

Advancing Understanding, and Informing Prevention of Public Mass Shootings: Findings from NIJ Funded Studies, Part 2

November 17, 2020

The webinar will begin shortly.



NIJ

www.nij.gov/ojp

Presentations

Presentation Title

Understanding School Shootings in the U.S.A, 1990-2016

Deadly Mass Shootings in America: Features and Trends across Four Decades

Reflections on researching the lives and crimes of mass shooters

Presenter

Steven Chermak, Ph.D., Michigan State University
Joshua D. Freilich, Ph.D., John Jay College, CUNY

Jillian J. Turanovic, Ph.D., Florida State University
Travis C. Pratt, Ph.D., University of Cincinnati

Jillian Peterson, Ph.D., Hamline University
James Densley, Ph.D., Metropolitan State University

Disclosure: These projects are supported by Award Numbers: 2016-CK-BX-0013, 2018-75-CX-0024, and 2018-75-CX-0023 awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in these presentations and during this webinar are those of the authors/presenters and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Thank you

Questions and Answers

Please submit questions to “**all panelists**” in the **Q&A** box.

Indicate which presenter the question is for.

Understanding School Shootings in the U.S.A, 1990- 2016

Joshua D. Freilich, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

Steven M. Chermak, Michigan State University

Nadine M. Connell, Griffith University

Brent Klein, University of South Carolina

Emily Greene-Colozzi, John Jay College of Criminal Justice,
CUNY

Outline

- Goals and Objectives of the Project
- Importance of Study
- Overview of Methodology
- Key Findings

Goals and Objectives

- Expand knowledge & address gaps about the causes of school shootings
- Create open source DB that includes all publically known shootings w/at least 1 injury (1990-2016)
- Apply criminology's Developmental Social Control theory to better understand offenders
- Apply criminology's SCP to better understand events
- Produce deliverables to aid law enforcement, school officials, policy-makers, and the social sciences

Importance

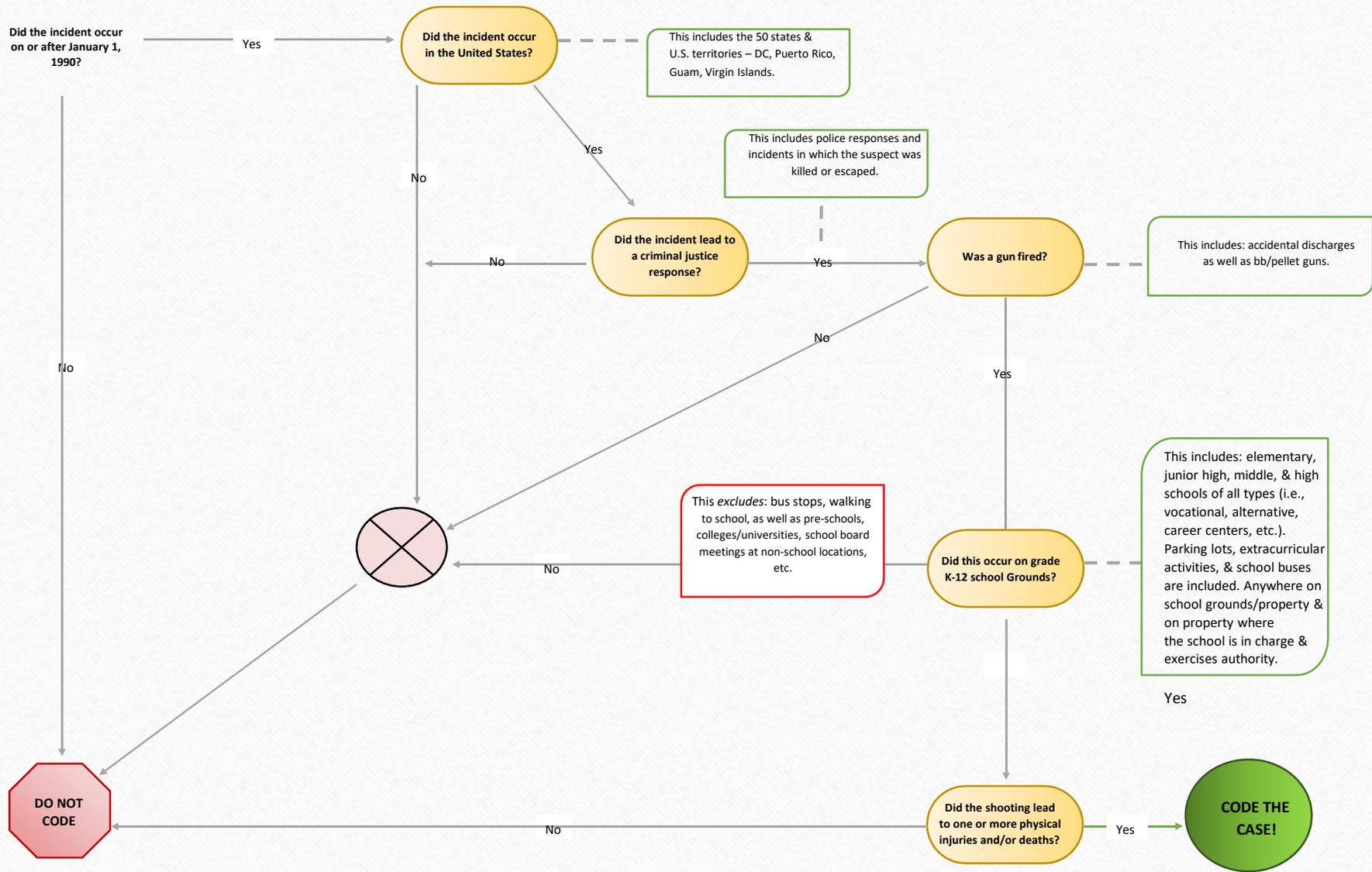
- Impact of School Shootings
- Limitations of Existing Research
 - *The lack of valid large-scale data*
 - *The lack of detailed understanding of the school environment*
 - *Changes over time*
 - *Victim attributes*
 - *Measurement & reliability*
- *Better data=Better understanding of the problem, opportunity to assess of impact of policy initiatives.*

Methodology: Overview

- Quantitative Analysis
 - Open source database
 - Inclusion
 - Process
 - Assessment
- Qualitative Analysis
 - 30 Case Studies
 - Focused on in-depth capture of life course of offenders and situational crime prevention related to schools

Inclusion Criteria

- Open sources to ID events
- *1/1/90- 12/31/16*
- Shooting with injury/fatality on K-12 school grounds/includes outdoors; Excludes universities
- 50 states & U.S. territories
- At least 1 gun-shot/bullet injury or death
 - Includes rampage; work place; drugs; suicide; gangs, etc.
 - Excludes plots



Identifying Cases

- Review sources to ID relevant cases (Conducted by PIs; reviewed 35+)
 - Scholarly; Official; Media; Watch-Group; Web-Engines, Databases
- Capture all known school shootings events reported in open sources

Figure 2: Flow Chart of Case Identification and Inclusion for the TASSS

Sampling Frame of Potentially Eligible Cases (n=1,378)

52.69% excluded for failing to
meet selection criteria (n=726)

The American School Shooting Study (TASSS) v1.0, 1990-2016 (n=652)

72.55%
voluntary/intentional
(non-accidental) fatal
and non-fatal
shootings (n=473)

15.64%
voluntary/intentional
(non-accidental)
self-harm shootings
(n=102)

11.20% accidental
shootings (n=73)

0.61% legally
justified shootings
(n=4)

Searching Cases

- Collect all publically available information on each case
 - (i) 60 web-engines searches
 - (ii) Event/offender/victim search protocol & (ii) school search protocol
- UG RAs- Extensive training:
 - Court cases (criminal & civil)
 - Department of Corrections
 - Obituaries
 - Scholarly books; other books (survivor, reporter, etc.)
 - Social media
 - Documentaries
 - Watch-groups, blogs, etc.
 - School, offender, victim photos

Search Protocols (Sample)

MASTERFILE #:		MF 1 #	COMMENTS
Source:	Link:		
Lexis-Nexis	http://libguides.lib.msu.edu/az.php?q=nexis%20uni	Y	E.g. "used x and y search terms. # articles found"
Proquest	https://search-proquest-com.proxy2.cl.msu.edu/criminaljusticeperiodicals/index?accountid=12598	Y	
Yahoo	https://www.yahoo.com/	Y	
Bing	https://www.bing.com/	Y	
Google	https://www.google.com/	Y	
Newsbank	http://infoweb.newsbank.com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu	Y	
Google Scholar	https://scholar.google.com/	Y	
USA.gov	https://www.usa.gov/	Y	
Google Video	https://www.google.com/videohp	Y	
Google News	https://news.google.com/?hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en	Y	
Google Images	https://www.google.com/imghp?hl=en	Y	
School Shooters Info	https://schoolshooters.info/browse-library	Y	

Table 1. Estimated Open Source Data Coverage for Intentional U.S. School Shootings Involving Publicly Known Shooters (n = 352)

Document Type	Total	Mean	Median	St.Dev.	Min	Max
Court	210	0.60	0.00	2.62	0	37
Police	709	2.01	0.00	7.90	0	76
Other Government	443	1.26	1.00	1.90	0	19
Education/School	90	0.26	0.00	3.24	0	51
News Media	26983	76.66	25.00	158.49	0	2078
Scholarly	612	1.74	1.00	3.60	0	21
Websites	627	1.78	1.00	31.53	0	20
Other	545	1.55	0.00	4.47	0	39
Total	30148	85.65	31.50	165.23	1	2091

Data Capture: Codebooks

- Offender level DB
 - Operationalize Developmental Social Control
- Event AND school databases
 - Operationalize Situational Crime Prevention
 - Extend ECDB
- Case study template (Developmental Social Control & SCP)

Figure 3. Yearly Prevalence of Fatal and Non-Fatal U.S. School Shootings, 1990-2016 (n=652)

