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A Report from ADL Center on Extremism

# MURDER & EXTREMISM

in the United States 2021



## **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, antisemitism 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 antisemitism. You can find the full complement of COE's research and publications at [ADL.org](http://ADL.org).

ADL is a leading anti-hate organization that was founded in 1913 in response to an escalating climate of antisemitism and bigotry. Today, ADL is still the first call when acts of antisemitism 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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# **Murder & Extremism**

**in the United States 2021**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Murder & Extremism in The United States 2021

### KEY FINDINGS:

- Every year people with ties to a variety of extreme movements and causes kill people in the United States; the ADL Center on Extremism tracks these murders. Extremists regularly commit murders in the service of their ideology, in the service of a group or gang they may belong to, or while engaging in traditional, non-ideological criminal activities.
- In 2021, domestic extremists killed at least 29 people in the United States, in 19 separate incidents. This represents a modest increase from the 23 extremist-related murders documented in 2020 but is far lower than the number of murders committed in any of the five years prior (which ranged from 45 to 78).
- The 2021 murder totals were low primarily because no high-casualty extremist-related shooting spree occurred this past year. Such sprees are the main contributor to high murder totals.
- Most of the murders (26 of 29) were committed by right-wing extremists, which is usually the case. However, two killings were committed by Black nationalists and one by an Islamist extremist—the latter being the first such killing since 2018.
- Most of the 2021 murders were committed by people associated with longstanding extremist movements, such as white supremacy and the sovereign citizen movement. However, 2021 continued the trend of recent years of seeing some murders from newer types of extremism, including QAnon adherents, people associated with the toxic masculinity subculture of the “manosphere” and anti-vaccination extremists.
- White supremacists killed more people in 2021 than any other type of extremist, though not an outright majority, as is often the case. An in-depth look at white supremacist killings over the past 10 years demonstrates the dangers posed by alt right white supremacists and white supremacist prison gangs.



# **Murder & Extremism**

## **In The United States 2021**

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# **EXTREMISM, INSURRECTION AND MURDER**



**E**ach year, individuals with ties to extreme movements and ideologies kill people in the United States. Some killings are high profile and spark nationwide outrage; others may go largely unnoticed except by the family and friends of victims. For 14 years, the ADL Center on Extremism has worked to identify and track as many of these domestic extremist-related murders as possible, and to identify past extremist-related murders dating back to 1970.

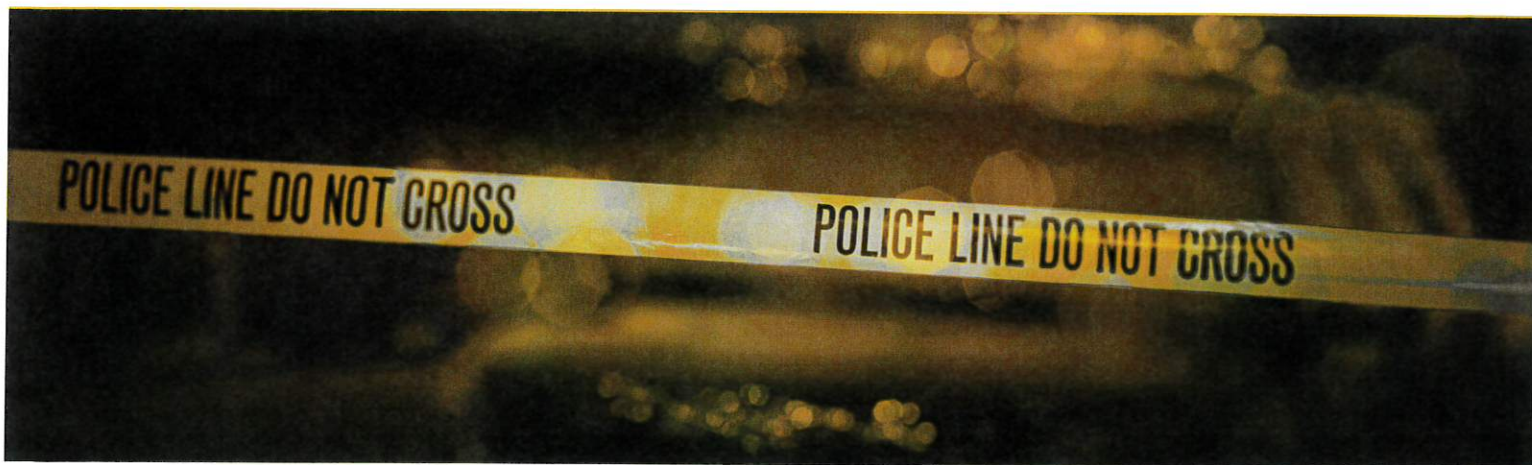
Domestic extremists—extremists who are U.S. citizens or longtime permanent residents—regularly commit murders in the service of their ideology, using deadly force against perceived enemies. In addition, extremists also often commit murders in the service of a group or gang they may belong to—targeting a rival group member, for example, or even a suspected informant in their own ranks. Extremists can also commit murders while engaging in non-ideological criminal activities ranging from home invasions to domestic violence. In some cases, extremists may commit a murder the motive for which is never revealed. We include all these types of killings in this report.

Murders can be committed by right-wing extremists such as white supremacists or

sovereign citizens, by left-wing extremists such as Black nationalists or anarchists, by domestic Islamist extremists or by people associated with other, more obscure causes or groups. All types are included here.

The year 2021 saw extremism flourish in the United States, starting in early January when a large angry mob attacked the U.S. Capitol, intent on interfering with the certification of the results of a free and fair presidential election. The Capitol stormers included white supremacists, militia members, sovereign citizens, Qanon and other conspiracy adherents, as well as Trumpist extremists radicalized by election-related conspiracy theories promulgated by Donald Trump and his associates. As of early 2022, the FBI has arrested over 750 people for crimes connected to the storming of the Capitol.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the attack on the Capitol is how few lives were lost that day, a fact that may be attributed primarily due to most insurrectionists leaving their firearms behind thanks to Washington, D.C.'s strict gun laws. Had the Capitol stormers been as well armed as extremists at many protests in 2020 had been, the temptation for some to use those weapons might have been too high to resist. As it turned out, the extremist murders of 2021 came from other sources.<sup>2</sup>



The rest of 2021 saw more extremist rallies and protests, from continuing efforts to delegitimize the 2020 election results to events opposing vaccines and vaccine mandates. Such developments have had many negative effects, but they did not seem significantly to affect the number of extremist-related murders. Extremist-related murders did rise in 2021, but only modestly. The preliminary tally conducted by the ADL Center on Extremism reveals that domestic extremists killed at least 29 people in the United States in 2021, up from the 23 murders documented for 2020, but far fewer than the killings in any of the years 2015-19 (which ranged from 45 to 78).

## Domestic Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Year (2012-2021)



The primary reason 2021 death tolls were comparatively low is the same reason 2020 death tolls were low: the paucity of shooting spree with five or more deaths, or other mass killings. Most extremist-related killings, including 15 of the 19 lethal incidents of 2021, have just one victim. This past year saw only one high casualty shooting spree, when an adherent of the toxic masculinity subculture of the "manosphere," Lyndon McLeod, killed five people and wounded another in a multi-location shooting rampage in Denver in December. One can contrast that with other recent years, such as 2015, which saw three deadly shooting sprees by white supremacists and Islamist extremists that by themselves killed a total of 28 people.



