VIOLENCE GOES TO COLLEGE

Second Edition

VIOLENCE GOES TO COLLEGE

The Authoritative Guide to Prevention and Intervention

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This book is dedicated to Tanner Johnson Thomas Nicholas Rex Thomas Jackson Thomas Theresa Tafoya Richard Tafoya Chen Tafoya Isaac Tafoya Christopher Wilson

May they someday have violence-free college experiences.

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FOREWORD

O ver the past 26 years I have dealt with inappropriate behavior, demonstrations, crime, and violence on three different university campuses in three different states. My perspective has changed over that time as my career progressed from the street to the chief's office. The wide range of behavior, problems, and challenges that confront today's leaders in higher education, in securing and policing these institutions, has never been more complicated. Unfortunately, today there are some who still hold the notion that universities and colleges are exempt from violence found elsewhere. Even following the tragedy at Virginia Tech, the largest mass casualty murders in the United States, some are slow in learning there is no campus exemption from violence.

Violence Goes to College is an invaluable resource for understanding, preventing, and interrupting violence on college campuses. This resource recognizes that all violence is not the same. The causes of one form of violence vary from the next. Therefore, the manner in which violence is prevented or dealt with must vary as well.

This book reviews many forms of violence on campus. The authors provide a background for understanding the causes of violence. The research further provides how alcohol, peer pressure, and the need to be accepted socially motivates young adults to occasionally act out in unacceptable ways. Certain forms of violence are the end result of a discernable process that when recognized can be interrupted, redirected, or decreased.

By de-bundling the different types of violence the book clarifies ways in which professionals can act to prevent or reduce problems, crime and violence in the first place. Examples are factually based and cover some of the most difficult complex incidents and circumstances higher education professionals may confront.

Violence Goes to College is a complete guide for the professional in looking for real solutions, both immediate and long term, to reducing violence and keeping students, staff, and faculty safe as they learn, teach, and work. From environmental factors, reporting mechanisms, threat assessment, policy documents, alternatives to violence, intervention strategies, consequence management, and handling the aftermath of actual incidents, this is a comprehensive guide that is a must read.

Using the information and strategies found in *Violence Goes to College*, the institution I work to safeguard is better prepared to confront and resolve

many of the challenges we face. These strategies have helped to reduce our institution crime rate to a 35-year low. If you believe in prevention rather than reaction, community policing and problem-solving policing, this guide will help you achieve your goals of providing a safe learning and work environment for your institution.

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PREFACE

LMOST A DECADE has passed since we wrote the first edition of Violence A Goes to College, and with this time, major violence has redefined the landscape of our nation. Most notably, the experiences of 9/11 and the tragedy of Virginia Tech will go down in history as two of the worst days in the United States. The Elizabeth Shin case, University of Oklahoma suicide bombing, and the Northern Illinois University shooting further increased anxiety on campuses. On the positive side, however, great strides have been made in understanding violence and how to prevent, interrupt, and respond to both internal and external threats; we have reflected this growth in our revisions. Not only have increasing numbers of campus leaders awakened to the real potential of many forms of violence, but our legislators are also paying attention. Technological advancement has expanded and altered communication mediums, leading to potential for greater violence as well as greater prevention, both of which have been significantly nuanced. Another milestone that passed in the last decade was the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant funded by the federal government's Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The three original authors have grown as the field has grown and as their lives have changed. Dr. Nicoletti continued to provide numerous trainings on preventing, detecting, interrupting, responding to, and surviving campus violent incidents across the nation. He also has worked with various campuses on developing vortexes and policies in addition to conducting risk assessments. He participated in an International Association of Chiefs of Police commission to review the Virginia Tech shooting, served on the National Association of Attorneys General Campus Safety Task Force, following the Virginia Tech tragedy, and was on the front lines of developing recommendations for the final publication presented by the Department of Justice.