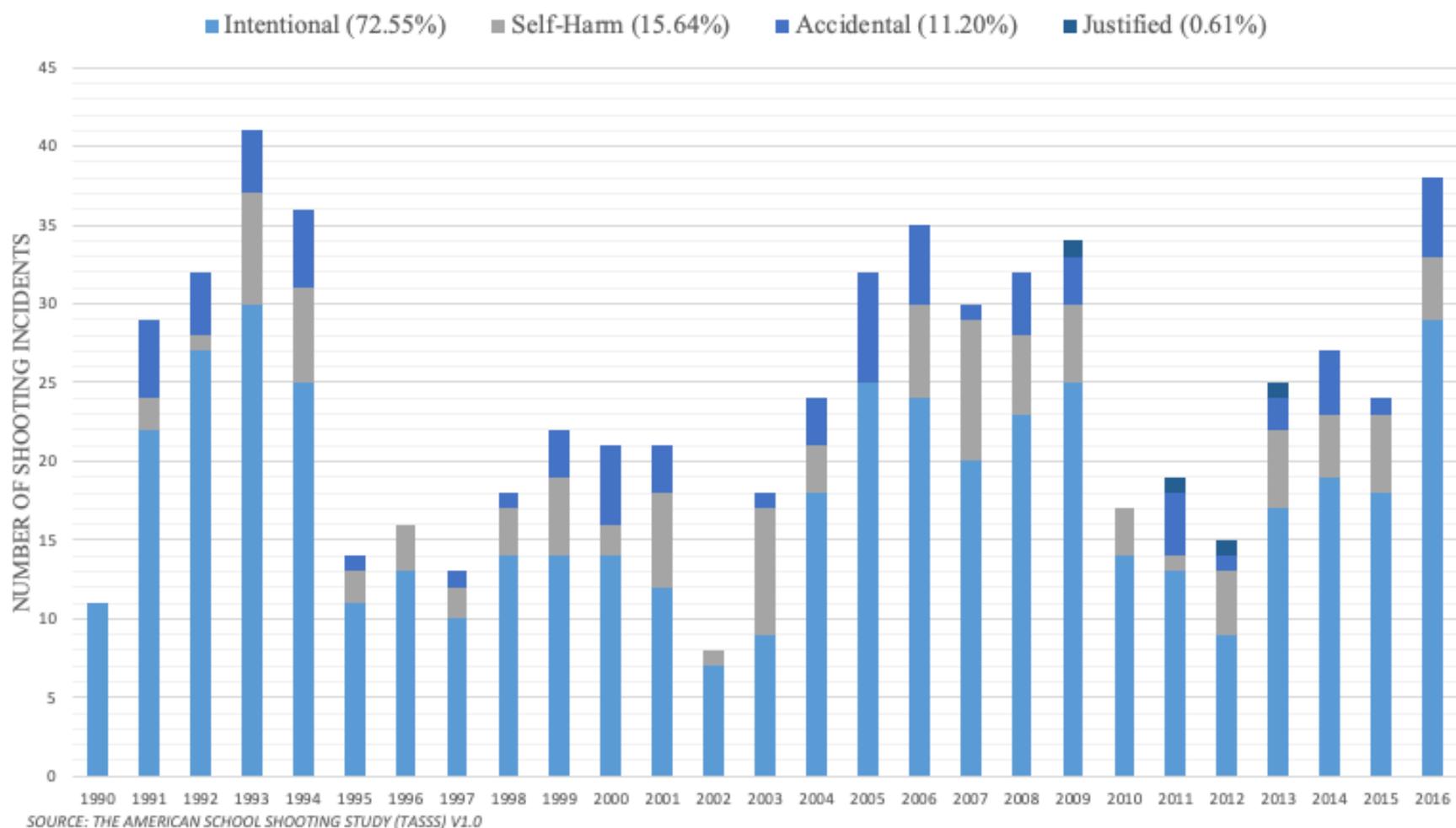
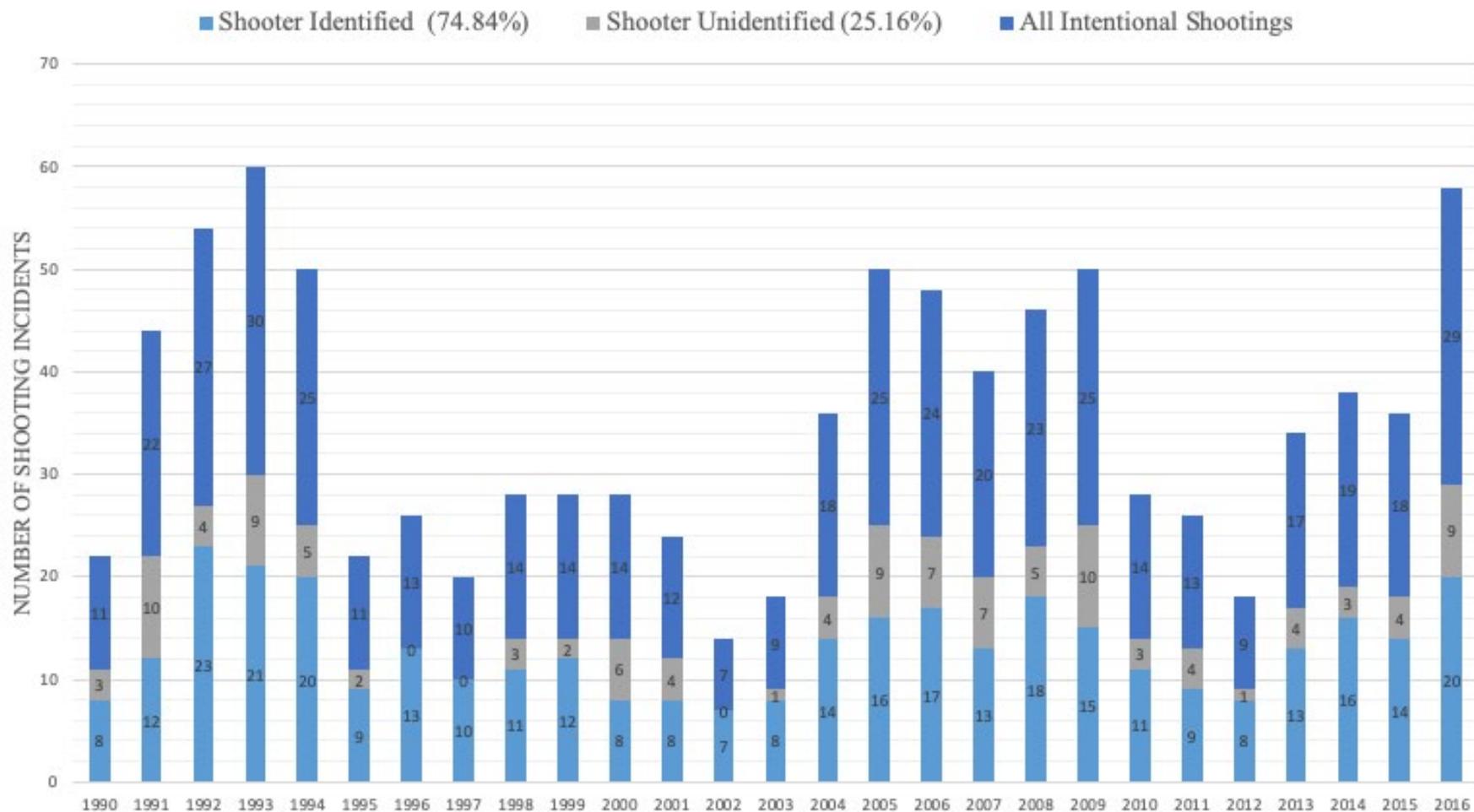
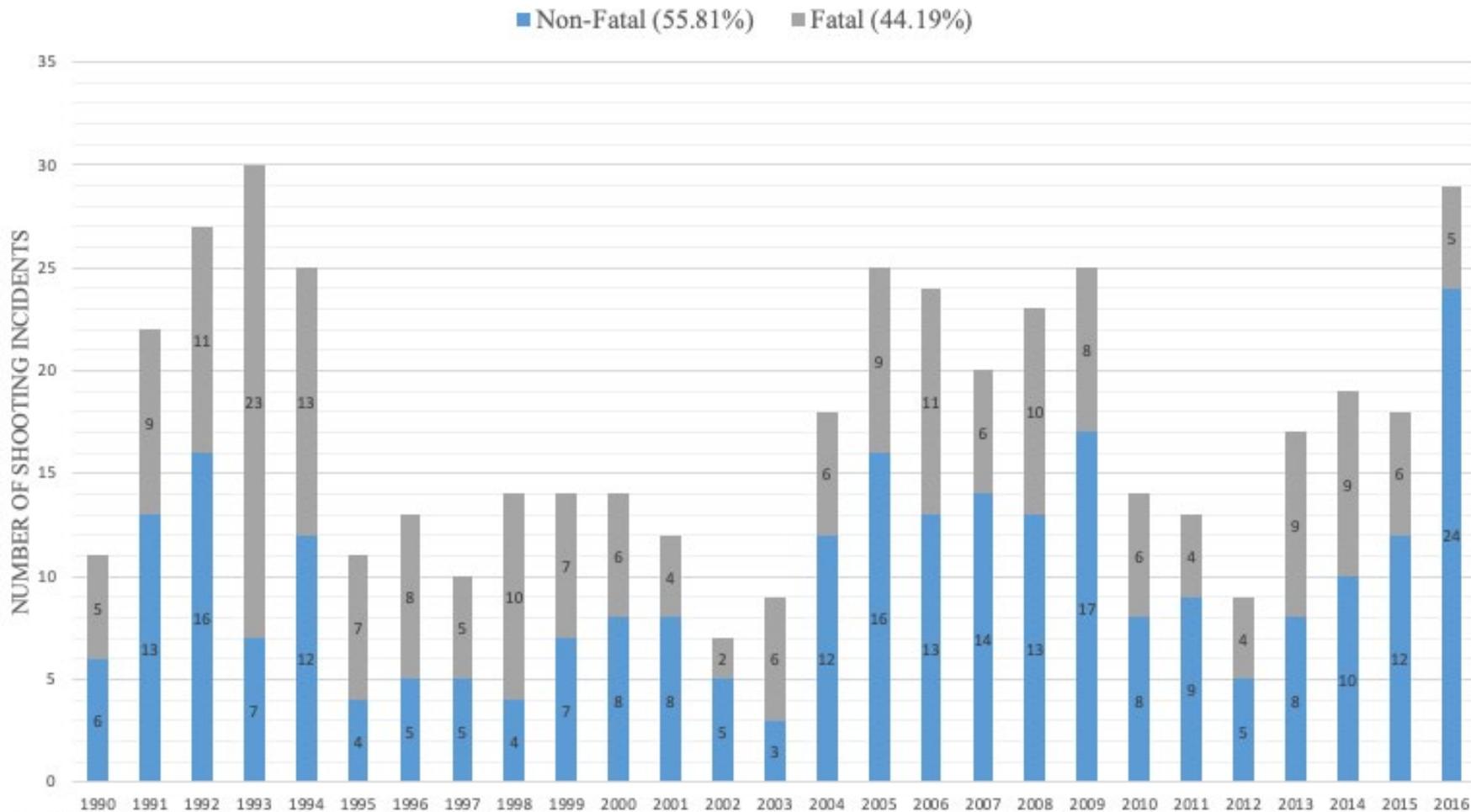


Figure 4. Yearly Prevalence of Intentional U.S. School Shootings, 1990-2016
(n=473)

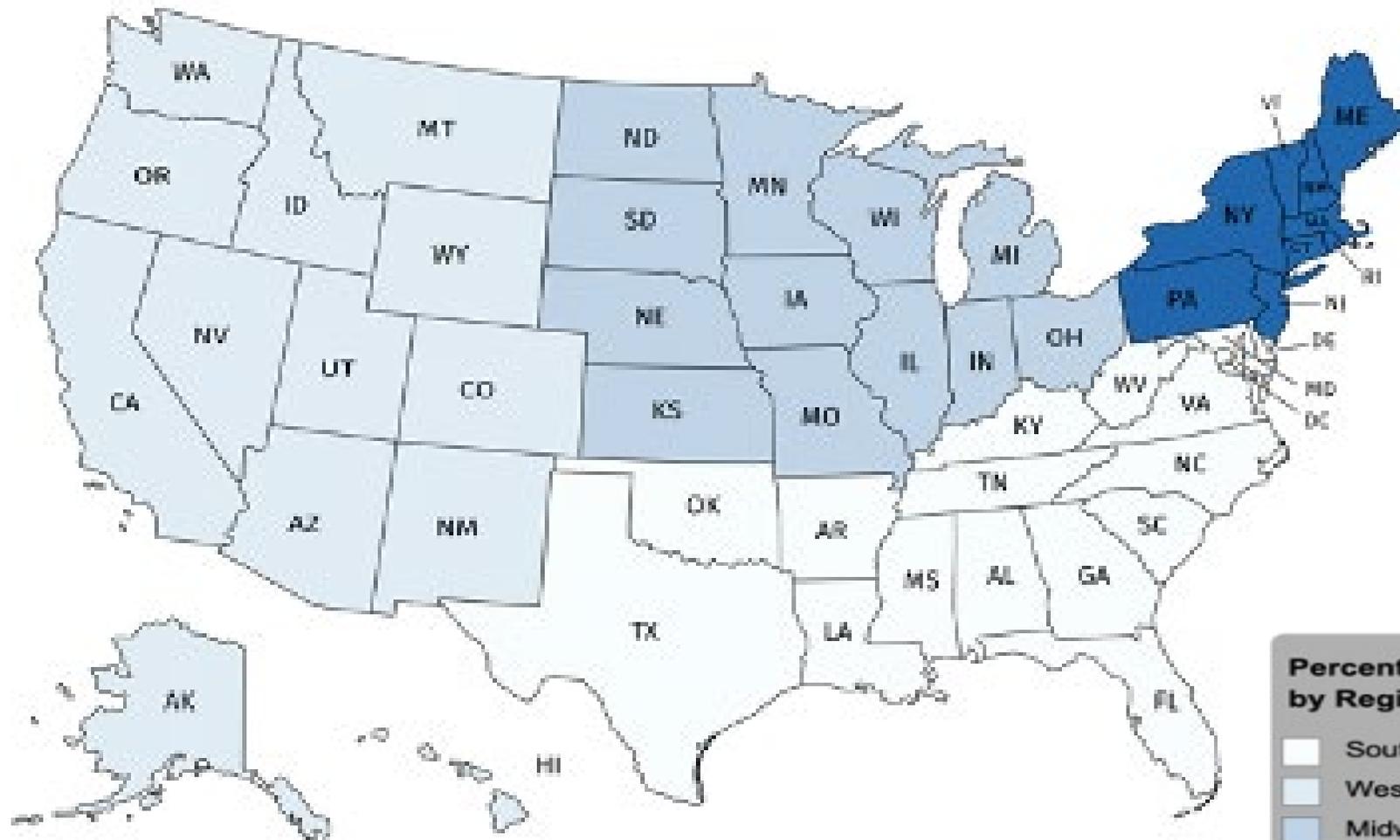


SOURCE: THE AMERICAN SCHOOL SHOOTING STUDY (TASSS) V1.0

Figure 5. Yearly Prevalence of Intentional U.S. School Shootings by Fatal & Non-Fatal Encounters, 1990-2016 (n=473)



SOURCE: THE AMERICAN SCHOOL SHOOTING STUDY (TASSS) V1.0



Percentage of School Shootings by Region

White	South (43.23%)
Very Light Blue	West (23.44%)
Light Blue	Midwest (21.00%)
Dark Blue	Northeast (12.33%)