## Six Most Deadly Years for Domestic Extremist Killings (1971-2021)

Year	Number of Deaths	Significant Incidents (5+ deaths)
1995	184	Oklahoma City bombing (168 deaths)
2016	78	Orlando nightclub shooting (49 deaths)
2015	70	San Bernardino, Chattanooga, Charleston shootings (28 deaths total)
2018	54	Pittsburgh synagogue, Parkland High School shootings (28 deaths total)
2009	46	Ft. Hood shooting (13 deaths)
2019	45	El Paso Walmart shooting (23 deaths)

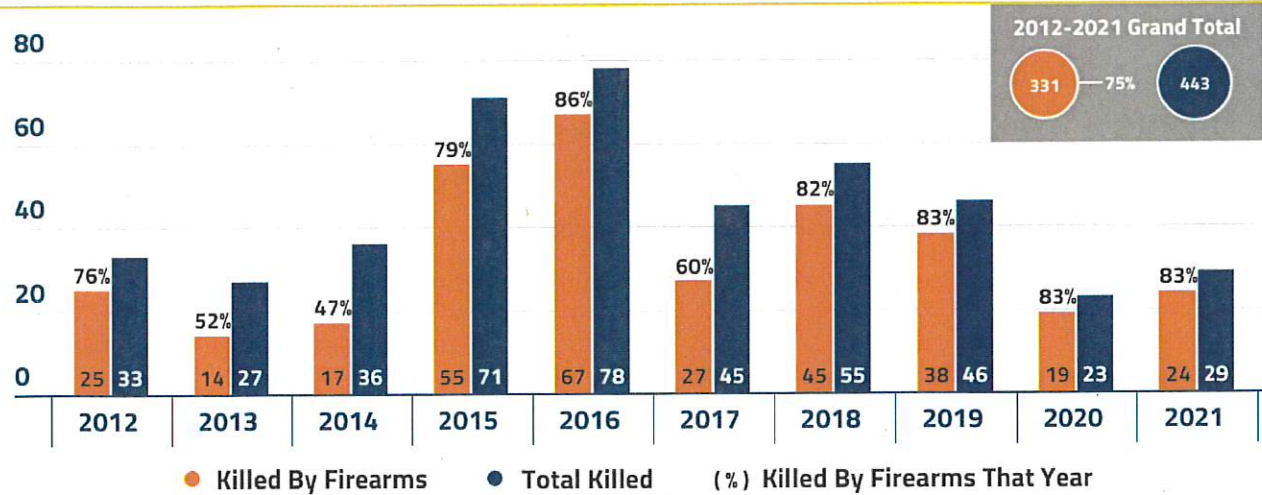
Note: Data for years before 2001 is more likely to be incomplete and may undercount extremist-related killings in those years.

Source: ADL

Every year, domestic extremists choose firearms as their deadly weapon of choice. More people are killed by extremists using firearms than any other weapon in any given year. In fact, over the past decade, firearm deaths constituted an absolute majority of all extremist-caused deaths almost every year. In 2021, 83% of the extremist-related deaths were firearms-related. Over the past 10 years, shootings accounted for 75% of the deaths at the hands of extremists.

Firearms are easy to use and are readily available and accessible to most extremists except juveniles and those with felony convictions. In the absence of meaningful gun control measures, extremist gun violence will continue to take a toll each year—and in years with shooting sprees, that toll may be especially high.

## Firearms Use in Domestic Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S., 2012-2021



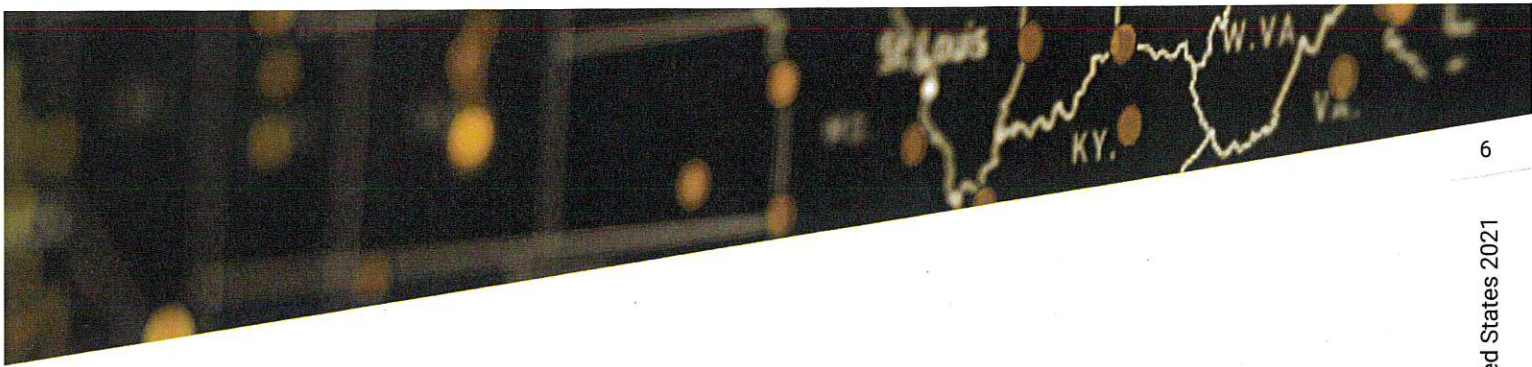
Source: ADL

Extremist-related killings are rare compared to the total homicides in the U.S. each year. However, extremist killings can have a disproportionate effect on communities, especially when they take the form of a hate crime or a terrorist attack.<sup>3</sup>

It's important to note that extremist murders are only one metric of extremist crime and violence. Every year, extremists in the United States are involved in terrorist plots and acts, armed standoffs, shootouts with police, hate crimes, scams and cons, threats and harassment and a wide variety of other criminal acts. ADL's Hate, Extremism, Antisemitism and Terrorism (HEAT) tracking map keeps track of some of the more serious of these extremist-related incidents, including murders but also terrorist incidents and shootouts, as well as other non-violent indicators, such as white supremacist events and propaganda distribution incidents.<sup>4</sup>



# EXPLORING THE NUMBERS

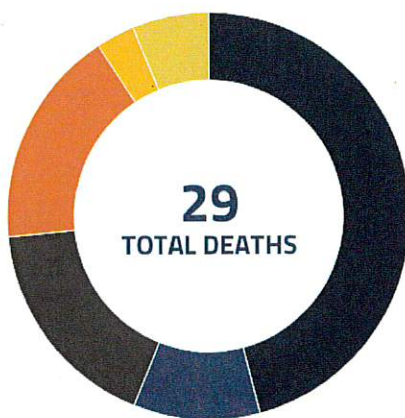


The COE tracks domestic extremist-related murders connected to all types of extremism, including right-wing extremism, left-wing extremism and domestic Islamist extremism, as well as less common forms.

When, as sometimes happens, 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 most important to them, is the most recently followed or, if applicable, that seems most directly related to the murders they committed. This is done not to obscure the presence of multiple belief systems but to make quantification more practical.

As in most years, lethal extremist violence in 2021 was heavily dominated by right-wing extremism. All but three of the 29 murders (90%) documented in this report had ties to forms of right-wing extremism, including white supremacy, anti-government extremism of several types, right-wing conspiracy theory adherents and toxic masculinity adherents.