Dr. Spencer-Thomas lost her younger brother to suicide in 2004, and subsequently her family and a network of supporters started the Carson J Spencer Foundation (www.CarsonJSpencer.org), a nonprofit "sustaining a passion for life" through suicide prevention. In 2006, she applied for and received funding from the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant, creating a partnership between her family's foundation, Regis University, and the BACCHUS Network to develop comprehensive suicide prevention strategies for campuses. Dr. Chris Bollinger received his Ph.D. in Communication after completing a dissertation exploring the ways in which hate is conceptualized, formulated, practiced, and resisted within our educational systems. He is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of English and Communication studies at Texas Lutheran University. He routinely facilitates workshops and programs on recognizing and working against hate and on occasion works as a consultant for student affairs programs.

Collectively, the three of us have also mentored a number of graduate students in the work of violence prevention and have made wonderful new connections with other experts in the field. We have brought these new voices to this revised edition as well. Rather than edit out the individual voices to one unifying voice, we have chosen to have their styles shine through. We welcome your comments and offer further collaboration as the field continues to grow and change.

Over the course of the last few decades, violence has infected new areas of society such as the workplace, schools, malls, and religious sanctuaries. As violence prevention experts, we and others have been observing and intervening as the violence spreads to these new locations; despite their peaceful facades, college campuses are not immune. In fact, the recent tragic campus shootings have fundamentally changed how campuses operate – security is not on the forefront of many minds.

Since our first edition of the book, progress has been made:

- Many national associations published reports, adopted position statements, developed collaborations, held forums, and promoted safety legislation:
 - National Mental Health Association and the Jed Foundation (2002). Safeguarding Your Students against Suicide: Expanding the Safety Net.
 - American College Health Association (February 2005). *Campus Violence White Paper*.
 - National Association of Attorneys General (September 2007). Task Force of School and Campus Safety: Report and Recommendations.
 - NASPA (n.d.) In Search of Safer Communities: Emerging Practice for Student Affairs in Addressing Campus Violence. NASPA also developed a collaborative campaign called "Enough is Enough" in 2008, designed to empower all campus stakeholders in the effort of violence prevention in our society.
- In 2005, the U.S. Senate recognized September as National Campus Safety Awareness Month.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics shows that violence against college students decreased 40 percent while violence against nonstudents of the same age fell 44 percent during 1995–2002.¹

When violence occurs on a college or university campus, the entire community is impacted. The ripple effects of one rape, one hate crime, or one riot spread rapidly and significantly contaminate the learning environment. Concentration and creative thought are stifled when fear is overwhelming. In order to deal with violence, campuses must not only treat the symptoms of the virus, but they must also inoculate and prevent further infection.

When the first edition of *Violence Goes to College* was published in 2001, it became the first violence prevention and intervention guide for college communities designed to prepare concerned individuals with up-to-date information and strategies to address campus violence. This now revised publication continues to be a user-friendly resource providing busy college personnel, students, and parents with directed, well-researched strategies to prepare for the possibility of tragedy before it strikes. Collectively, we bring decades of experience in both higher education and violence prevention to the task of developing these effective tactics. In addition to authoring three books on violence prevention, our violence experience includes consulting with the FBI and serving on national prevention panels.

Many of you may have picked up this book because you are interested in the threat of the mass casualty shootings that have rocked institutions of higher education. While these tragedies have dominated headlines, they are exceedingly rare – actually considered by many to be anomalous forms of campus violence.² All things considered, college campuses continue to be one of the safest places for people to be – motor vehicles, off-campus violence, family violence, and self-harm are often far bigger dangers. In fact:

- The murder rate off campus is about 28 times higher than on campus.³
- According to the National Crime Victimization survey, 93 percent of the crimes that students experience happen off campus.⁴
- Other way to look at it: with about 4,200 colleges in the U.S. and an average of 16 murders per year on college campuses, the average college can expect a murder on campus about once every 265 years.⁵

Nevertheless, when we are faced with the continuous barrage of images of violence, we tend to forget these facts and resort to a reactive response, best articulated by risk management expert Brett Sokolow:

If you believe the pundits and talking heads in the aftermath of the Virginia Tech tragedy, every college and university should rush to implement text-messagebased early warning systems, should install loudspeakers throughout campus, should perform criminal background checks on all incoming students, should allow students to install their own locks on their residence hall room doors, and should exclude from admission or expel students with serious mental health conditions. We should profile loners, establish lockdown protocols and develop mass-shooting evacuation plans. We should even arm our students to the teeth. In the immediate aftermath, security experts and college and university officials have been quoted in the newspapers and on TV with considering all of these remedies, and more, to be able to assure the public that WE ARE DOING SOMETHING.⁶

Sokolow goes on in his op-ed piece to emphasize as we have here that our best protection against violence is strategic and comprehensive prevention – much of it through mental health promotion and communication strategies.

The book is organized into three sections: The first addresses broad campus violence concerns and violence conceptualization. The second explores general prevention strategies. The third looks more in depth at particular forms of campus violence including sexual assault, rioting, hate crimes, hazing, homicide, nonsexual assault, arson, and bombing.

Violence Goes to College offers hope that somewhere between Pollyanna and paranoia, campuses can find a healthy balance between reasonable protection and personal freedom.

J.N. S.S.T. C.B.

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NOTE TO THE READER

ALL THE INFORMATION provided herein is general in nature and designed to serve as a guide to understanding. These materials are not to be construed as the rendering of legal, management, or counseling advice. If the reader has a specific need or problem, the services of a competent professional should be sought to address the particular situation.

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VIOLENCE GOES TO COLLEGE

Part I

LEAVING "IT-WILL-NEVER-HAPPEN-HERE": HELPING COLLEGE COMMUNITIES ACKNOWLEDGE VIOLENCE POTENTIAL WITHOUT CREATING PANIC

Chapter 1

SEEING VIOLENCE AS A VIRUS

JOHN NICOLETTI & SALLY SPENCER-THOMAS

⁶⁴ **I** NEVER THOUGHT it would happen here." We hear this statement repeatedly in the aftermath of tragic incidents. Most people want to believe that they are immune from harm, and that their learning and working environments are safe havens. When violence occurs, they often feel blind-sided, but in retrospect, they can usually identify subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle warning signs.

In order to understand the current state of campus violence, one must look to two sources of information - the factual and the theoretical. We must start by taking a look at what we know. This can be accomplished both by looking at our history and by looking at what current research is telling us. When we examine the impact high-profile cases have had on the campus culture over the past several decades, we can learn a great deal. While these cases may have only directly impacted a small number of individuals, their legacy continues to influence how many colleges think about violence. So, the first step is to look at our history to understand where we are today. Then we can appraise what credible sources are telling us about the prevalence and trends of violence on our campuses.

The second step is to develop a conceptualization that is relevant and useful to college campuses. We have found that a particularly effective conceptualization is achieved by thinking about violence as a virus. By using this analogy, we can examine the many different "strains" of violence hosted on college campuses.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM CAMPUS VIOLENCE HISTORY?

The following list of high-profile cases of college violence is not intended to be an exhaustive account of all devastating tragedies college communities have faced. Rather, certain cases were selected to illustrate how various forms of violence can forever change campus culture.

High-Profile Cases: History and Impact

July 13–14, 1966: Chicago Massacre South Chicago Community Hospital – residences for student nurses in training Chicago, Illinois

On this July night, Richard Speck brutally murdered – stabbed, strangled and sexually assaulted – eight nursing students in their Chicago townhouse.⁷ The 24-year-old sailor broke into the townhouse through a mesh screen door armed with a pistol and a knife. Initially he stated that his motive was robbery, but after taking his victims' money, he proceeded to tie up the women. Over the next several hours, he murdered each victim, except one who hid terrified under a bed. She would later be a crucial witness, leading to his eventual capture and conviction. This "crime of the century" is not usually thought of as a campus crime per say, but it was. From this tragedy of mass murder involving college women sprang a new genre of horror – a story that would be repeated in multiple novels, films, and reality in the upcoming decades.