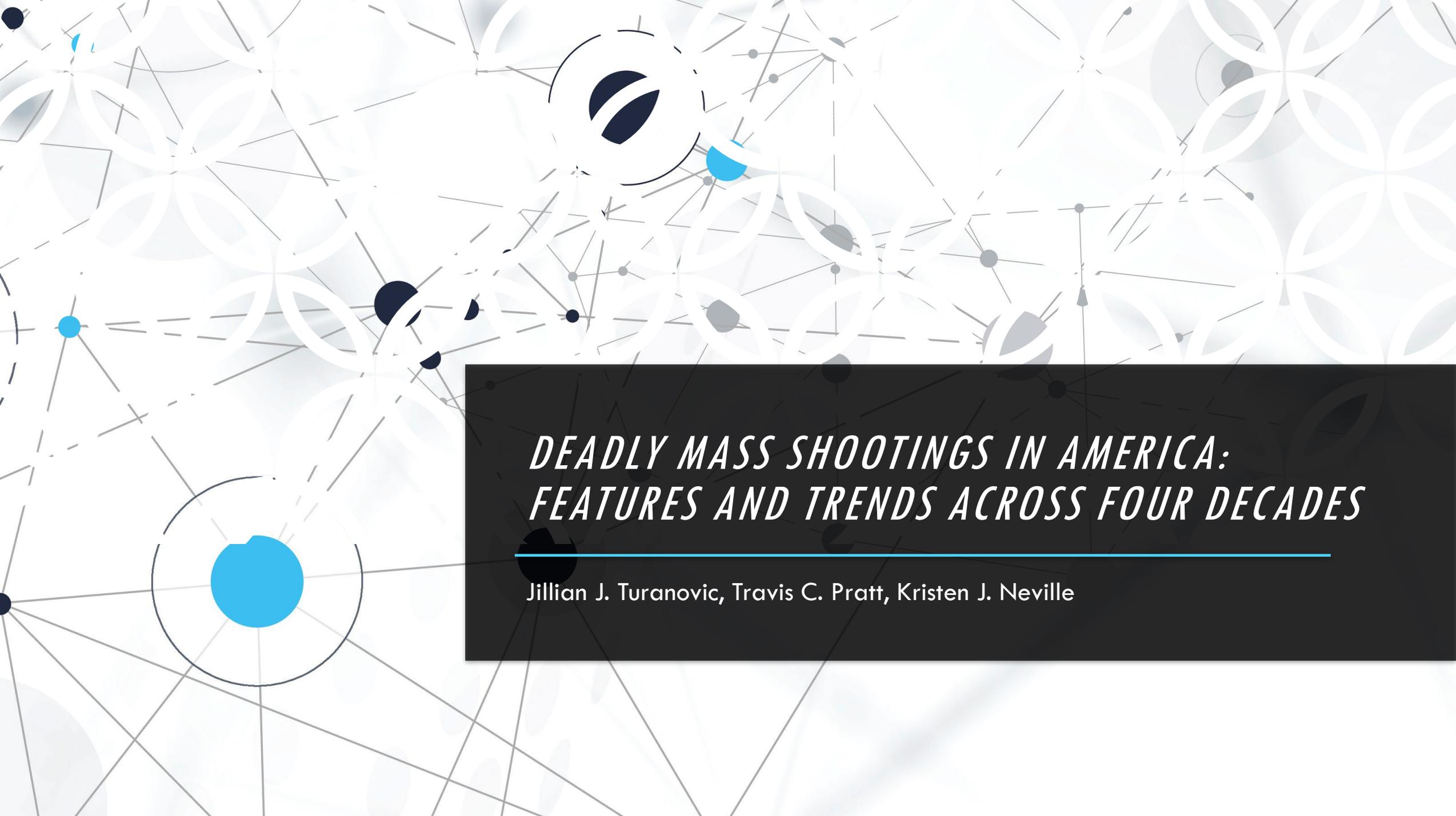
Table 2. Characteristics of Adolescent and Adult School Shooters

Variables	Adolescent (N 250)	Adult (N 102)
<u>Severity</u>		
Fatal	116/46.4%	65/63.7%
Non Fatal	134/53.6%	37/36.3%
<u>Number of Mass Shootings</u>		
+3 Fatal Victims	8/3.2%	3/2.9%
+4 Fatal Victims	4/1.6%	3/2.9%
<u>Location</u>		
Inside School	105/42.0%	29/28.4%
Outside School	145/58.0%	73/71.6%
<u>Timing</u>		
During School Hours	108/43.2%	28/27.5%
Before/After School Hours	142/56.8%	74/72.5%
<u>Student Status</u>		
Current Student	142/56.8%	N/A

SCP/Case Study Results

- SCP Findings

 - 5% Metal Detectors
 - 45% School Guards/Officers
 - 27% Barriers
 - 70% Limited Access
- Criminal Opportunities
 - Easy Access to School
 - Access to Gun
- Leakage
 - Number leaked
 - Time to Shooting
 - Response



*DEADLY MASS SHOOTINGS IN AMERICA:
FEATURES AND TRENDS ACROSS FOUR DECADES*

Jillian J. Turanovic, Travis C. Pratt, Kristen J. Neville

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Kristen J. Neville – Project Manager

Dr. Travis C. Pratt – Co-Principal Investigator

Undergraduate and graduate students at Florida State University

This project was supported by Award No. 2018-75-CX-0024, awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this presentation are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department of Justice.

DEADLY MASS SHOOTINGS

- Have emerged as one of the most prominent social problems in contemporary America
- Such events continue to rise toward the top of U.S. citizens' list of pressing concerns



REASONABLY SCARED

Mass shootings are Americans' fastest rising fear

By Dan Kopf • October 31, 2018

Mass Public Shootings Are on the Rise

Politics • Analysis

The frequency of high-fatality mass shootings has increased significantly

HEALTH

Mass Shootings in America Are Spreading Like a Disease

If it seems like the shooting mass murder can catch on

DEREK THOMPSON NOV 6, 2017

NEWS

Mass shootings like Dayton, El Paso, Gilroy more than doubled since Columbine

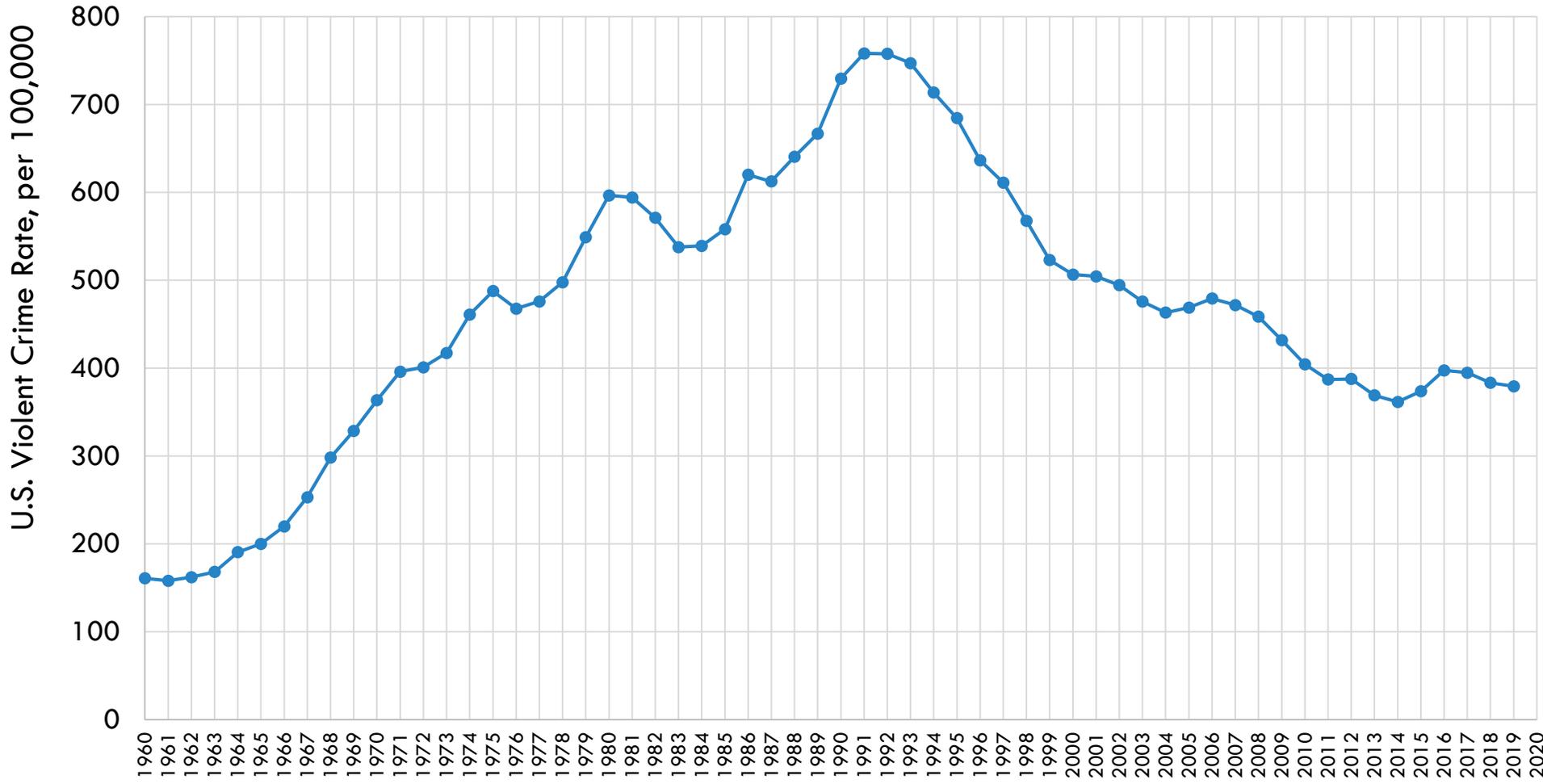
Mass shooting still rare but increasing with alarming frequency

Mass shootings 'increasing' and pose 'most serious threat' in US, expert says

At least 59 people have been killed as a result of mass shootings this year.

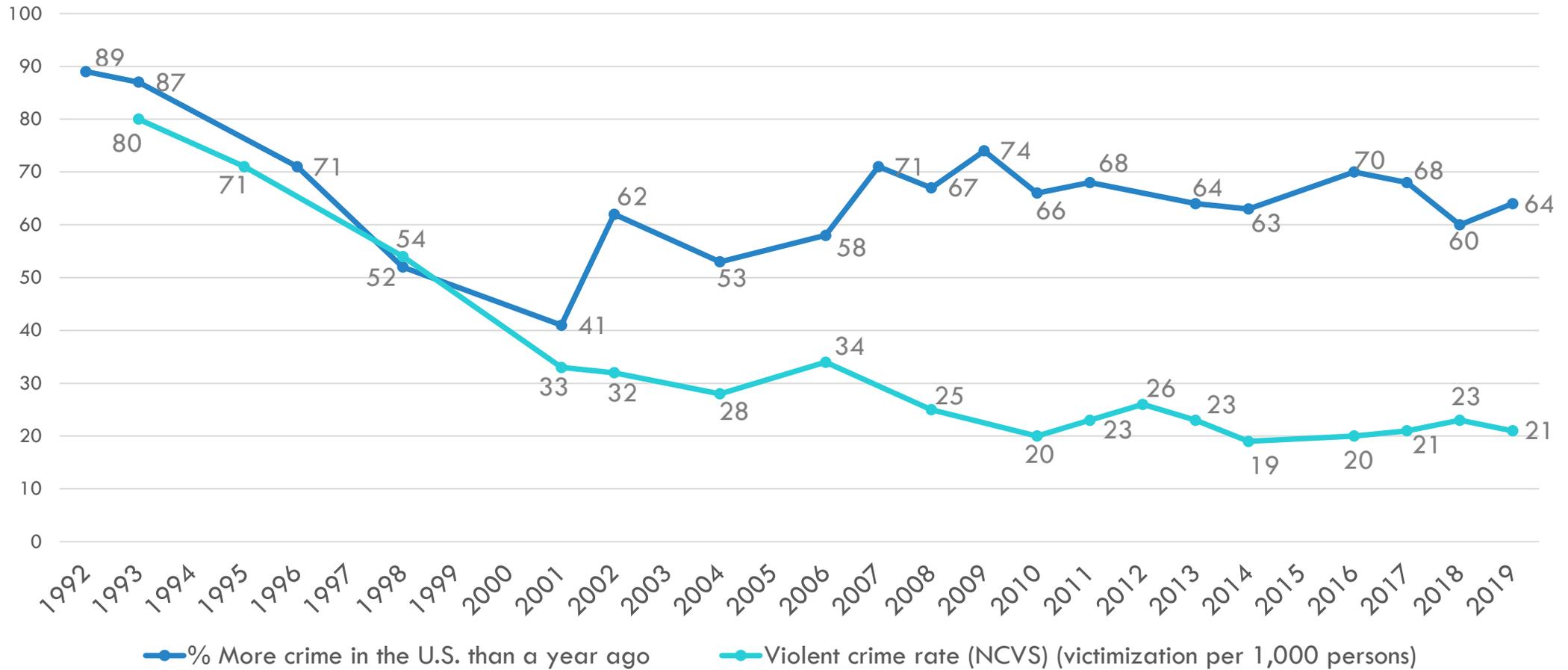
Reality is that violent crime (and murders) were higher in 80s & 90s

- 2014 regarded as the “safest year in modern history” (Sharkey, 2018)



Crime in the United States, UCR 1960-2019.
Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program.