## Domestic Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Perpetrator Affiliation, 2021



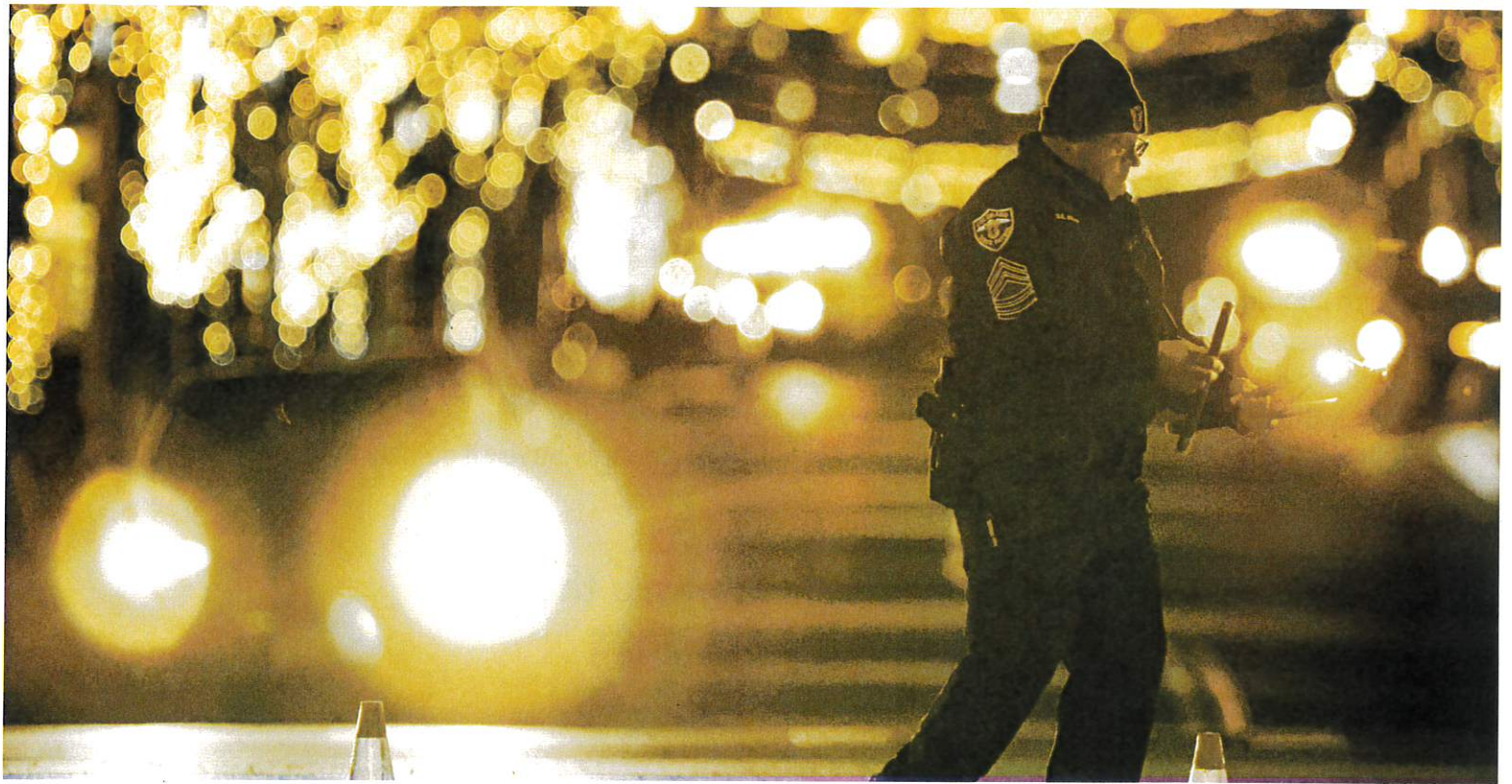
**Almost all the 2021 extremist-related murders were committed by right-wing extremists.**

- White Supremacy: 45%
- Anti-Government Extremism: 10%
- Incel/Manosphere Extremism: 17%
- Other Right-Wing Extremism: 17%
- Islamist Extremism: 3%
- Left-Wing Extremism: 6%

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

Source: ADL

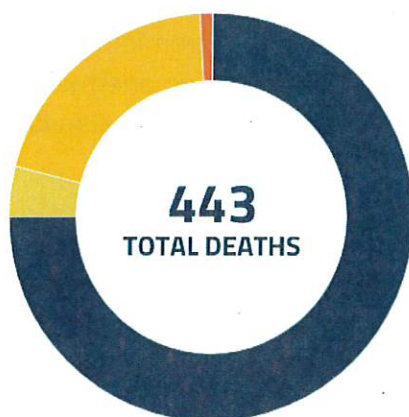




LAKEWOOD, CO - DECEMBER 27: A police officer picks up flares at the Belmar shopping center where authorities say the suspect in a shooting spree that claimed five lives was shot and killed on December 27, 2021 in Lakewood, Colorado. The shootings occurred this evening at more than six separate locations across the metro area. Police say one officer was wounded while exchanging gunfire with the suspect. (Photo by Michael Ciaglo/Getty Images)

Over the past decade, right-wing extremists have committed the majority of extremist-related killings in all years but one—2016, the year of the shooting spree at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida, by a person motivated by Islamist extremism. Of the 443 people killed at the hands of extremists over that 10-year period, 333 (or 75%) were killed by right-wing extremists.<sup>5</sup>

## Domestic Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Perpetrator Affiliation, 2012-2021



**Right-wing extremists**  
are responsible for the great majority  
of extremist-related murders  
**right-wing extremists.**

- Right-Wing Extremism (all movements): 75%
- Left-Wing Extremism (including anarchists & Black nationalists): 4%
- Domestic Islamist Extremism: 20%
- Other/Misc Extremism: 1%

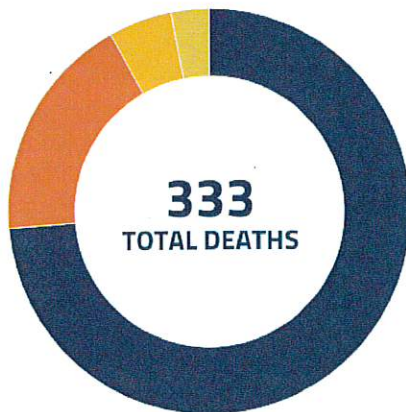
Note: Total deaths include both ideologically and non-ideologically motivated killings.

Source: ADL



Right-wing extremists in the U.S. commit such a large proportion of murders for a range of reasons. The far right in this country is large, comprising many movements, including multiple white supremacist and anti-government extremist movements, as well as a variety of single-issue extremists and conspiracy-based movements. Most of these movements have some degree of association with violence, with many even engaging in terrorist plots and attacks. Even the newest right-wing movements to emerge in recent years—movements that include incel/manosphere extremists, QAnon adherents and anti-government boogalooers—have all quickly developed violent track records.<sup>6</sup>

## Right-Wing Extremist-Related Killings in the U.S. by Perpetrator Affiliation, 2012-2021



**More than 3 out of 4 killings committed by right-wing extremists in the U.S. are committed by white supremacists.**

- White Supremacy: 73%
- Anti-Government Extremism: 18%
- Incel/Manosphere Extremism: 5%
- Anti-Abortion & Other Right-Wing Extremism: 3%

Notes: 1. Anti-government extremism includes militia, sovereign citizens, tax protesters, "Patriot" movement adherents, boogalooers and other right-wing anti-government extremists. 2. Total deaths include both ideologically and non-ideologically motivated killings.

Source: ADL

Moreover, adherents of some far-right extremist movements engage not only in ideological violence (defined narrowly for the purposes of this report as attacking perceived enemies, as well as others who may get in the way of such attacks), but also other forms of deadly violence. Extremists often engage in violence related to their group or movement that may not involve attacking an enemy. For example, extremists sometimes murder suspected informants in their own ranks; they may also kill rival members of their own group or of another group.

Additionally, members of some extremist groups—particularly those that take the form of gangs—may kill while committing "traditional" crimes, such as those involving illegal drugs. It may also be likely, though it is difficult to definitively prove, that the ideologies or subcultures of certain types of extremists, including white supremacists and toxic masculinity extremists, may play a role in enabling incidents of deadly domestic violence—or other violent acts as well.



Finally, the motives behind many murders never become known (particularly if a perpetrator pleads guilty without a trial) or are never released by law enforcement. All these types of murders are conservatively classified in this report as “non-ideological,” even though it is possible that extremism still played some sort of role in many.

