



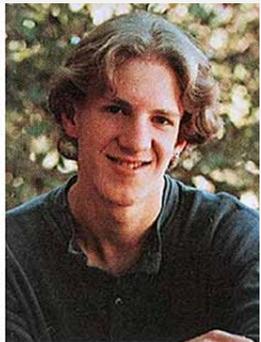
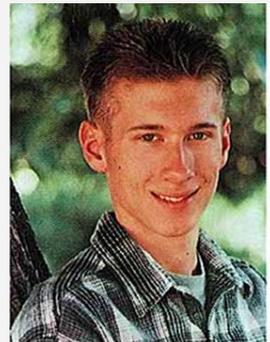
Multiple homicides committed by young offenders: The phenomena beyond school shootings and terrorist attacks

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Images of multiple killings and multiple killers...





- part of TARGET project („Incident and case analysis of highly expressive targeted violence”), funded by German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
- main focus of TARGET is on an interdisciplinary analysis of killing sprees /school shootings (KS) and terrorism (TE)
- **YMHO** [Young multiple homicide offences] subproject focusses upon **multiple homicide offences** committed by **young** persons and “**not looking like killing spree or terrorism**” with regard to
 1. **characteristics** of YMHO cases
 2. **subgroups** / typology
 3. **profile** of YMHO **compared to KS / TE** cases



YMHO study **includes** ...

- intentional homicides **committed in Germany 2000-2013**
- committed by offenders up to 25 years of age
- directed against 2+ victims,
- completed with regard to at least one victim,
- judged as murder or manslaughter by the court (if offender legally responsible and not dead)
- with no

excludes...

- Cases phenomenologically classified as killing spree / school shooting or terrorist / extremist violence
- serial killings with a cooling off period
- groups of perpetrators with mixed age range w/ minor share of offender <25 years



KS, TE and YMHO are

- homicide offences (usually) targeted against multiple persons
- mostly committed by young males
- rare events

„So what’s the difference?“



Identification of cases

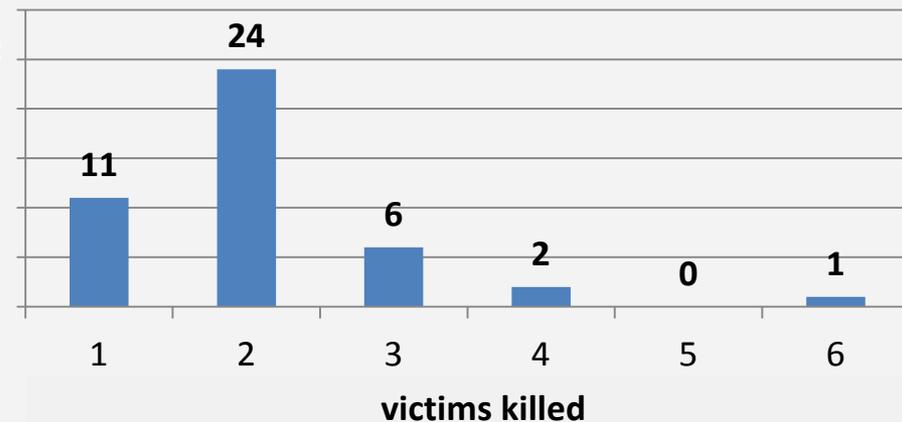
- via keyword searches on the internet
- via searches in media databases
- via searches in police databases (through state criminal police offices in Bavaria, Berlin, Brandenburg, Lower Saxony, and North Rhine-Westphalia)

- Case material: **Public prosecutor files**
- **Instruments:**
 - (a) Standardized instrument for file analysis developed in TARGET
 - (b) Guideline for case summaries



Based on **44 cases**

- **no female offenders** in sample
- 31 (70%) cases with **close victim-offender relationships**
 - crime sites: 75% private apartments/houses
- 137 victims
 - **91 killed**
(2,1 pro case; w/o offender suicides)
 - 72 female + 65 male victims
(killed: 49 f + 42 m)