PERCEPTIONS VS. REALITY



Sources: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 1992-2019; Gallup Annual Crime Poll, 2019.

MASS CONFUSION

- Have little in the way of a shared definition with respect to mass shootings
- Existing databases on mass shootings paint very different pictures of the problem

MASS CONFUSION

Mother Jones Mass Shootings Database (1982-present):

- Lists 10 incidents in 2019
- Shootings where three fatalities occurred
- Selective about what is included (no gang, felony, family, or private)
- Unreliable data in earlier years

• Gun Violence Archive (2013-present):

- Lists 416 mass shootings in 2019
- Four or more shot and/or killed in a single event, not including the shooter
- Includes everything - fatal and nonfatal incidents

MASS CONFUSION

- **FBI Active Shooter Data (2000-2019):**
 - Fatal and nonfatal incidents
 - Selective about what is included
 - 1 incident recorded in 2000; 28 in 2019
- **FBI Supplemental Homicide Reports (1976-2019):**
 - Several crimes mischaracterized as mass killings
 - Several cases handled by federal agencies not included
 - Not all jurisdictions report; cases missing even in jurisdictions that do

MASS CONFUSION

- There is no comprehensive, public, centralized knowledge base on deadly mass shooting incidents over time
- Difficult to determine the nature and extent of the mass shooting problem

CURRENT PROJECT

- Build a comprehensive database of deadly mass shootings
- Assess the key individual, situational, and contextual features of all deadly mass shootings in America between 1980-2019
- Goal is to improve the understanding of mass shooters and mass shooting incidents to develop data-informed policies

CURRENT PROJECT

Four or more victims killed by firearm (not including the shooter) in one event, in one location

- All deadly mass shootings, in public and private spaces
- Capture a host of data points (100+) on each incident
- Media reports, existing data, FBI reports, police files, court records, and other public records
- Data will be made publicly available upon completion of the project

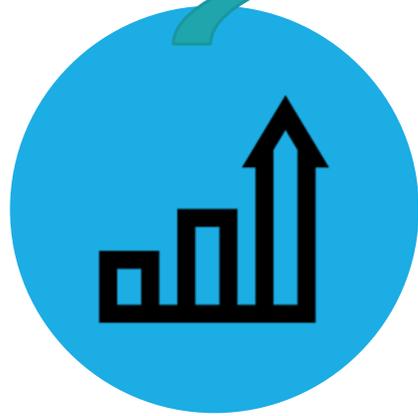
CURRENT PROJECT

- Three main phases:
 1. Identify all deadly mass shootings
 2. Gather extensive information on each incident
 3. Code each incident according to a host of characteristics

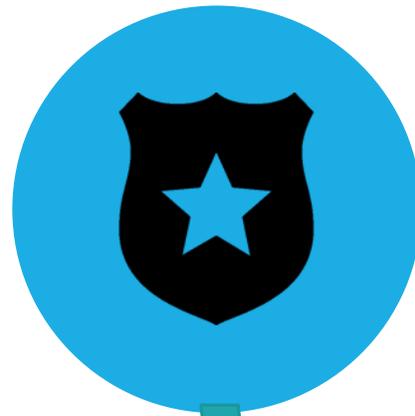
WORK IN

PROGRESS

DATA COLLECTION: LOCATING INCIDENTS



EXISTING REPORTS
AND DATA ON MASS
SHOOTINGS



LOCAL, STATE, AND
NATIONAL HOMICIDE
REPORTS, COURT
RECORDS



NEWS MEDIA
REPORTS

Incident in existing mass shooting dataset/report



Official homicide report/court file



News media reports



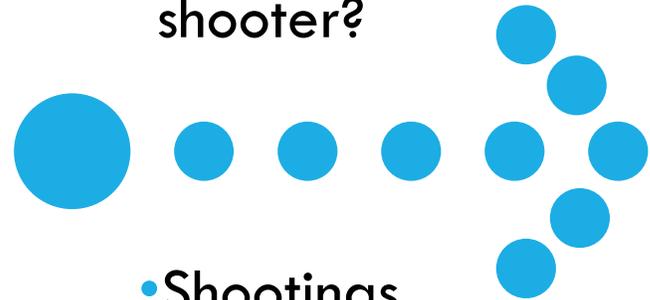
Leads from online searches



VERIFY INCIDENT
(additional news reports, case files, court records)

• 4 or more shot and killed, not including the shooter?

• Shootings happened on the same day?



Include in our dataset

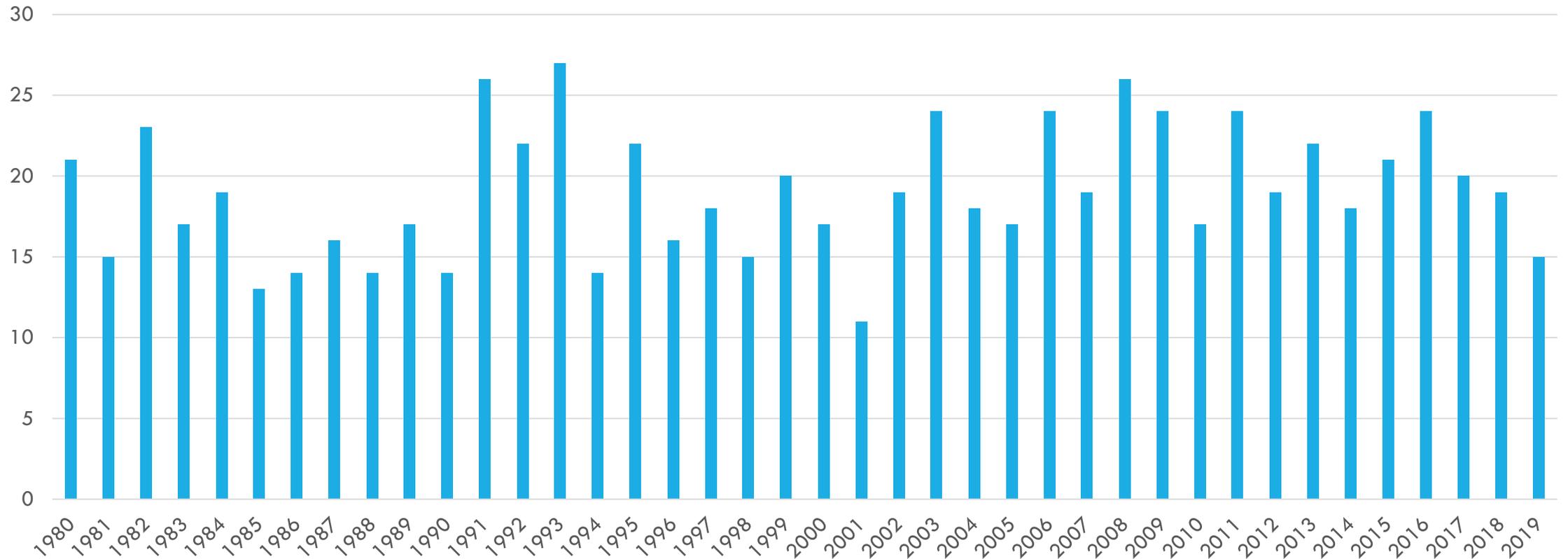
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

Verified 761 deadly mass shootings

- Only incidents where 4+ victims were shot and killed within 24 hours
- Did not exclude any incidents based on motive or location
- Mass shootings in public *and* private spaces
- ***What does the overall trend in mass shootings look like over time?***

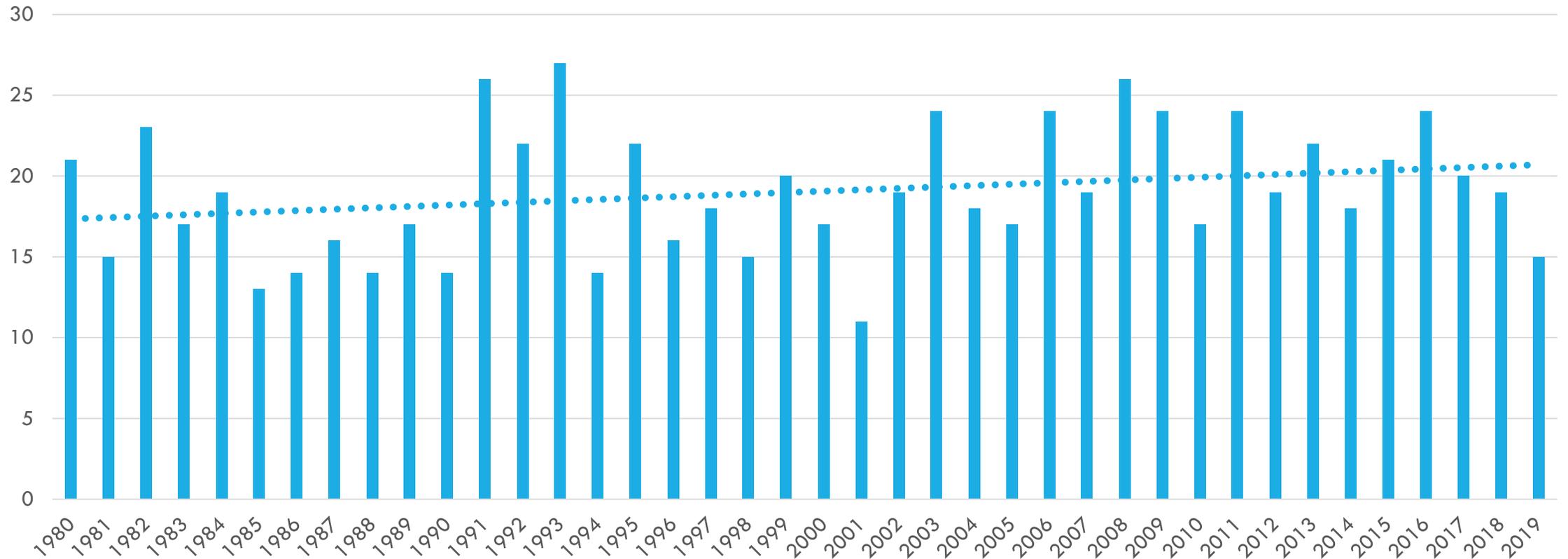
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

DEADLY MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



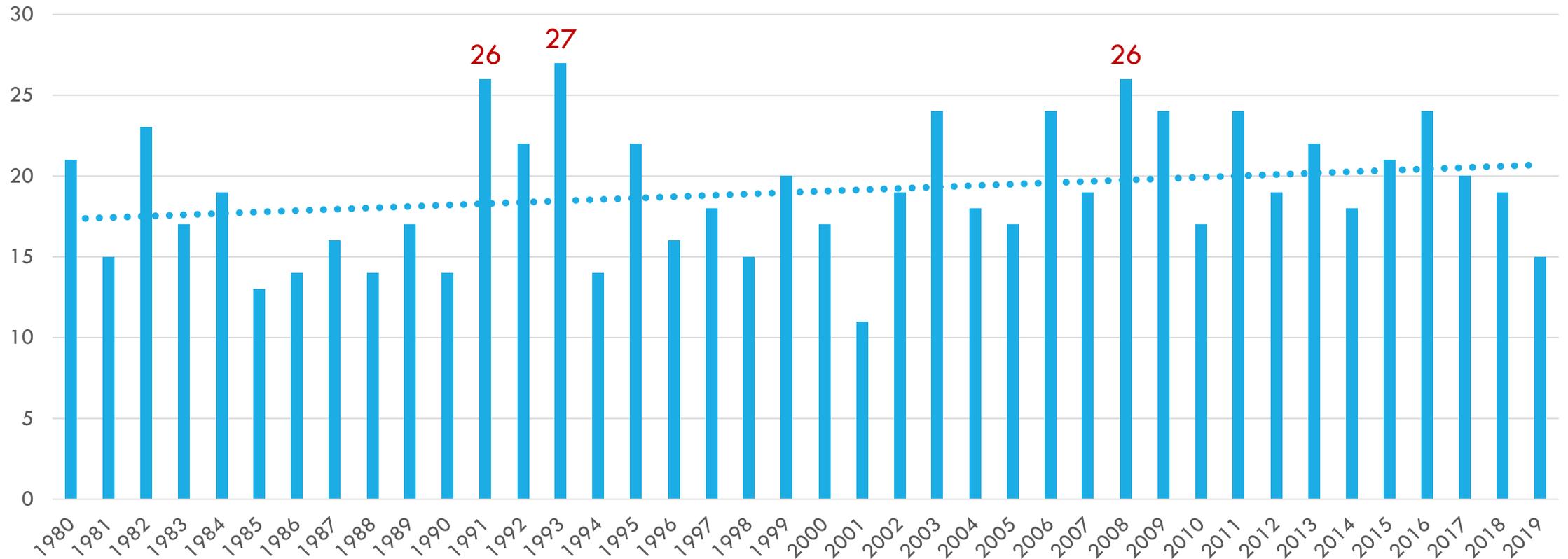
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