Over the past 10 years, the number of ideological-related killings and non-ideological (and unknown motive) killings by extremists has been close to equal (231 versus 212), with the majority of non-ideological killings coming from right-wing extremists, especially white supremacists. Sovereign citizens have also been responsible for several non-ideological killings in recent years. To some degree, this may say more about how easy it is to identify white supremacists and sovereign citizens compared to other types of extremists. A white supremacist who commits a non-ideological killing may still possibly be identified as such by his or her tattoos, or perhaps a gang association previously documented by law enforcement. A sovereign citizen arrested for a murder is likely to use the distinctive pseudo-legal language and tactics of that movement. But if the person who committed that non-ideological murder was instead an Islamist extremist or a member of a militia group, it may be possible this fact will not be noticed or documented. In other words, some extremist movements may be underrepresented in this data when it comes to non-ideological killings.

In 2021, 14 of the extremist murders appear to have been committed in whole or in part as ideological killings, while 15 were committed for one or another of the non-ideological motives mentioned above or for which no motive has been revealed. The difficulty of determining how murders should be categorized in this fashion can be illustrated by the case of Aidan Ingalls, who committed one of the 2021 murders. Ingalls opened fire at people at a pier in South Haven, Michigan, killing a man and wounding his wife. The victims were white, and Ingalls had a history of fantasizing and plotting about killing people, but he also went to the trouble of decorating the firearm he used for the shootings with swastikas and other white supremacist symbols, much like white supremacist Brenton Tarrant had done to his weapons for his shooting spree at mosques in New Zealand in 2019. This murder ended up being categorized as non-ideological because the motive remains opaque.<sup>7</sup>





# THE PERPETRATORS

Of the 29 extremist-related killings in 2021, almost half (13) were committed by white supremacists. Five were committed by people with ties to white supremacist prison gangs, while one murder was committed by a member of the Fresnecks, a Fresno, California, based white supremacist street gang. White supremacist street gangs, often known as “peckerwood” gangs, exist only in California (mostly in Southern California), but are a distinctive feature of the white supremacist movement there. Many, including the Fresnecks, also have a noteworthy presence in the California prison system, and some—again, including the Fresnecks—have ties to the Aryan Brotherhood.<sup>8</sup>

The other white supremacist murders were committed by people with no identifiable ties to specific groups. Perhaps the most noteworthy of these were the murders committed by Nathan Allen, a 28-year-old man from the Boston suburb of Winthrop. Allen was an honors student in high school and a biology major in college. He held different jobs at times while he took classes related to health care, eventually becoming a licensed physical therapist. He married his long-time fiancée in 2020. But beneath the normal exterior something was lurking. At some point he began accumulating what authorities later called “volumes” of white supremacist literature. In late June, Allen composed a hateful diatribe in a journal that promoted white supremacy and attacked Black and Jewish people. He called it “The Allen Diaries,” an apparent reference to *The Turner Diaries*, an infamous white supremacist novel promoting a white revolution. Nor were these the only white supremacist writings he penned in his notebooks. Selected excerpts later released by police included claims of the superiority of the white race as well as statements about whites “waking up.” In one chilling passage, he wrote “Racism is good. Natural. Killing shitskins [an

offensive term for Black people] is in our blood. We need to do it.” He also expressed a wish that he could convince his wife (a liberal and Bernie Sanders supporter) to adopt his white supremacist views.<sup>9</sup>

Two days after penning “The Allen Diaries,” Allen left his apartment armed with two pistols and stole a large truck owned by a plumbing company. It is not clear what Allen’s specific plans were, or what he intended to do with the truck (although authorities did speculate there were synagogues nearby), because while driving it he hit an oncoming truck and crashed into a home. His original plans, whatever they were, in disarray, Allen crawled out of the wreckage and unsuccessfully tried to carjack a nearby vehicle. He then ran down the street, passing several people, all of whom were white. But when he came across a Black person, 60-year-old Ramona Cooper, he shot her three times in the back. David Green, a 68-year-old retired state trooper—also Black—heard the shots and came outside. Seeing Allen, he pulled a neighbor out of harm’s way, but was then shot seven times by Allen. Cooper and Green, both military veterans, died from Allen’s attack.<sup>10</sup>



Source: Handout via <https://www.boston.com/news/crime/2021/07/07/winthrop-shooter-nathan-allen-alleged-writings-released/>



Allen might well have killed more people, but Sergeant Nick Bettano of the Winthrop Police Department, who was dispatched to the location after the vehicle crash and learned about the active shooter situation while on the way, arrived at the scene and quickly spotted Allen 150 feet away. He helped two bystanders get behind cover, then called for Allen to drop his gun. When Allen got within 20 feet of him, Bettano shot and killed Allen, ending his attack.<sup>11</sup>

Anti-government extremists, including one militia/boogaloo adherent and two sovereign citizens, contributed three murders to the 2021 toll. One of these killings, in Hoschton, Georgia, was committed by Jessica Worsham, the only female perpetrator of any of the killings. Worsham, a sovereign citizen, was apparently already angry at local authorities and law enforcement when two sheriff's deputies were called by the homeowner to a residence where she was located. Meeting the deputies at the door, Worsham pulled a gun. They called for her to drop the weapon, but she fired several times at one of them, Lena Marshall, fatally wounding her. The other deputy returned fire, killing Worsham.<sup>12</sup>

Marshall was one of three law enforcement officers in 2021 tragically to die at the hands of angry or disturbed extremists (the other two incidents are described below). Every year, law enforcement officers are wounded or killed by a variety of extremists. Sometimes the officers are themselves the subject of an attack, while other times they may be attacked while trying to stop a violent extremist, or simply encountering an extremist when responding to a call. The militia/boogaloo case mentioned above serves an example. The murder was an act of domestic violence by Braedon Chessser, of Tecumseh, Oklahoma, against his wife. But when local sheriff's deputies arrived at the scene following a domestic disturbance call, militia member Chessser engaged them in gunfire, shooting one deputy seven times. The deputy survived.

## Police Officers Killed in the United States by Domestic Extremists (1971-2021)

Years	By Left-Wing Extremists*	By Right-Wing Extremists	By Domestic Islamist Extremists	By Other Extremists	Total
1971-1980	21	1	2	0	24
1981-1990	5	6	0	0	11
1991-2000	1	15	0	0	16
2001-2010	2	25	0	0	27
2011-2020	10	14	1	1	26
2021-2030 (partial)	2	1	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>107</b>

\*Includes anarchists, Black nationalists.



Other types of right-wing extremists were also responsible for deadly violence in 2021. The shooting rampage of Lyndon McLeod in Denver in December, previously mentioned, added five more deaths to the number of lives taken by adherents of toxic masculinity. Over the past 10 years, people associated with the “manosphere,” most of them incels, have killed 16 people in the United States, a troubling development.

Right-wing conspiracy theorists killed five people in 2021 in two incidents that involved troubled perpetrators, illustrating the power that conspiracy theories can have to influence unbalanced or volatile minds. In August, Matthew Taylor Coleman, self-confessedly motivated by “QAnon and Illuminati conspiracy theories,” took his two infant children from California to Mexico and murdered them there, believing his wife had passed “serpent DNA” to them. The next month, in Maryland, Jeffrey Allen Burnham killed his own brother, his brother’s wife, and a third person, because Burnham reportedly believed his brother, a pharmacist, was involved in a government plot to poison people with COVID-19 vaccines.

Prior to the coronavirus, the anti-vaccine movement in the United States did not have a particular ideological leaning and contained both left-leaning and right-leaning activists. However, the politicization of the coronavirus and other factors have created many new anti-vaccine conspiracy adherents and given the anti-vaccine movement a distinctly right-wing tone it did not previously have.