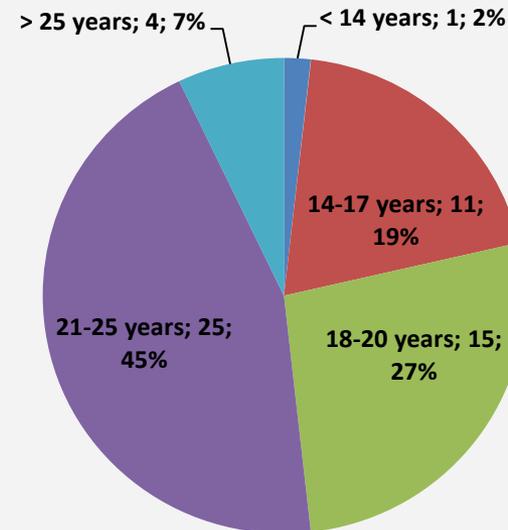




- mean age of offenders: **20 years**
- Weapons used: **knives** in 25 cases, **guns** in 13 cases; broad range of other weapons / tools (car, axe, belt, screwdriver, gas etc.)
 - guns: mostly illegal; only two cases where legal guns stolen from fathers

N of offenders / case

- 35 cases = 1 offender
- 5 cases = 2 offenders
- 3 cases = 3 offenders



Age of 56 Offenders



- **heterogeneity** of YMHO cases with regard to type of offence, motivation, victim-offender relationship
- majority of YMHO cases located in **close victim-offender relationships**
(mainly family and intimate partnerships)
- importance of victim-offender relationships for case typologies



	No of cases
within close victim-offender relationships	24
separation / divorce – partner as a primary target	9
separation / divorce – other primary targets	3
(intergenerational) violence linked to family conflict	10
intra-family violence linked to psychiatric disorders	2
without close victim-offender relationships	10
„ordinary crime“ including homicidal option or escalating into severe violence	4
Suicide involving causation of other people's deaths	2
Multiple homicide linked to substance abuse and intoxication	4
YMHO cases overlapping with KS / TE cases	4
cases not included in typology	6

(1) separation / divorce – partner as a primary target (n=9)

- killing of (ex-) partner plus other persons - separation in progress or completed
- heterogenic group of “other persons”: new partners, kids, relatives of former partner, people present at the crime scene as witnesses or obstacles

(2) separation / divorce – other primary targets (n=3)

- killing of parents of ex-partner (perceived as an obstacle of reconciliation)
- killing of an illegitimate son (and his mother) who was seen as a “blemish”

(3) (intergenerational) violence linked to family conflict (n=10)

- parents or grandparents as victims
- conflicts about financial issues, school achievements, life style, substance use, violence/abuse in the family
- 1 suicide, two suicide attempts

(4) intra-family violence linked to psychiatric disorders (n=2)

- clearly dominated by delusional disorder of offender (undiagnosed or not treated)



(5) „ordinary crime“ including homicidal option or escalating into severe violence (n=4)

- 2 robbery offences + 2 contract killings, instrumental motivation
- homicide planned in advance or homicidal motivation emerged in the course of the "basic offence"

(6) Suicide involving causation of other people's deaths (n=2)

- suicide involving causation of other people's deaths (head-on collisions in road traffic)

(7) Multiple homicide linked to substance abuse and intoxication (n=4)

- severe intoxication of offenders; partially also of victims
- conflict over trivial issues escalating into lethal violence



- YMHO subgroups can be regarded as highly serious variants of more widespread and (more or less) well researched types of crime / violence
 - Domestic violence / Intimate partner violence / Intimate partner homicide
 - Family violence / family conflict / Intergenerational violence
 - Violence / homicide and mental illness
 - Suicide – homicide
 - Serious violent crime; instrumental crime; instrumental homicide
 - Drug related violence / alcohol related violence



Highly heterogeneous paths:

- motive for killing (revenge; alleviating grievance etc.) is directed against several persons from the beginning
- "removal" of persons regarded as obstacles to offence completion or as possible witnesses
- suicides: multiple victims accepted as "collateral damage"
- intoxication cases: impulse control reduced



- reference to socially shared narratives / symbols
- reference to social groups
- offence-related internet usage
- individualistic or collective framing of grievances
- public / private character of places chosen as crime scenes
- advance planning
- intended impact / intended number of lethalties
- range of weapons / lethality of weapons used



- YMHO cases are rare and constitute a heterogeneous category of events.
- They can mostly be considered extreme forms of more widespread types of violence (intimate partner homicide; family violence; drug-induced violence ...)
- Compared to KS / TE cases they are characterized by less planning and more influence of situational factors, less intended lethal impact, lack of reference to collective /shared narratives, symbols, scripts, and social groups.
- Concept of *grievances* (i.e. perceived frustration, exclusion, discrimination, rejection, humiliation, injustice - frequently used in radicalisation research) has relevance for KS + TE + YMHO
 - Framing of *grievances* in YMHO cases is more “privatistic” than in TE and KS cases; usually no reference to broader issues, shared narratives, symbols



Thank you!

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