DEADLY MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



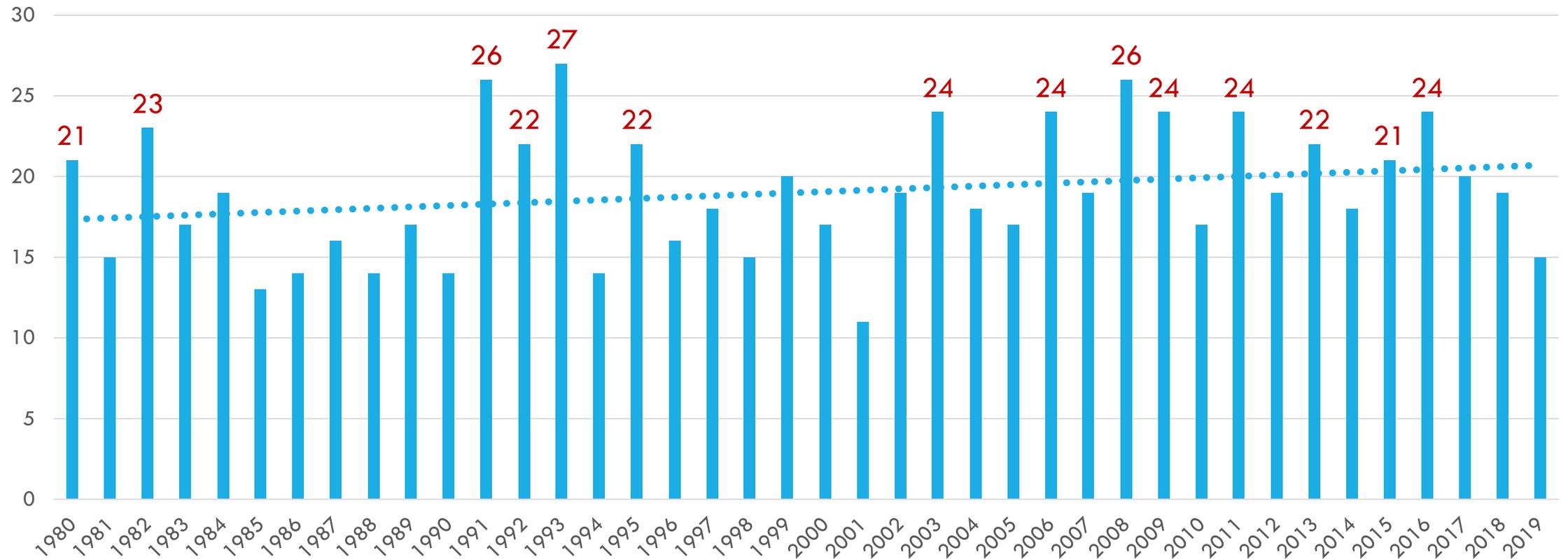
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

DEADLY MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



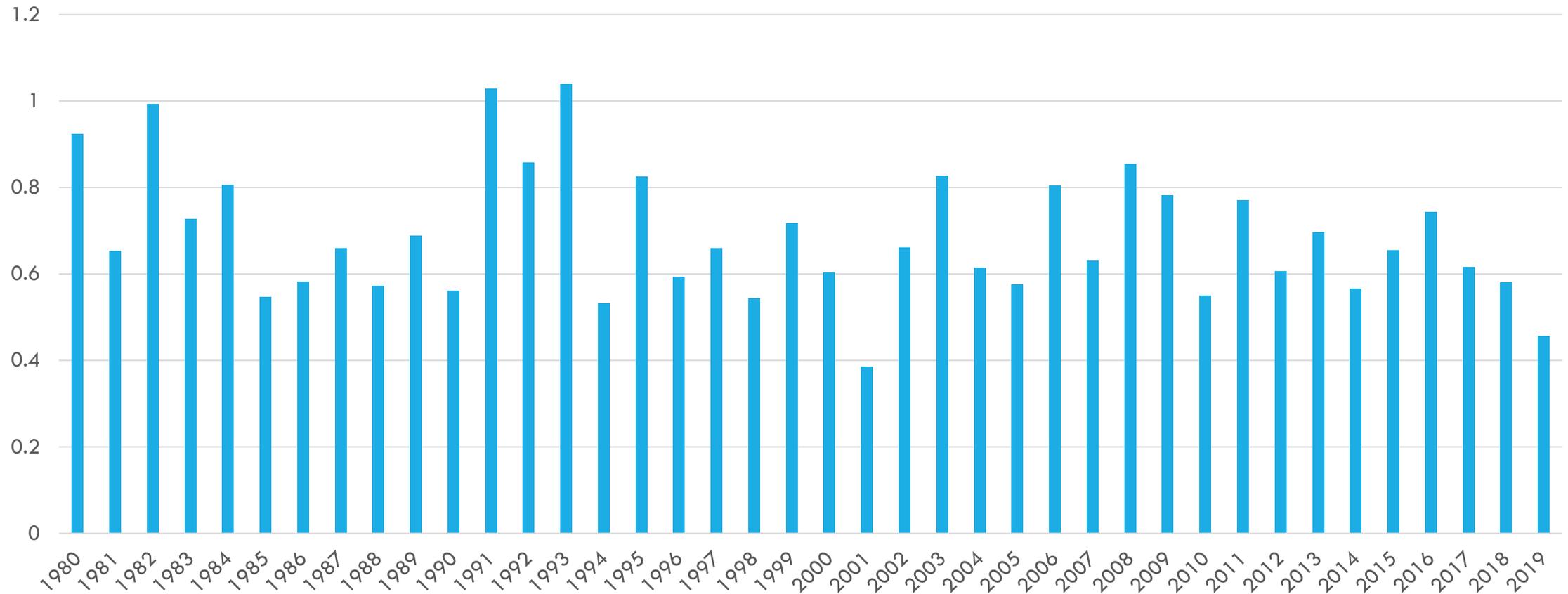
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

DEADLY MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



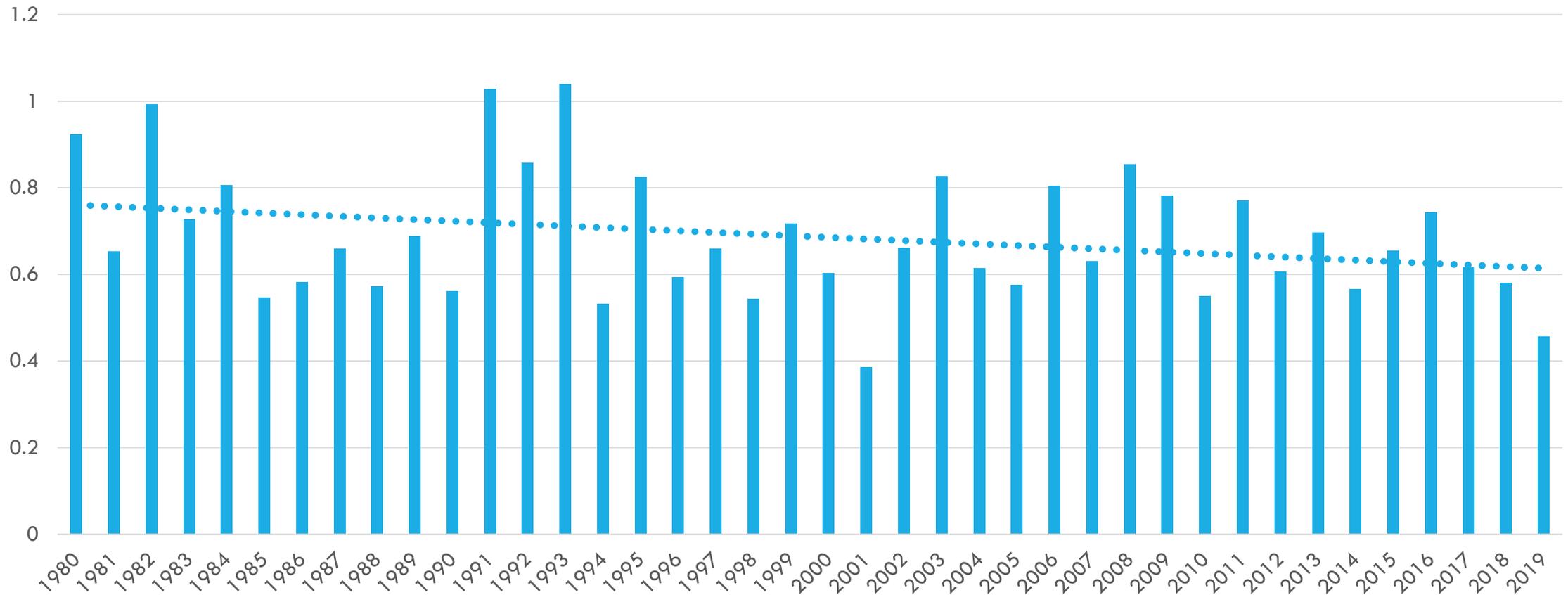
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

RATE OF MASS SHOOTINGS (PER 10 MILLION PERSONS)



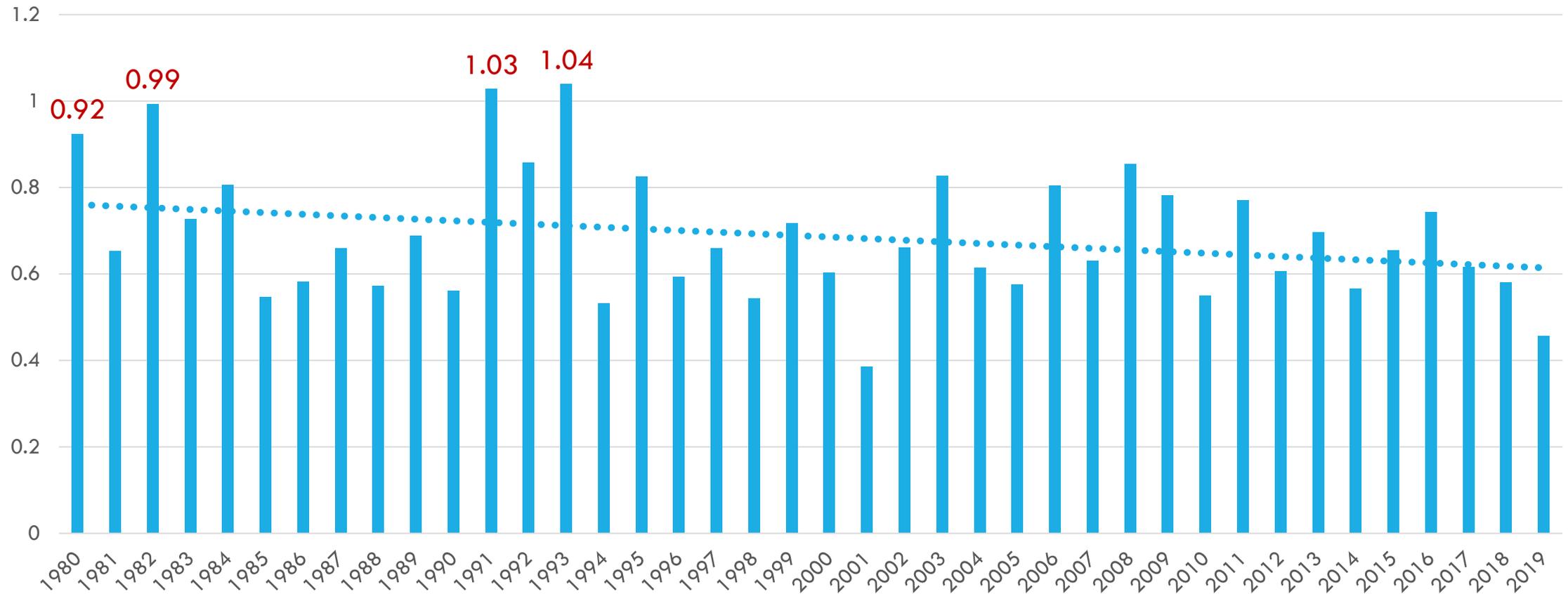
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

RATE OF MASS SHOOTINGS (PER 10 MILLION PERSONS)



DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

RATE OF MASS SHOOTINGS (PER 10 MILLION PERSONS)