Source: Twitter, Promotional Material for  
McLeod’s Book

Although people may oppose vaccines for a variety of reasons, an anti-vaccine extremist may be defined as someone who deliberately and knowingly promotes false information about vaccines, such as the spurious claim that they cause autism, or who subscribes to and promotes conspiracy theories regarding vaccines, such as assertions that vaccines are part of nefarious attempts to control, manipulate, or sicken populations. Anti-vaccine extremists have gone beyond simply refusing to be vaccinated themselves; in the U.S. and other countries some have even attempted to interfere with vaccinations and vaccine distribution. For example, in early 2021 in Los Angeles anti-vaccination protesters temporarily shut down a vaccination site at Dodger Stadium. In New York in October, a speaker at an anti-vaccine rally threatened that town halls and schools would be “burned to the ground” if vaccinations were “pushed” on children. Other extremist movements ranging from white supremacists to sovereign citizens to QAnon adherents have also made inroads into the anti-vaccine movement.<sup>13</sup>

Three murders in 2021 were committed by non-right-wing extremists. Two troubling incidents involved people with Black nationalist ties attacking police officers. In April, Noah Green used his vehicle as a weapon against two Capitol Police officers at a barricade outside the U.S. Capitol building, killing one officer, William Evans, and injuring another. A third officer killed Green after he got out of the vehicle and approached with a large knife. Green was a devoted follower of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan and had donated a substantial amount of money to the group, though he was apparently never a formal member. In August, Othal Wallace was charged with murder in Daytona Beach, Florida, after a police officer he shot in June died in the hospital. Wallace, who has ties to several extremist groups, including the New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and the Not Fucking Around Coalition, shot Officer Jason Rayner after Rayner approached Wallace sitting in a vehicle.<sup>14</sup> For purposes of this report, the COE classifies Black nationalism as left-wing extremism. Black nationalist-related murders—almost all of police officers—constitute the great majority of the 18 murders over the past decade connected to left-wing extremism. Most of these occurred in just two years, 2016 and 2017.

Finally, 2021 saw a murder seemingly committed by an Islamist extremist, the first since 2018. Domestic Islamist extremists have been responsible for 87 murders over the past 10 years, but all but two of those killings occurred during the period 2013-2017, when the terrorist group ISIS was at its most influential. In August 2021, Imran Ali Rasheed of Garland, Texas, killed a Lyft driver, stole her car and made his way to the headquarters of the Plano Police Department, where he opened fire. However, he was killed by return fire from one of the officers before anybody could be harmed. The FBI has said they believe Rasheed was inspired by “rhetoric or propaganda” from a foreign terrorist organization.<sup>15</sup>

# **WHITE SUPREMACIST KILLINGS: A CLOSER LOOK**



In 2021, white supremacists were responsible for more murders than any other type of extremist; in many years they comprised an outright majority of the extremist murders that year. Indeed, over the past 10 years, white supremacists have committed 244 (55%) of the 443 killings that the ADL COE has documented. Given the preponderance of deadly white supremacist violence, it is worth examining white supremacist-related murders in more detail.

The white supremacist movement is not monolithic. It comprises a number of factions or segments of various sizes, differentiated by factors such as religions, subcultures, tactics and goals, regional influences and ideological particulars. At any given moment, one part of the movement, such as the alt right, might be ascendant, while another part, like the religious sect Christian Identity, might be in decline. Some people may belong to more than one faction at once; only a few are mutually exclusive. But there are also many white supremacists who don't gravitate to any faction but are more "generically" white supremacist. Nor are most adherents members of formally organized groups.

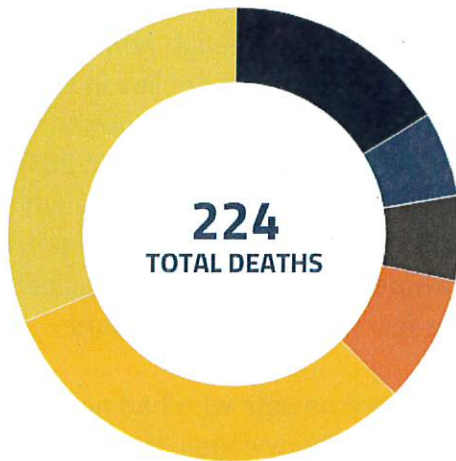
All these factors make trying to categorize individual white supremacists rather tricky. Still, even a rough attempt at categorizing white supremacist killers can yield some insights into white supremacist violence.

A breakdown of the past decade's 244 white supremacist murders reveals that 76 of them (31%) were committed by members, suspected members, or associates of white supremacist prison gangs. This was the deadliest category of white supremacist and the only category to have committed multiple murders in each of the past 10 years. These figures are not surprising, as there are so many circumstances in which white supremacist prison gang members can commit acts of murder. Given the nature of prison gangs as organized crime groups, it is predictable that many of the murders would be related to traditional criminal activities, ranging from drug-related murders to killings committed in robberies.

White supremacist prison gang members commit many group-related murders, from killing suspected informants to killing members of other gangs. They also commit hate-related murders both in and out of prison. Finally, prison gang members may kill police and corrections officers, either as targeted killings or when encountering them while engaged in other activities. Though in other measurements, such as terrorist plots or acts, white supremacist prison gang members may lag far behind other types of right-wing extremists, in terms of murders alone, white supremacist prison gang members are the deadliest.

There are over a hundred white supremacist prison gangs in the United States and many of them committed murders over the past decade. However, the gangs responsible for the most killings include the Aryan Brotherhood of Texas with 10 murders, the Aryan Brotherhood (based primarily in California and the federal prison system) with nine murders, the Aryan Circle (based primarily in Texas) with seven murders and the Oklahoma-based United Aryan Brotherhood with five murders. The remaining 45 documented murders were from other gangs or by gangs unspecified by law enforcement. Most of these murders were committed on the street, rather than behind bars, and there are likely additional killings that occurred behind bars that ADL has not been able to document.<sup>16</sup>

## White Supremacist Killings in the U.S. by Perpetrator Affiliation, 2012-2021



### Members of white supremacist prison gangs are the most consistent killers within the white supremacist movement

- Alt Right White Supremacists: 16%
- Neo-Nazis: 6%
- "Traditional" White Supremacists: 6%
- Racist Skinheads: 9%
- White Supremacist Prison Gangs: 31%
- Other/Unaffiliated/Unknown: 31%

Source: ADL

Next to prison gang members, adherents of the so-called "alt right" segment have committed the next highest total of murders, at 40 (16%). The alt right is the newest segment of the white supremacist movement, coming to the fore only in 2015-2016, and all the murders attributed to this segment occurred during the three-year period 2017-2019. Most of them stem from a few high casualty shooting sprees, such as the 2019 attack in El Paso by Patrick Crusius targeting Hispanics/Latinos.

Racist skinheads were responsible for 23 (9%) of the white supremacist murders of the past decade, but all such killings but one occurred during the period 2012-2016. From the late 1980s through the early 2010s, racist skinheads were consistently among the white supremacist movement's most prolific killers, but since 2015 they have seen a steep decline in numbers and activity. Racist skinheads began as a youth subculture, recruiting most of their members at a young age, but the skinhead subculture aged over time, and after 2015, the young white males that made up their recruiting pool were increasingly attracted to the alt right instead. As a result, racist skinhead groups have been unable to replace dropouts with many new members. The welcome decline of racist skinhead murders mirrors the decline of the faction itself.

Another segment in decline are the so-called "traditional" white supremacists, consisting of groups that formed (or descended from groups that formed) to prevent African Americans from gaining equality. Most "traditional" white supremacist groups are Ku Klux Klan groups, though there are also others, such as the Council of Conservative Citizens. Ku Klux Klan groups have been in a slow but steady decline for decades and are today just a fraction of what they used to be. Traditional white supremacists contributed 15 killings (6%) to this past decade's murder toll, but the great majority of those were killed by one person, Dylann Roof, perpetrator of the 2015 Charleston church massacre.

