Weapon	Description
1	168	1995	Right-Wing Extremism	Bomb	Bombing of Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City by Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols
2	49	2016	Islamist Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, by Omar Mateen
3	17	2018	Right-Wing Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings at high school in Parkland, Florida, allegedly by Nikolas Cruz
4	14	2015	Islamist Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings at Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California, by Syed Farook and Tashfeen Malik
5	13	2009	Islamist Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings by Nidal Malik Hasan at Fort Hood, Texas
6	11	2018	Right-Wing Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings at Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, by Robert Bowers
7 (tie)	9	2015	Right-Wing Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings at Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina, by Dylann Roof
7 (tie)	9	1972-1973	Left-Wing Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings of police officers and whites in Dec. 1972 and Jan. 1973 in New Orleans by Mark Essex
9 (tie)	8	2017	Islamist Extremism	Vehicle	Vehicular homicides on New York City bike path allegedly by Sayfullo Saipov
9 (tie)	8	1972	Left-Wing Extremism	Firearm(s)	Shootings on St. Croix (U.S. Virgin Islands) by alleged black power activists

Source: ADL



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## SPEAK OUT AGAINST HATE AND EXTREMISM – PARTICULARLY FROM THE FAR RIGHT

Public officials and law enforcement authorities must speak out against all manifestations of hate and extremism. For too long, policymakers have focused disproportionate attention on the threat of Islamist extremism – to the detriment of readiness to address many other security issues.

- While we must continue to address that threat, the time has come to recognize that far-right extremism is an ongoing, pervasive and consistent threat to innocent lives in America. The right to free speech is a core value that must be protected, honored and cherished. But the promotion of hate – and bias-motivated criminal activity – must be vehemently rejected.
- Federal, state and local officials must send a consistent and much stronger message that violent bigotry is unacceptable – and ensure that the FBI, the Justice Department and state and local law enforcement officials have the tools and resources they need to enforce relevant laws and vigorously investigate and prosecute hate crimes to the fullest extent of the law, while providing comfort and assistance to individual victims and community members.

## ENACT LAWS TO FIGHT DOMESTIC TERRORISM

Recognizing that far-right extremism is a major threat of this new era, the United States Congress should enact laws to focus specifically on domestic terrorism, including close examination of the utility of enacting a statute that explicitly recognizes and punishes domestic terrorism as a crime.

- Congress should also ensure that the executive branch is tracking and focusing on domestic terrorism through legislation like the current Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act. ADL would support legislation that calls upon the federal government to collect data on domestic terrorism and ensures training for law enforcement on best practices to combat domestic terrorism. Such a statute should focus on specific

criminal acts and not cross the line to punishing First Amendment protected expression.

- The nature of domestic extremist movements is substantially different from the State Department-maintained listing of designated *foreign* terrorist organizations – and creating such a list would present potential constitutional issues under the First Amendment. ADL would not support the creation of a designated domestic terrorist organization list.

## EXPAND DIALOGUE BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY AND TECH SECTOR

In the last several years, civil society and the technology sector have partnered on a range of projects to adapt for the digital era. For example, ADL has been proud to be part of Twitter's Trust and Safety Council and to work with Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Twitter as members of our Problem-Solving Lab. ADL has worked with tech companies in a myriad of ways to help them improve their approach toward dealing with hate and extremism on their platforms. However, those efforts are still nascent.

- At the federal and state level, policymakers should work to fill the gaps in addressing the impact of technological advances. This includes addressing the offline consequences of online hate, pursuing genuine dialogue with the technology sector to better counter extremism online, and work with tech companies to find solutions for emerging challenges.
- At the same time, tech companies have a responsibility to improve terms of service related to hate and extremism, to enforce them more effectively and to act more proactively to remove extremist content.

## IMPROVE FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL RESPONSES TO HATE CRIMES

Every state should enact comprehensive, inclusive hate crime laws. Effective responses to hate violence by

public officials and law enforcement authorities can play an essential role in deterring and preventing these crimes.

- Data must drive policy. The Department of Justice should incentivize and encourage state and local law enforcement agencies to collect and report hate crimes data to the FBI more comprehensively, with special attention devoted to large underreporting among certain law enforcement agencies that either have not participated in the HCSA program at all or have incorrectly reported zero hate crimes.
- The Department of Justice must consider why victims of hate violence fail to report these crimes to the police. If marginalized or targeted community members – including immigrants, people with disabilities, LGBTQ community members, Muslims, Arabs, Middle Easterners, South Asians and people with limited language proficiency – cannot report, or do not feel safe reporting hate crimes perpetrated against them, law enforcement cannot effectively address these crimes, thereby jeopardizing the safety of all.

### **REFRAME PREVENTION STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO COUNTER FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISM**

Congress and state legislatures should authorize and appropriate grants for research and services to better understand the drivers of extremist hate and fund evidence-based programming to counter it.

- There is no comprehensive strategy and program to counter violent extremism and the programming currently underway is minor and disproportionately focused on groups like ISIS - not nearly enough on the types of individuals on whom this report focuses.
- State, local and community leaders must create opportunities throughout the lifecycle of hate – from awareness to intervention to rehabilitation and victims services – in support of comprehensive,

evidence-based and whole-of-society programs that counter all facets of hate and extremism.

- Non-profit and academic research driven efforts, working with tech companies and appropriate state and local government partners, can provide the critical boost that these prevention efforts need, while also avoiding misgivings held by some about the implications of an overly federalized effort.
- Recent ADL-supported programs that nurture these sorts of partnerships include the Mayors' Compact to Combat Hate, Extremism, and Bigotry; the Strong Cities Network; and Communities Overcoming Extremism: The After Charlottesville Project.