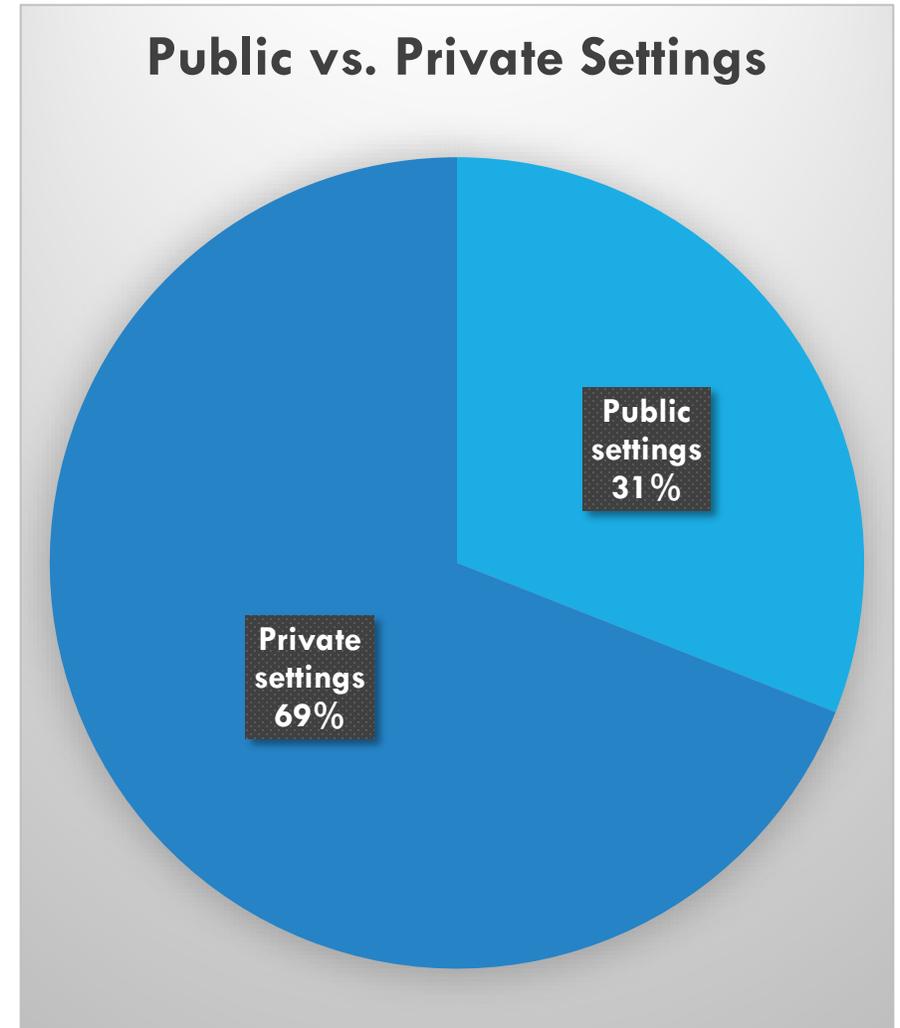


DATA THUS FAR: 1980- 2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings

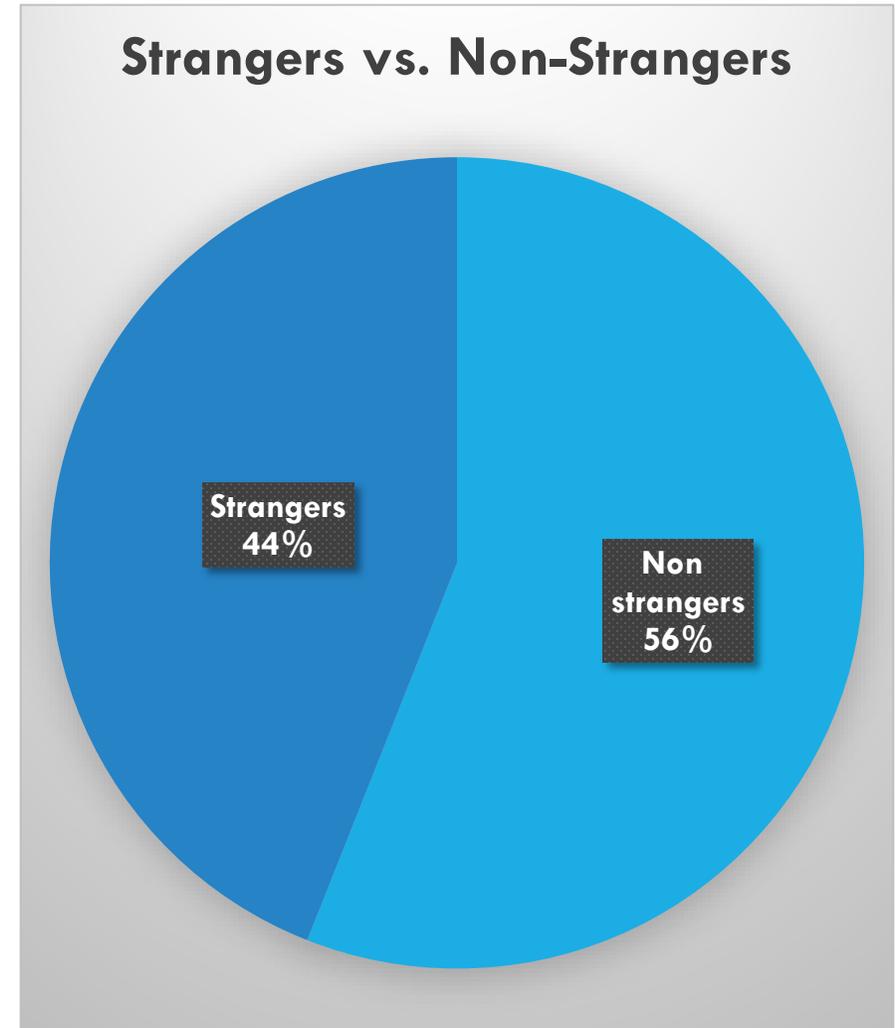
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings
 - **Majority occur in private settings (69%)**



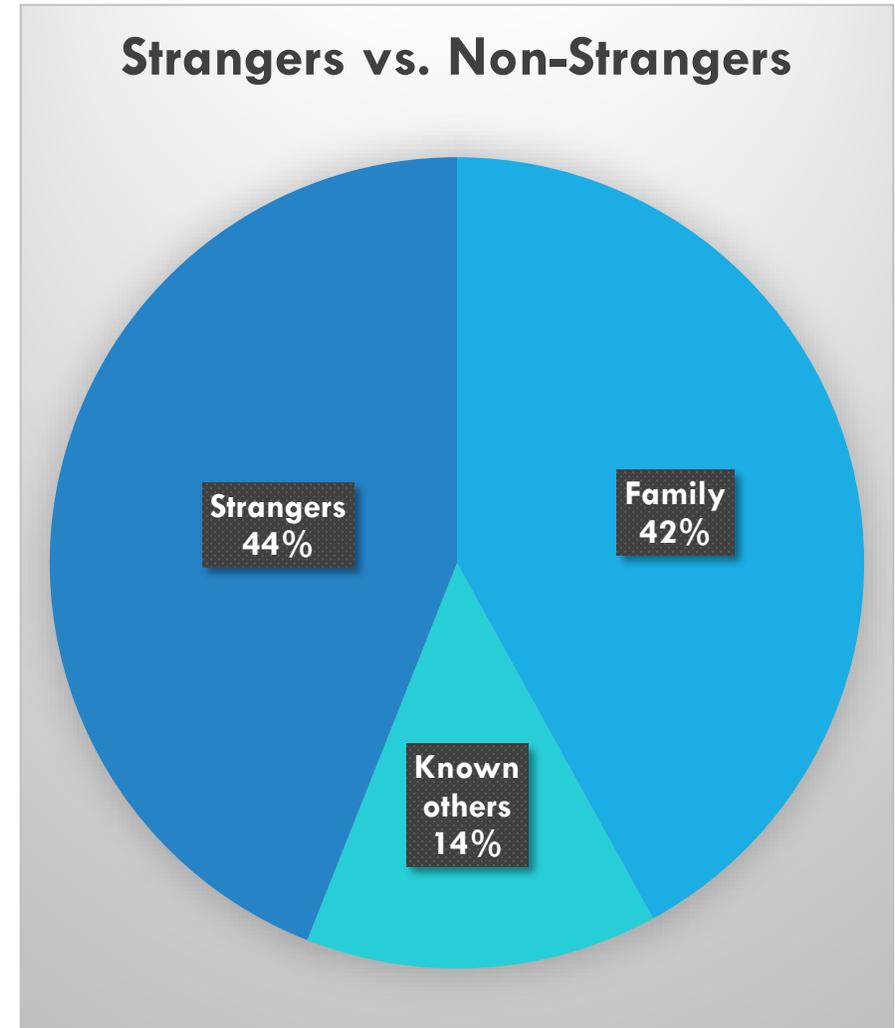
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings
 - **Majority occur in private settings (69%)**
 - **Majority involve non-strangers (56%)**



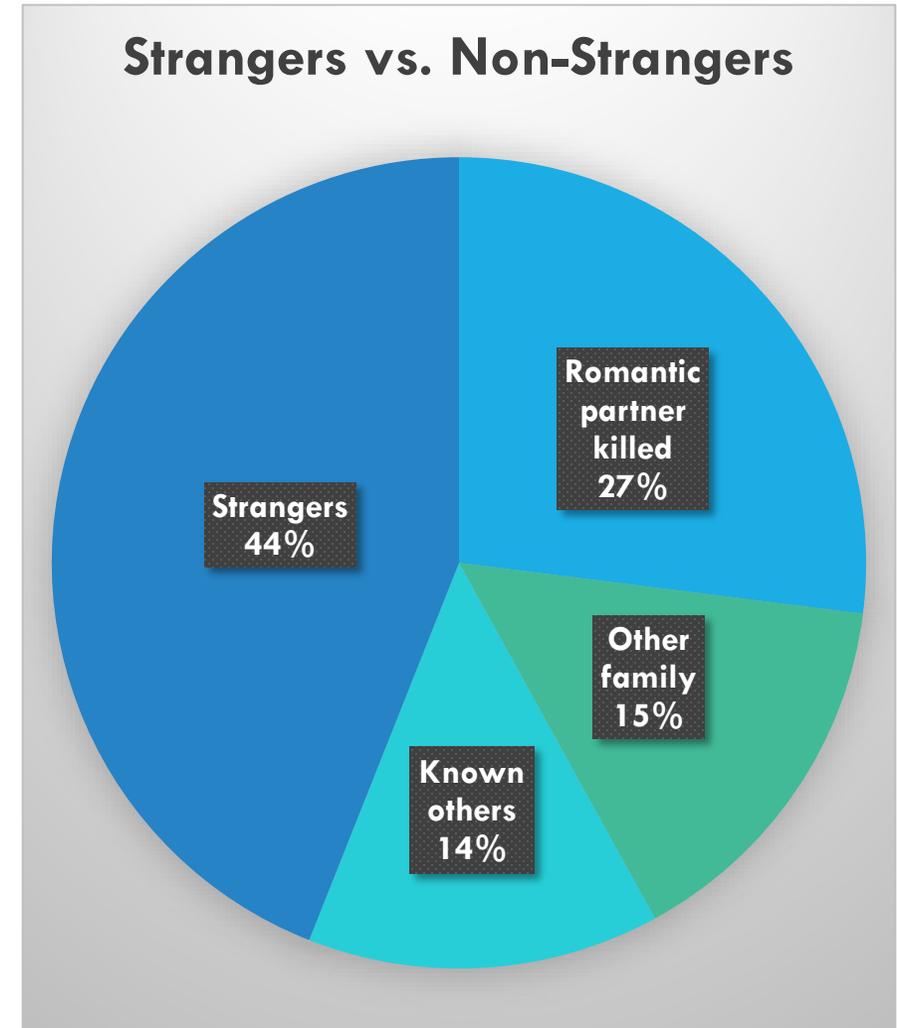
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings
 - **Majority occur in private settings (69%)**
 - **Majority involve non-strangers (56%)**
 - 42% involve family
 - 14% known (friends, co-workers, neighbors)



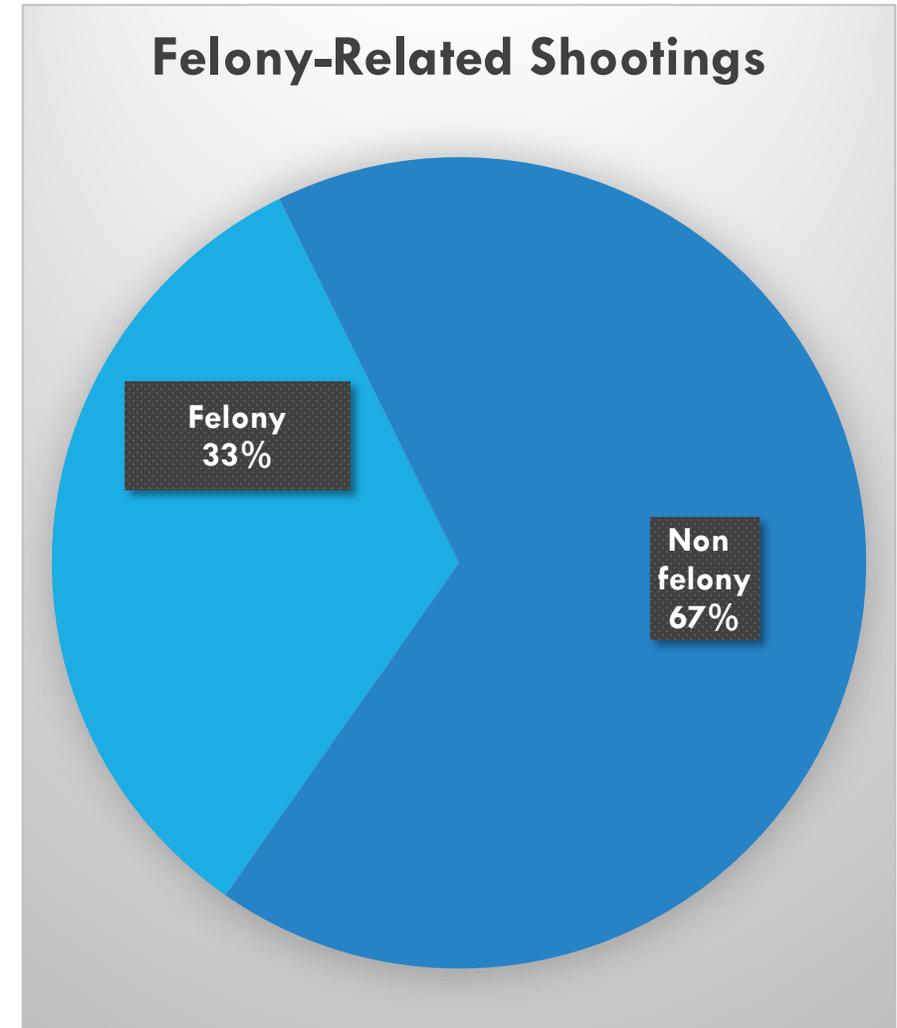
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings
 - Majority occur in private settings (69%)
 - Majority involve non-strangers (56%)
 - 42% involve family
 - 14% known (friends, co-workers, neighbors)
 - Romantic partner killed (27%)