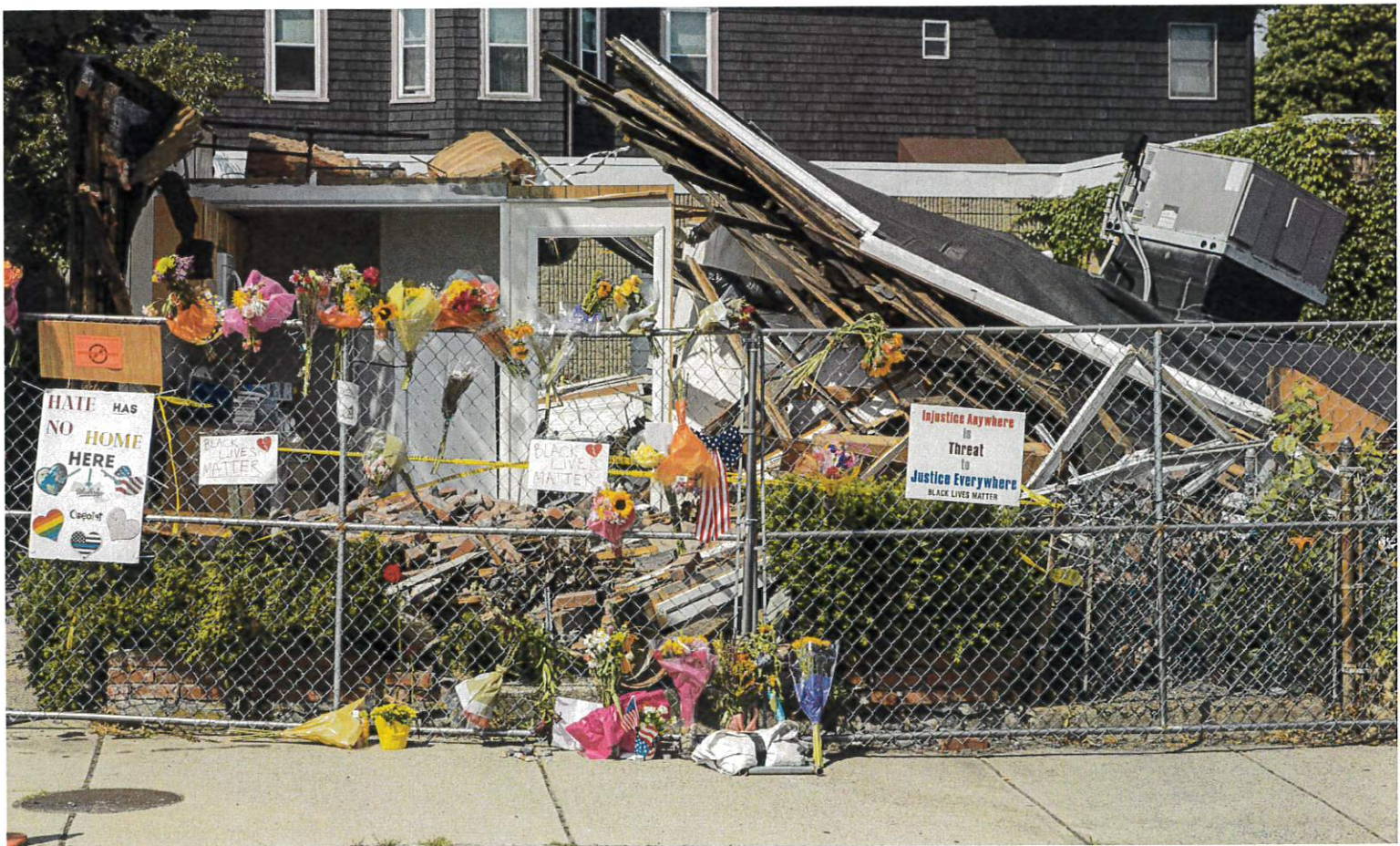


Roof is categorized here as a traditional white supremacist because he was primarily influenced by the propaganda of the Council of Conservative Citizens (which has also much declined over the years).

Neo-Nazis have committed at least 14 murders (6%) over the past decade, though none in the past three years. The neo-Nazi faction of the white supremacist movement fell into decline in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with many of its most prominent groups either imploding (National Alliance, Aryan Nations) or losing considerable membership (National Socialist Movement). However, starting in 2015, this faction enjoyed a modest revival thanks to the rise of "accelerationist" neo-Nazi groups such as Atomwaffen and The Base. These groups have gotten considerable attention in recent years, in part for several terrorist plots, but have thankfully actually killed few people to date. This is possibly partly due to early and sustained FBI attention, which has put quite a few members behind bars.

Finally, 76 of the 244 murders (31%) were committed by white supremacists who had no readily identifiable connection to any specific segment of the movement. In many cases, they probably had no such ties but were instead what one could call "generic" white supremacists.

WINTHROP, MA - JUNE 28: The scene where an armed man crashed a stolen truck on Saturday, June 26, then fatally shot two people before being killed by law enforcement on June 28, 2021 in Winthrop, Massachusetts. The act is being treated as a hate crime. (Photo by Scott Eisen/Getty Images)





One of the most striking features of white supremacist murders is the large proportion of non-ideological killings to ideological killings. Over the past 10 years, only 86 of the 244 white supremacist killings (35%) were ideological murders. The remainder were group-related but not ideological attacks, were related to traditional criminal activities, or were murders for which no clear motive could be determined.

As mentioned above, non-ideological killings are almost certainly underrepresented for other types of extremism. But leaving that aside, there are aspects of the white supremacist movement that likely make non-ideological killings more common, starting with the fact that violence is often considered an acceptable, or even approved, form of resolving conflict within white supremacist subculture. Many white supremacists are also involved in gangs and gang subculture, from white supremacist prison gangs to peckerwood street gangs to racist skinhead gangs, as well as some members of outlaw biker gangs. Such gang members can commit murders for all the reasons any gang members may. Some of these gangs also fit the definition of organized crime groups.

The non-ideological killings by white supremacists take many forms (12, for example, occurred during home invasions), but a few statistics stand out. First, of the 158 such murders, fully 27 (or 17%) were group-related murders. White supremacists killed members of their own groups because they were suspected informants, because they had broken rules and because they were involved in disputes or rivalries; they also occasionally killed members of other rival groups.

Almost as many murders (24, or 15%) were incidents of domestic violence. Most of these incidents involved men killing female partners (as well as family members of such partners) or children, but there were also murders of male housemates and one murder by a female Klan member and her son of the woman's husband, a Klan group leader. White supremacists have attitudes towards women that range from traditionalist and patriarchal all the way to the outright misogyny common among alt right adherents, and it is quite possible that white supremacist views of women may have played a role in some or many of these deadly incidents. At the same time, though, domestic violence is one of the most common types of violence and can be found in any sizable collection of people, so care must be taken in analyzing this issue.

