



School Shooters: Understanding High School, College, and Adult Perpetrators

By Peter Langman



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School shootings scare everyone, even those not immediately affected. They make national and international news. They make parents afraid to send their children off to school. But they also lead to generalizations about those who perpetrate them. Most assumptions about the perpetrators are wrong and many of the warning signs are missed until it's too late. Here, Peter Langman takes a look at 48 national and international cases of school shootings in order to dispel the myths, explore the motives, and expose the realities of preventing school shootings from happening in the future, including identifying at risk individuals and helping them to seek help before it's too late.

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School Shooters: Understanding High School, College, and Adult Perpetrators By Peter Langman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #391381 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2015-01-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.33" h x 1.06" w x 6.32" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 298 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

This psychologist [Langman], widely recognized for his expertise, is refreshingly honest. . . . Out of this densely documented book [the author] . . . concludes 'There is no one way to prevent school shootings.' . . . What I came away with was the conclusion that the shooters are people we would all easily identify as 'losers.' Beyond that, there is no specific way of identifying them, only suspicions of their capability to do the unthinkable. (*Warning Signs*)

In this interesting, enlightening, and thought-provoking book, Langman details the importance of early detection and intervention for people suffering from mental health issues. At the same time, he cautions us not to jump to conclusions about individuals who may happen to share certain traits. (*Psych Central*)

School Shooters: Understanding High School, College, and Adult Perpetrators is a pick for any frightened by school shootings, and addresses common misconceptions about the perpetrators and their acts. Peter Langman considers nearly fifty national and international cases of school shootings in the course of dispelling myths and exposing factors that led to rampages, and provides a survey that considers violence prevention tactics and how they succeed or fail. The result is a powerful combination of social and psychological analysis that provides insights on perps, programs to thwart them, and school safety, and should be read by any concerned about the escalation of school violence. (*Midwest Book Review*)

Langman dives deep into the backgrounds of our nation's school shooters to analyze their mindsets, discover patterns and dispel common myths. He uncovers numerous critical misconceptions about school shooters and presents key findings to strengthen prevention and intervention practices for keeping schools safe. (Kenneth S. Trump, M.P.A., President of National School Safety and Security Services, Cleveland, Ohio)

Peter Langman's book is a welcome advance over the existing popular library of books about school shootings, many of which are grounded in hunch and fueled by hysteria. This volume features insightful analysis of schoolyard assailants, with carefully researched case studies, and should be of immense value to policy-makers and professionals alike. I, for one, will keep Langman's *School Shooters* on my nearby bookshelf of favorites. For years to come, this book should remain as one of the most important contributions to the fast-growing body of work on the topic of school violence. (James Alan Fox, Ph.D., The Lipman Professor of Criminology, Law and Public Policy at Northeastern University; author of *Violence and Security on Campus: From Pre-School through College*)

School Shooters is a captivating read that reaches beyond the headlines and media coverage to reveal the larger context of the narrative exploring the factors that may have contributed to the attack. The quotes from the attackers at the beginning of each case narrative bring the reader closer to understanding the mind of the killer. Peter Langman truly grapples with events from Columbine to Sandy Hook and his passion, dedication to detail, and ability to draw together complex thoughts in his typology of psychopathic, psychotic, and traumatized school shooters provides a wealth of information. Langman leaves no stone unturned and no narrative unexplored as he lays out for his reader a well-reasoned and meticulously researched book that helps us all better understand what drives some to commit these horrific attacks. Work like Peter Langman's is key, because understanding past attacks is essential to the prevention of future attacks. (Brian Van Brunt, Ed.D, author, *Ending Campus Violence: New Approaches to Prevention*; Senior Vice President for Professional Program Development, The NCHERM Group)

About the Author

Peter Langman is a psychologist whose work on school shooters has received international recognition. His previous book, *Why Kids Kill: Inside the Minds of School Shooters*, was named a Choice Outstanding Academic Title and was translated into German, Dutch, and Finnish. Langman's research has been cited in congressional testimony on Capitol Hill and thousands of news outlets. He has been interviewed by the New York Times, CBS-TV, Fox, CNN, the BBC, and over 150 other news outlets in the USA, Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia, and the Middle East. Langman has trained thousands of professionals in education, mental health, and law enforcement on identifying potential school shooters. He maintains the largest online collection of materials relating to school shooters at schoolshooters.info. He is in private practice in Allentown, PA.

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