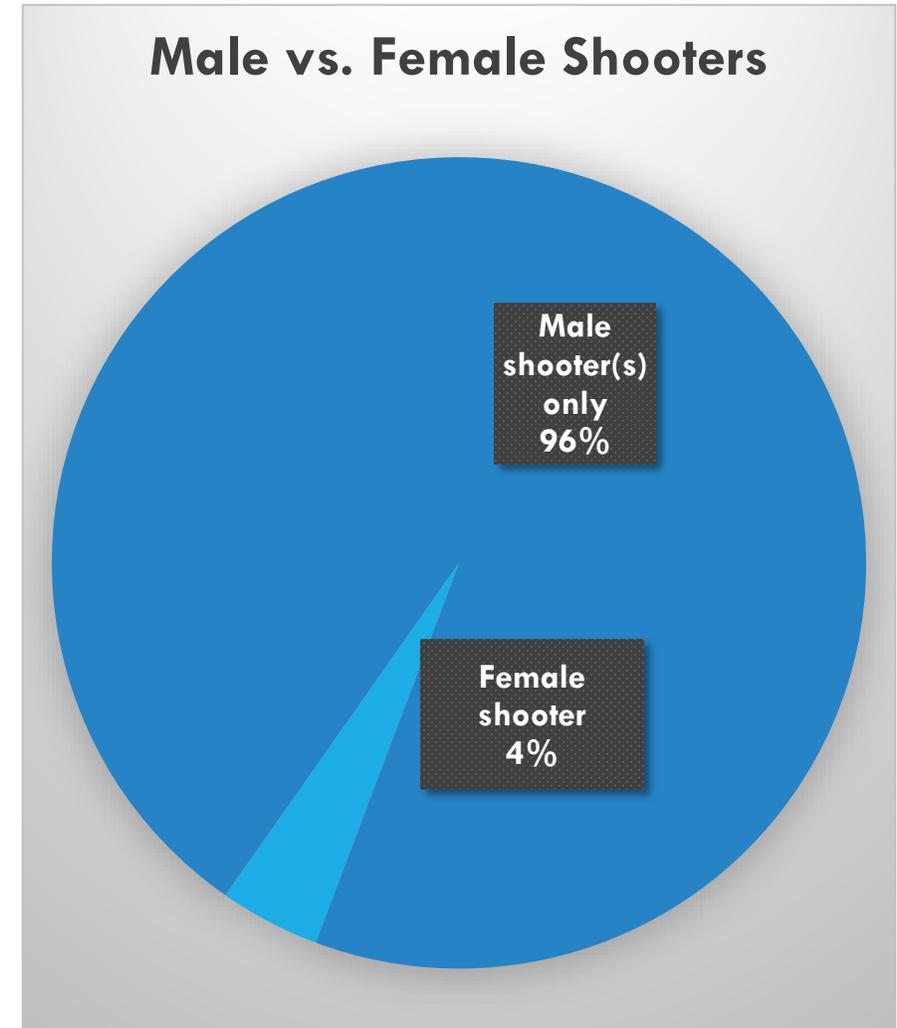
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings
 - **Majority occur in private settings (69%)**
 - **Majority involve non-strangers (56%)**
 - 42% involve family
 - 14% known (friends, co-workers, neighbors)
 - **Romantic partner killed (27%)**
 - **One-third of shootings felony-related (33%)**



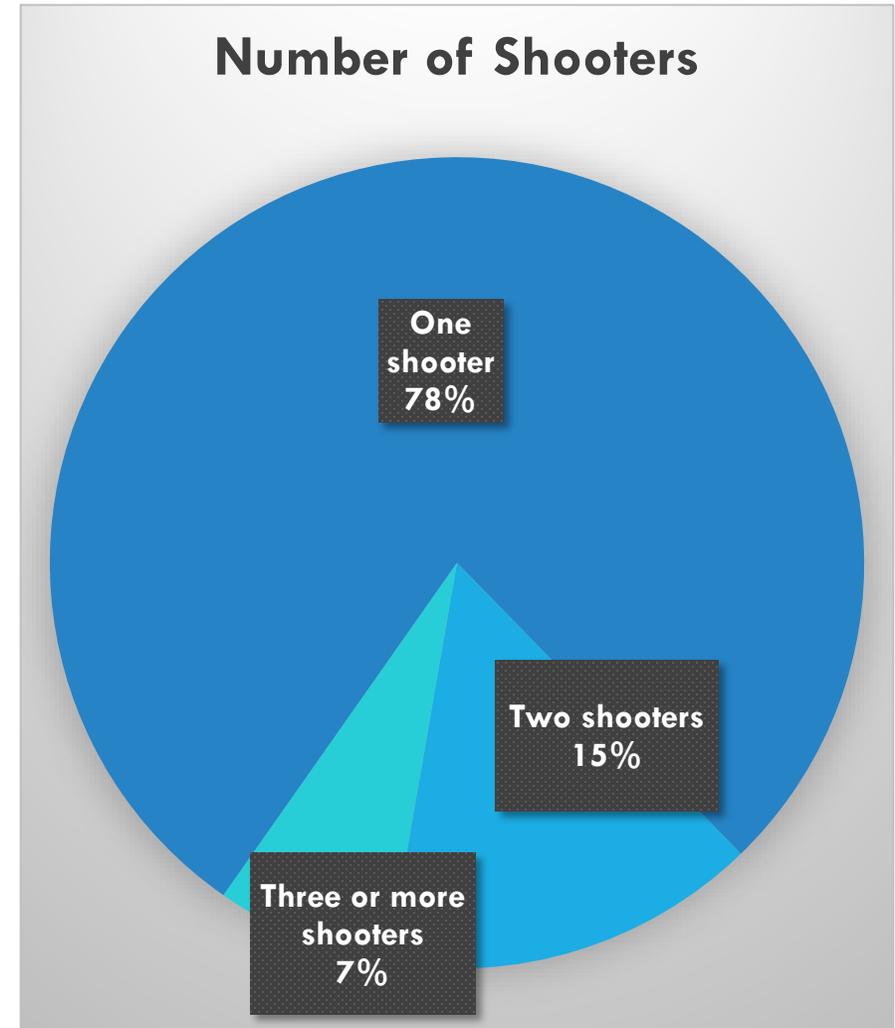
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings
 - **Majority occur in private settings (69%)**
 - **Majority involve non-strangers (56%)**
 - 42% involve family
 - 14% known (friends, co-workers, neighbors)
 - **Romantic partner killed (27%)**
 - **One-third of shootings felony-related (33%)**
 - **Female shooters rare (4%)**



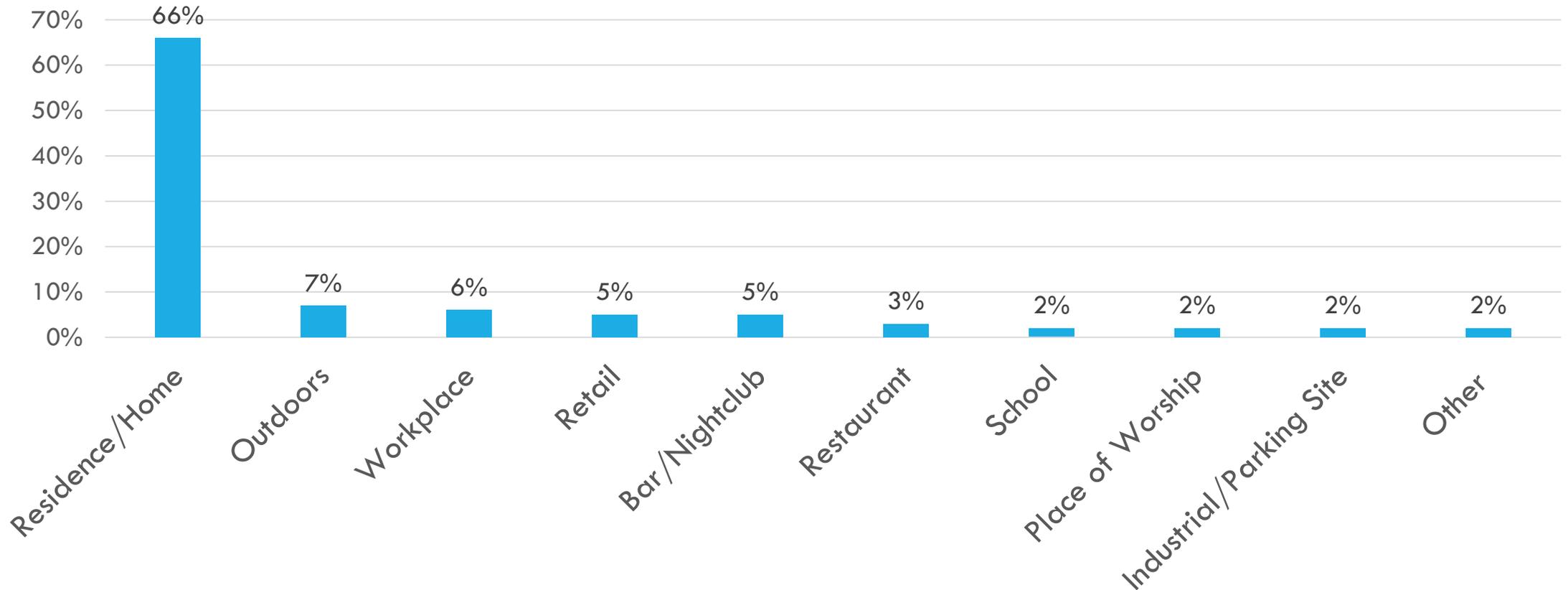
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Verified 761 deadly mass shootings
 - **Majority occur in private settings (69%)**
 - **Majority involve non-strangers (56%)**
 - 42% involve family
 - 14% known (friends, co-workers, neighbors)
 - **Romantic partner killed (27%)**
 - **One-third of shootings felony-related (33%)**
 - **Female shooters rare (4%)**
 - **Majority lone shooters (78%)**



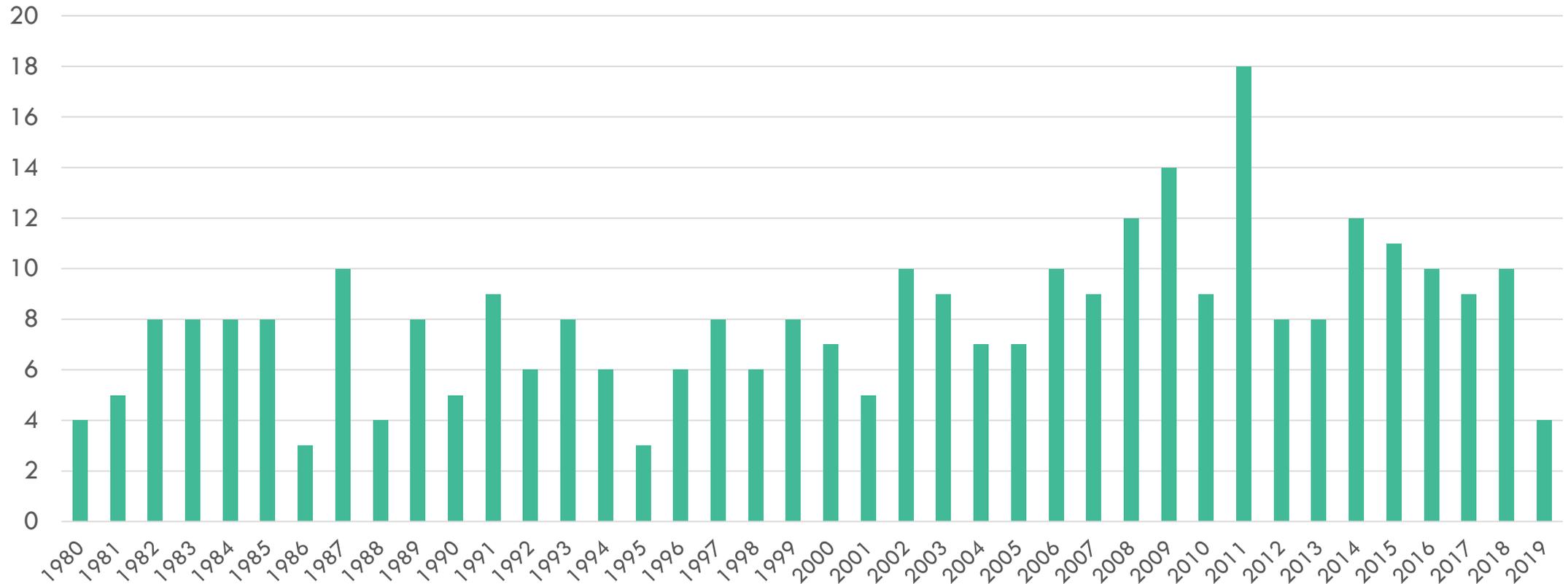
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