One aspect of both ideological and non-ideological white supremacist murders is the presence of shooting sprees—six of the past 10 years saw at least one shooting spree by a white supremacist. Just thirteen shooting spree incidents inflicted 85 deaths, or 35% of all white supremacist murders over the past decade. In ideological shooting sprees, the victims were typically minorities, including Jewish people, Black people, and Hispanics/Latinos. Non-ideological shooting sprees included school shootings and domestic violence shootings, such as the 2012 spree by neo-Nazi and border vigilante J. T. Ready in Gilbert, Arizona, in which Ready, one of the most high-profile white supremacists in Arizona at the time, killed his girlfriend and three others in a violent domestic dispute.<sup>17</sup>

# THE INCIDENTS



# THE INCIDENTS

- **Denver, Colorado, December 27, 2021:** Lyndon McLeod went on a multi-location shooting spree, killing five people and wounding a police officer, who nevertheless was able to kill McLeod and end the spree. He had harbored revenge fantasies against most of the victims. McLeod was involved in the toxic masculinity subculture of the “manosphere,” specifically as an advocate of hypermasculinity, claiming that “alpha” and “sigma” males should be the only males allowed to lead others and to procreate, while “beta” males and women should hold lower places and be deferential. He self-published a long three-volume novel that expounded upon these views and detailed his revenge fantasies.<sup>18</sup>



DENVER, CO - DECEMBER 27:

Police work the scene outside the Sol

Tribe tattoo shop on Broadway where two women were

shot and killed and a man injured on December 27, 2021 in Denver, Colo-

rado. The Broadway shooting was the first in a series of shootings tonight that claimed five

lives across the Denver metro area, according to police. Police say officers exchanged gunfire

with a suspect at one of the scenes. (Photo by Michael Ciaglo/Getty Images)

- **Hoschton, Georgia, November 5, 2021:** Jessica Worsham, an anti-government sovereign citizen, shot and killed a Jackson County sheriff's deputy, Lena Marshall, who had been called to a residence by homeowners who wanted Worsham removed from the home. Worsham was apparently angry with local government and law enforcement, in part because she feared authorities would take her children.<sup>19</sup>
- **Tecumseh, Oklahoma, October 29, 2021:** Braedon Chesser, an adherent of the anti-government boogaloo movement and a member of a small militia group called the Sons of Liberty, killed his wife in a domestic violence incident, then engaged in a shootout with police responding to a domestic disturbance call, shooting one deputy seven times—though the deputy survived. Chesser was subsequently found dead in the woods behind his home, having shot himself.<sup>20</sup>



- **Lufkin, Texas, October 24, 2021:** Jason Heyer Neumann, a member of the Aryan Circle, a white supremacist prison gang, was arrested for the murder of William Wade Pierce. Neumann allegedly shot Pierce, then transported the body to a remote location. Police have not yet offered a motive.<sup>21</sup>
- **Cumberland, Maryland, September 29, 2021:** Jeffrey Allen Burnham allegedly embarked upon a killing spree, shooting a friend of his mother in Cumberland, then travelling the next day to Ellicott City and killing his brother and his brother's wife. Burnham reportedly subscribed to anti-vaccination conspiracy theories and came to believe that his brother, a pharmacist, was poisoning people by providing COVID-19 vaccines.<sup>22</sup>



Source:  
cbsnews.com,  
Jeffrey Burnham October 1, 2021  
mugshot. ALLEGHENY COUNTY  
(MARYLAND) SHERIFF'S OFFICE

- **Plano, Texas, August 29, 2021:** Imran Ali Rasheed shot and killed a Lyft driver and stole the driver's car. He drove to the headquarters of the Plano Police Department and opened fire inside but was killed by a Plano police officer before he could harm anybody there. According to the FBI, who had once investigated Rasheed but never charged him with anything, Rasheed may have been inspired by the rhetoric of foreign terrorist organizations.<sup>23</sup>
- **South Haven, Michigan August 20, 2021:** In a seemingly random attack, Aidan Ingalls opened fire at a married couple on a pier in South Haven, killing the husband and wounding the wife. Ingalls then killed himself. Police found swastikas and other white supremacist markings on the gun he used.

Three years earlier, Ingalls, then a juvenile, pleaded guilty to planning an attack on a local school; evidence found in that case included internet searches by Ingalls on white supremacist topics and a drawing by Ingalls of a Ku Klux Klan member.<sup>24</sup>

- **Daytona Beach, Florida, August 17, 2021:** Othal Wallace allegedly shot a Daytona Beach police officer, Jason Raynor, who had approached Wallace sitting in his vehicle. Raynor was transported to the hospital but died there from his injuries two months later. Wallace was revealed to have ties to several extremist groups, including the New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense and the Not Fucking Around Coalition.<sup>25</sup>
- **San Ysidro, California, August 9, 2021:** Matthew Taylor Coleman of Santa Barbara transported his two infant children across the border into Mexico, where he allegedly killed both children with a spear-fishing gun. He was arrested by authorities at San Ysidro as he tried to return to the United States. Coleman reportedly confessed, saying that he had been "enlightened by QAnon and Illuminati conspiracy theories" and had become convinced his wife had passed on "serpent DNA" to their children, who would grow up to be monsters.<sup>26</sup>



- **Vorhees Township, New Jersey, August 3, 2021:** Shawn Lichtfuss allegedly strangled his wife to death in a domestic violence incident. Lichtfuss has a white supremacist past that includes vandalizing three synagogues with white supremacist graffiti and distributing handmade neo-Nazi fliers.<sup>27</sup>
- **Winthrop, Massachusetts, June 26, 2021:** Nathan Allen drove a stolen truck into a building, then exited the truck and began shooting at nearby Black people after walking by several white people. He was able to kill two people, a man and a woman, before responding police officers shot and killed him. Investigators subsequently found vicious white supremacist writings by Allen that included antisemitic and anti-Black language.<sup>28</sup>
- **Parkersburg, West Virginia, May 30, 2021:** Victor Lee Thompson, an Odinist white supremacist with possible ties to a white supremacist prison gang, allegedly entered a house in Parkersburg, where he assaulted a woman and shot a man to death. Though the slain man was Black, police speculate there may have been a dispute over drugs.<sup>29</sup>
- **Albany, New York, May 21, 2021:** Sovereign citizen Natural Wise Joseph allegedly shot and killed another man at an intersection. A possible motive has not been released.<sup>30</sup>
- **Springfield, Missouri, May 16, 2021:** John Hilt and Justin Murphy were arrested for the alleged shooting death of James R. Kenney, who was, according to authorities, a member of the Southwest Honkeys, a white supremacist prison gang. Hilt and Murphy are reportedly members of Family Values, a rival white supremacist prison gang. They were allegedly angry at Kenney due to previous encounters.<sup>31</sup>
- **Albuquerque, New Mexico, May 12, 2021:** In an unusual incident, four alleged members of the New Mexico Aryan Brotherhood were involved in a shootout among themselves inside a vehicle. Three of the people involved, Michael Edward Sanchez, Brandon Torres and James Fisher, died of gunshot wounds. The lone survivor, Richard Kuykendall, has been arrested, though so far only on a weapons charge.<sup>32</sup>
- **Venice, Florida, April 20, 2021:** Stephen Havrilka was arrested for the beating death of a female hotel worker. According to law enforcement, Havrilka has multiple white supremacist tattoos, including an apparent "14" and "88" on his abdomen.<sup>33</sup>
- **Fresno, California, April 13, 2021:** Brandon Engelman was arrested after allegedly fatally shooting a man with whom he had long been feuding. Engelman, according to law