### **PROMOTE ANTI-BIAS AND CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Recognizing the limits of legal responses to hate violence, Congress and the Department of Education should increase federal funding for promoting inclusive school climates, anti-bias education and hate crime prevention in schools.

- Schools should be directed to properly implement crafted anti-bullying, cyberbullying and harassment education and training initiatives. Every state has a bullying prevention law, but proactive measures must be taken to ensure implementation of the policies and programs required by these laws. And every elementary and secondary school should promote activities that celebrate our nation's diversity and inclusivity – and regularly integrate anti-bias and anti-hate content into their curricula.

## NOTES ON METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

ADL's COE has compiled a list of more than 1,000 known murders/killings perpetrated since 1970—essentially the post-Civil Rights era—by people associated with domestic extremist movements. These are primarily murders committed by American extremists on U.S. soil, though a few cases involving American extremists murdering other Americans abroad (such as at Jonestown in Guyana) are also included.

Because extremist connections to some murders can take months or years to be revealed, statistics for the most recent years will inevitably be revised upward in future years. For example, the COE's report on extremist-related murders in 2017 counted 34 murders, but within a year the COE had uncovered three more extremist-related 2017 murders and revised its numbers accordingly. Similar upward revision is likely to occur in the future for the 2018 statistics.

The incidents are derived primarily from public sources, leading to some limitations regarding cross-era or cross-movement comparisons. Regarding cross-era comparisons, it is generally more difficult to find information on extremist-related killings from the 1970s and 1980s, so it may not be meaningful to compare figures from earlier eras with figures from the 1990s or later.

The main limitation of cross-movement comparisons is that extremist connections to killings are easier to determine for some movements than for others. For example, white supremacists, who often display many racist and white supremacist tattoos, or who may be documented as white supremacists by gang investigators or corrections officials, are often more easily identifiable. In contrast, it may be more difficult for police or media to identify a suspect's anti-government extremist associations. This issue comes up more often with non-ideological killings. It is likely that non-ideological murders committed by extremists other than white supremacists are underrepresented in ADL's data.

In addition, because murders behind bars tend to often attract little or no media attention and are typically not publicized by prison officials, incidents of prison-based deadly violence committed by adherents of all extremist movements are under-represented.

As with any such list, the inclusion or exclusion of certain borderline cases may be judgment calls based on the best evidence available, judgments with which others may reasonably disagree.



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# ADL by the numbers | OUR IMPACT

## EDUCATE

**5.2M**  
STUDENTS 

impacted through our Holocaust education program, Echoes & Reflections, since inception in 2005

**28k**  
EDUCATORS 

acquired skills to teach anti-bias concepts and support students in using ally behaviors to challenge bias and identity-based bullying

**30,000**  
EDUCATORS 

receive ADL Education Updates and Curriculum resources

## ADVOCATE

**45**  
STATES + D.C. 

have enacted Hate Crimes legislation based on, or similar to, the ADL model produced in 1981

## INVESTIGATE

**11k**   
CASES

in which ADL has provided extremist related information to law enforcement, including critical, up-to-the-minute background on extremist threats

## MONITOR

**2.6M**   
TWEETS

Tweets containing anti-Semitic language were identified in our 2016 report about online harassment of journalists

**250**   
WHITE SUPREMACISTS

who attended the 2017 "Unite the Right" Rally in Charlottesville were identified by ADL in cooperation with local law enforcement

## PARTNERS

**300+**   
MAYORS

pledged to join ADL through the Mayors' Compact to Combat Hate, Extremism and Discrimination, a new partnership with the U.S. Conference of Mayors

## TRAIN

**100%** 

Of all new FBI agents have been trained by ADL since 2001

**+150k**   
LAW ENFORCEMENT  
PROFESSIONALS

were trained by ADL in the last 10 years, helping them to fight extremism and build trust with the communities they serve

## How ADL is Responding

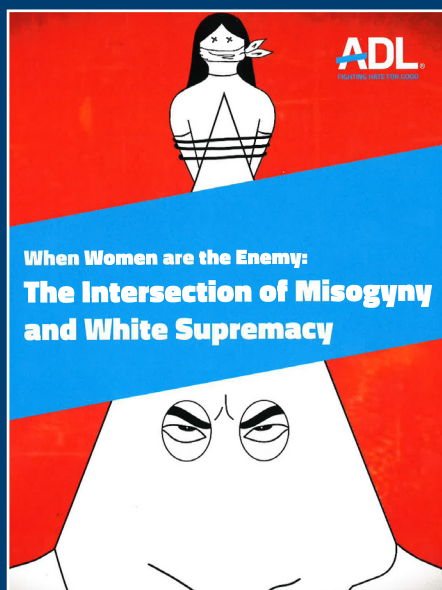
ADL has a comprehensive approach to address anti-Semitic incidents and to counter all forms of hate.

ADL's Center on Extremism is a foremost authority on extremism, terrorism and all forms of hate.

The COE's team of investigators and analysts strategically monitors and exposes extremist movements and individuals, using cutting-edge technology to track real time developments and provide actionable intelligence and data-based analysis to law enforcement, public officials, community leaders and technology companies.



## Featured Resources from the Center on Extremism:



For a database of reports and resources on extremism, cyberhate and more, visit [ADL.org](https://www.adl.org).

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FIGHTING HATE FOR GOOD