• August 1, 1966: The Texas Sniper University of Texas Austin, Texas

Charles Joseph Whitman, a former Eagle Scout and Marine Lance Corporal, was a student at the University of Texas.⁸ In the early morning hours of August 1, 1966, Whitman stabbed his mother and wife to death in their homes. Later that same morning, he bought ammunition and a shotgun. When he arrived on campus, he had an arsenal of weapons and knives that he brought to the top of the Tower, a University landmark that overlooks most of the campus grounds. On his way up, he killed the receptionist and two other people who were touring the Tower. From an elevation of 231 feet, Whitman shot at people crossing the campus.

The siege lasted 92 minutes, an eternity for this type of crime.⁹ Finally, Whitman was shot to death by two Austin police officers. In the end, 17 people were killed, including Whitman and an unborn child, and 31 were wounded. An autopsy of Whitman's body indicated that he had a brain tumor, but experts remain unclear as to the extent to which this tumor affected his behavior.

In September 1999, the University of Texas moved to reclaim this landmark by reopening the Tower.¹⁰ All visitors to the observation deck must pass through a metal detector and are prohibited from bringing any packages with them. Thus, the legacy of this one terrible act of violence still haunts the University of Texas today. With two major massacres impacting college campuses during this violent one-month period in the summer of 1966, the image of college campuses as ivory tower sanctuaries sheltered from violence was shattered.

• May 4, 1970: Kent State Riots Kent State University Kent, Ohio

In late April 1970, the United States invaded Cambodia, escalating the Vietnam War. Shortly after, protests emerged on college campuses across the country.11 At Kent State University, antiwar gatherings became increasingly intense. Students began by peacefully burying a copy of the Constitution, then built bonfires in the streets of Kent, and eventually clashed with police. Because of this escalation, the mayor declared a state of emergency and called in the Ohio National Guard. On May 2, the ROTC building was set ablaze in the presence of over 1,000 demonstrators. By Sunday, May 3, the campus looked like a war zone and most of the campus assumed that the university was in a state of martial law.

On the morning of Monday, May 4, 3,000 people began to gather in the Commons area for an antiwar rally scheduled for noon.¹² Initially the rally was peaceful, and the accounts of the following events are still subject to debate. Just before the rally was about to commence, officials made the decision to disperse the demonstrators. What ensued was an escalating confrontation between demonstrators and enforcement, and in the end, 28 guardsmen fired over 60 shots, wounding nine and killing four Kent State students. This event is critical to appreciating campus violence history for two reasons. First, the politically driven campus protests of that era can be compared and contrasted to rioting that many campuses are experiencing today. In understanding potential rioting triggers and diffusion tactics, we need to ask, "What are the similarities and differences in the campus culture now and then?" Second, the community response in the aftermath of the tragedy can serve as a model for other schools facing such violence. At Kent State, at that time and for years to come, students, faculty, and staff all participated in the recovery and the future direction of the campus.

• January 14, 1978: The Chi Omega Murders Florida State University Tallahassee, Florida

Ted Bundy is probably the most notorious serial killer in American history.¹³ His modus operandi: preying on young women and luring them in with his charm and perception of vulnerability. On the night of the Chi Omega murders, Bundy apparently walked right in the front door of the sorority, leaving it wide open after he entered. He then attacked the sorority sisters in their rooms while they slept. He beat them, raped them, bit them, and strangled them. Two victims died and two survived. Like Richard Speck's attack on the nurses a decade earlier, this event magnified the vulnerability of women living on campus and perpetuated a perception of college women as accessible sexual prey.