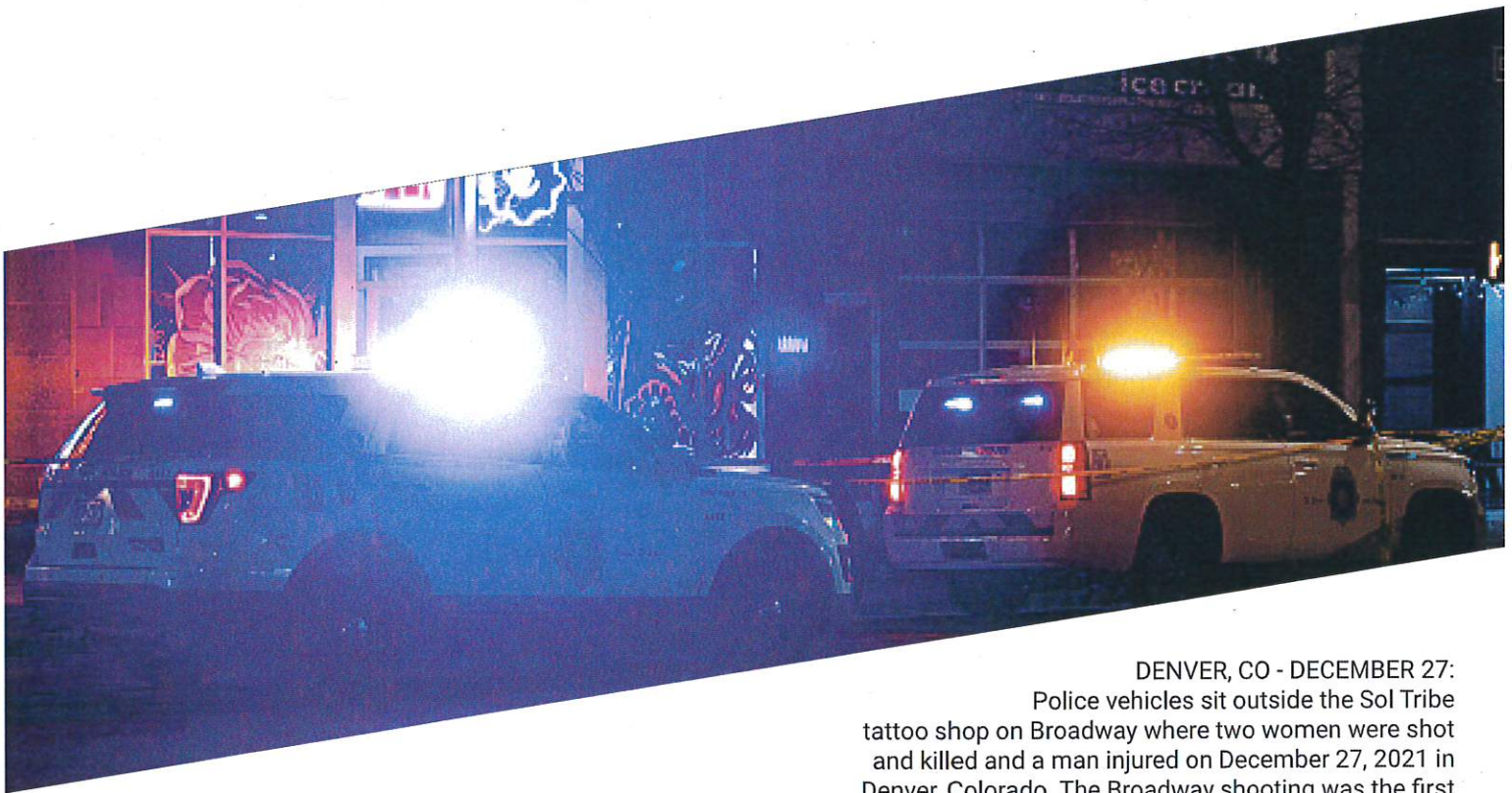


Source:  
news-leader.com,  
Suspects: John Hilt and  
Justin Murphy Greene County Jail



enforcement, is a member of the Fresnecks, a local white supremacist street gang.<sup>34</sup>

- **Washington, D.C., April 2, 2021:** Noah Green rammed a vehicle into two Capitol Police officers at a barricade in front of the U.S. Capitol building, killing one of the officers, William Evans, and injuring the other. Green subsequently exited his vehicle and ran at other officers with a knife; they shot and killed Green. While there is evidence that he may have suffered from mental illness, Green was also a devoted follower of Louis Farrakhan, the racist and antisemitic leader of the Nation of Islam and had attended at least one Farrakhan event. He also donated a considerable sum of money to the group, but according to the Nation of Islam, he never became a formal member.<sup>35</sup>
- **Fort Wayne, Indiana, January 19, 2021:** Joseph "Doc" Rose shot and killed a man in a room at an extended-stay hotel following an argument over a social media post. Rose has multiple white supremacist tattoos, including a swastika and SS tattoos on his face. Later in the year, Rose pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 55 years (five suspended) in prison.<sup>36</sup>



DENVER, CO - DECEMBER 27:  
Police vehicles sit outside the Sol Tribe tattoo shop on Broadway where two women were shot and killed and a man injured on December 27, 2021 in Denver, Colorado. The Broadway shooting was the first in a series of shootings tonight that claimed five lives across the Denver metro area, according to police. Police say officers exchanged gunfire with a suspect at one of the scenes. (Photo by Michael Ciaglo/Getty Images)



Every year, some murders attract speculation or allegations of extremist connections. The COE examines all such incidents for evidence of extremism. Some such cases are confirmed as being extremist-connected, but in many other cases, investigation either reveals no extremist ties or uncovers insufficient evidence on which to determine an extremist connection. Such incidents are not included in the year's extremist murder statistics. If additional evidence is subsequently uncovered for a specific murder that does confirm an extremist tie, such a murder would be added to the statistics at that time.

The omission that perhaps most deserves an explanation here is the death of Capitol Police officer Brian Sicknick. Officer Sicknick was one of the many Capitol Police and Metro Police officers defending the U.S. Capitol building on January 6, 2021, when it was stormed by an angry mob of right-wing extremists and extreme Trump supporters intent on interfering with Congress's certification of the vote of the Electoral College that officially made Joe Biden the next president of the United States. Many officers were attacked during this incident, and Sicknick was one of them—indeed, in March the FBI arrested two men it alleged had assaulted Sicknick. Late in the evening—some hours after he had been attacked—Sicknick collapsed and was transported to the hospital, where he passed away on January 7.

Initial reports on Sicknick's death claimed that he died because of injuries suffered during the attack. However, in April 2021 the chief medical examiner of Washington, D.C., released a report on Sicknick's death that stated his death was due to two serious strokes and that the officer was not otherwise injured, though "all that transpired played a role in his condition." Although it is clear that the Capitol attack could have contributed to, or even precipitated, the strokes that felled Sicknick, it cannot be definitely proven that he was murdered by a Capitol stormer. As a result, his death is not listed as a murder in this report. However, one must agree with the statement by the Capitol police that the nature of his death "does not change the fact that Officer Brian Sicknick died in the line of duty, courageously defending Congress and the Capitol."<sup>37</sup>



## NOTES ON METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

The COE has compiled a list of well over 1,000 known murders/killings perpetrated since 1970 by people associated with a variety of 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 are also included (such as at Jonestown in Guyana). Fatalities in foreign terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, such as the December 2019 shootings at Naval Air Station Pensacola by a radicalized Saudi military aviation student, are not 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, COE's report on extremist-related murders in 2020 counted 17 murders, but within a year, COE had uncovered six more extremist-related 2020 murders and has revised its numbers accordingly. This happens every year, so similar upward revision is likely to occur in the future for the 2021 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 to figures from more recent decades, as figures for the earlier eras are likely to undercount deaths.

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 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 data.

In addition, because murders behind bars 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 likely underrepresented.



## Policy Recommendations:

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Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2021

# THE PROTECT PLAN

<https://www.adl.org/protectplan>

We need a whole-of-government approach to address the extremist threat that the Jewish community, and many others, are facing and will continue to face in the years to come. The framework that ADL has created — the PROTECT plan — is a comprehensive, seven-part plan to mitigate the threat posed by domestic extremism and domestic terrorism while protecting civil rights and civil liberties. Together, focusing on these seven categories can have an immediate and deeply significant impact in preventing and countering domestic terrorism— more so than any one action, policy, or law— and can do so while protecting civil rights and liberties and ensuring that government overreach does not harm the same vulnerable people and communities that these extremists target.





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