• February 24, 1978: Chuck Stenzel Alfred University Alfred, New York

Hank Nuwer, hazing expert, describes the following tragedy in his books *Broken Pledges* and *Wrongs of Passage*. February 24, 1978 was Tapping Night at Alfred University's Klan Alpine fraternity.¹⁴ Chuck Stenzel had recently re-enrolled at Alfred. His mother thought, in hindsight, that he probably chose to join the fraternity to increase his chances for making the lacrosse team (several brothers played the sport) or to get closer to his existing friends. The "Klan" had a reputation of being an "animal house," and ironically, the theme for this particular Tapping Night was, "Don't Stop til You Drop." Sometime after 7:00 P.M.,

a fraternity brother came to Chuck's room to congratulate him on his acceptance with a pint of Jack Daniel's whiskey. The brother then led Chuck to the car where he was to ride in the trunk. The temperature outside was below freezing. There were two other pledges in the trunk with Chuck who later testified that he chugged not only his pint, but also most of another pledge's pint of Scotch.

Chuck arrived at the fraternity house at some point before 9:30 P.M. at which point he drank more beer and wine in festive celebration and drinking games.¹⁵ One of the goals of



Figure 1.1. Chuck Stenzel. February 28, 1978. Chuck Stenzel was a sophomore at Alfred University when his brothers at the Klan Alpine Fraternity locked him in the trunk of a car after giving him a pint of bourbon, a fifth of wine, and a six pack of beer, with orders to consume all before he would be released. He died of acute alcohol poisoning and exposure to the cold. Chuck's mother, Eileen Stevens formed C.H.U.C.K. (Committee to Halt Useless College Killings) in August of 1978 and has become a leading antihazing activist.

the night was to fill a trashcan up to a marked line with vomit. Chuck was given a shower at some point and when he began to pass out, he was placed on his side on an uncovered mattress. Chuck and another unconscious pledge were left in the room unattended until 11:30 P.M. when a fraternity brother came in to check on them and noted that Chuck's fingernails had turned blue. None of the three sober brothers on site knew CPR, and the rest of the brothers were too drunk to be of any assistance. By the time an emergency medical crew arrived, Chuck was dead. Chuck's blood alcohol content at the time of death was .46, a fourfold increase from the legal definition of intoxication. Two other pledges, one of whom the ambulance crew found in a locked closet, were close to death and were rushed to the hospital. They survived.

From that night on, Chuck's mother Eileen Stevens bravely chose to speak out against the dangers of hazing.¹⁶ She founded C.H.U.C.K. (Committee to Halt Useless College Killings), a national anti-hazing organization. She speaks to groups on this issue sharing her personal experience as a mother of a hazing victim. Alfred University is now leading the cause to prevent hazing.¹⁷ In 1999, Alfred helped orchestrate an NCAA study that exposed significant hazing activity in college athletics.

• April 5, 1986: Jeanne Clery Lehigh University Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Just a few days after her parents dropped her off at Lehigh University following her spring break, Jeanne Clery was asleep in her unlocked room when she was brutally raped, beaten, and murdered by a fellow student.¹⁸ Josoph Henry had easily gained entrance to the dormitory because the door had been propped open with empty pizza boxes. After the murder, he boasted about his attack to his friends. In 1987, he was sentenced to the electric chair. Jeanne's parents thought they had been acting in her best interest when they encouraged her to attend Lehigh because it looked so safe.¹⁹ What they did not know was that Lehigh had experienced 38 violent crimes within a three-year period. The Clerys filed a \$25 million civil suit against Lehigh for negligence. The suit was settled out of court, and the Clerys used the settlement and their own money to begin one of the largest campaigns to stop campus violence to date. In 1988, they founded Security on Campus, Inc., and in



Figure 1.2. Jeanne Clery. April 5, 1986, Jeanne Clery was found dead in her residence hall room. She had been raped, sodomized, beaten, and strangled. Her attacker, Josoph Henry, bit her face and breasts, to make sure she was dead. The night of the murder, Josoph Henry walked through three security doors. In the months prior to the murder, students had lodged complaints about his behavior and threats to female students to administrators. Since this tragedy, the Clery family has developed a nonprofit organization called "Security On Campus" and is largely responsible for the passage of 27 campus safety laws.