PRIMARY LOCATION OF MASS SHOOTING



DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

FAMILY-RELATED MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

FAMILY-RELATED MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



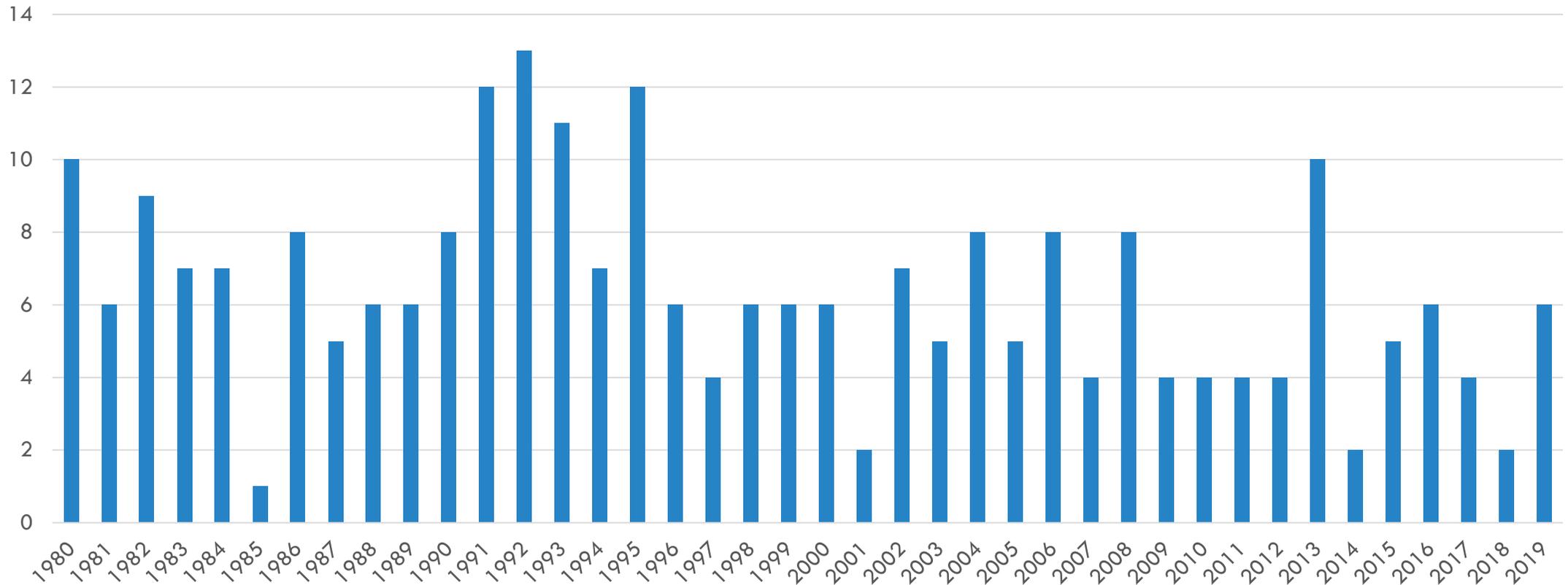
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

FAMILY-RELATED MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



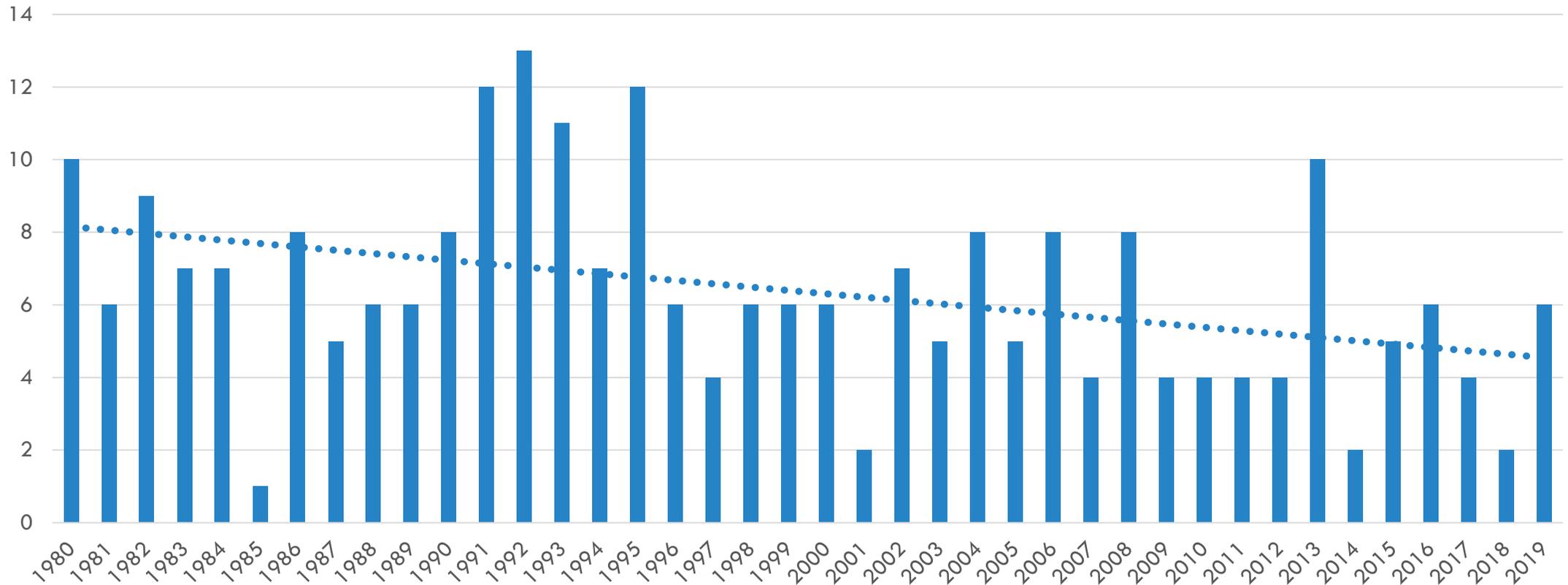
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

FELONY-RELATED/OTHER MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



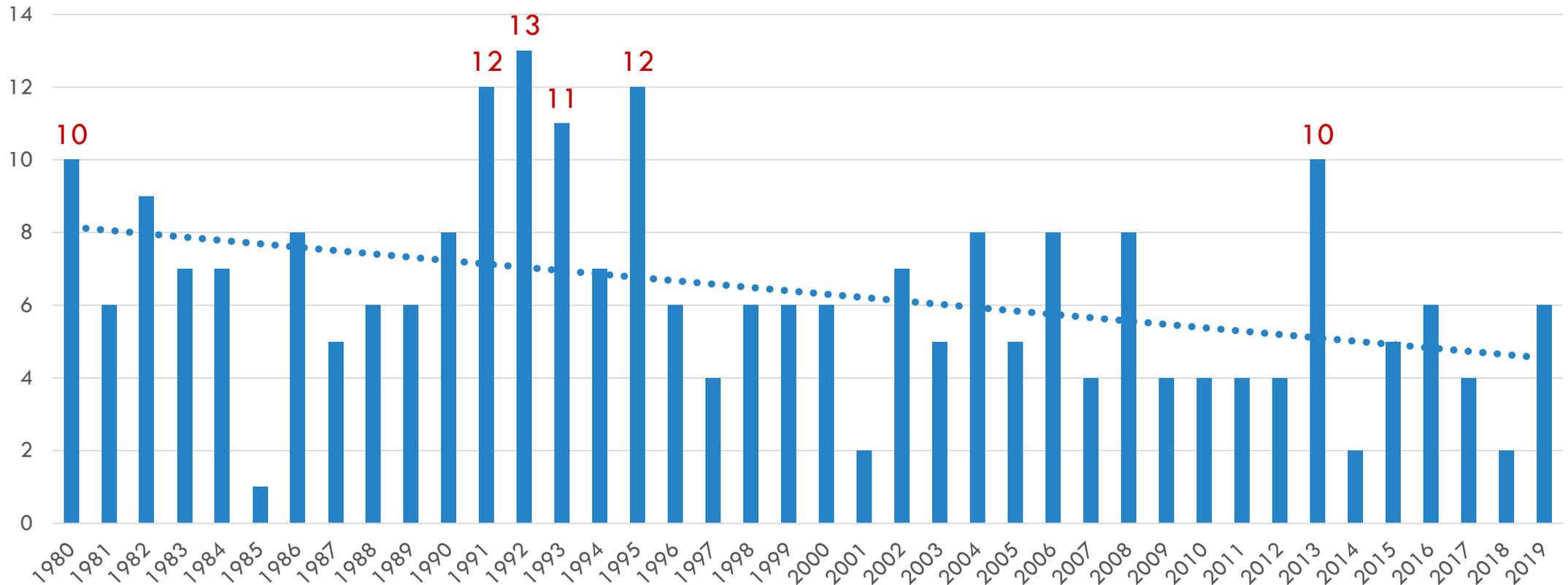
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

FELONY-RELATED/OTHER MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



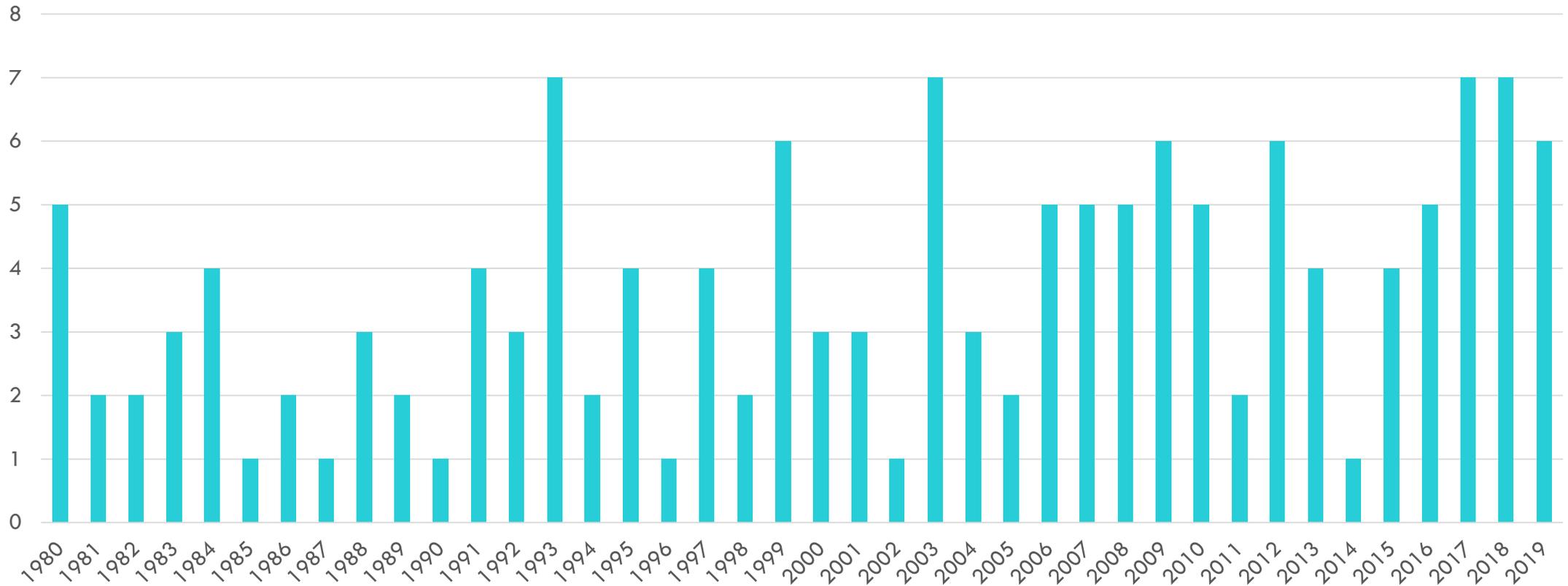
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

FELONY-RELATED/OTHER MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



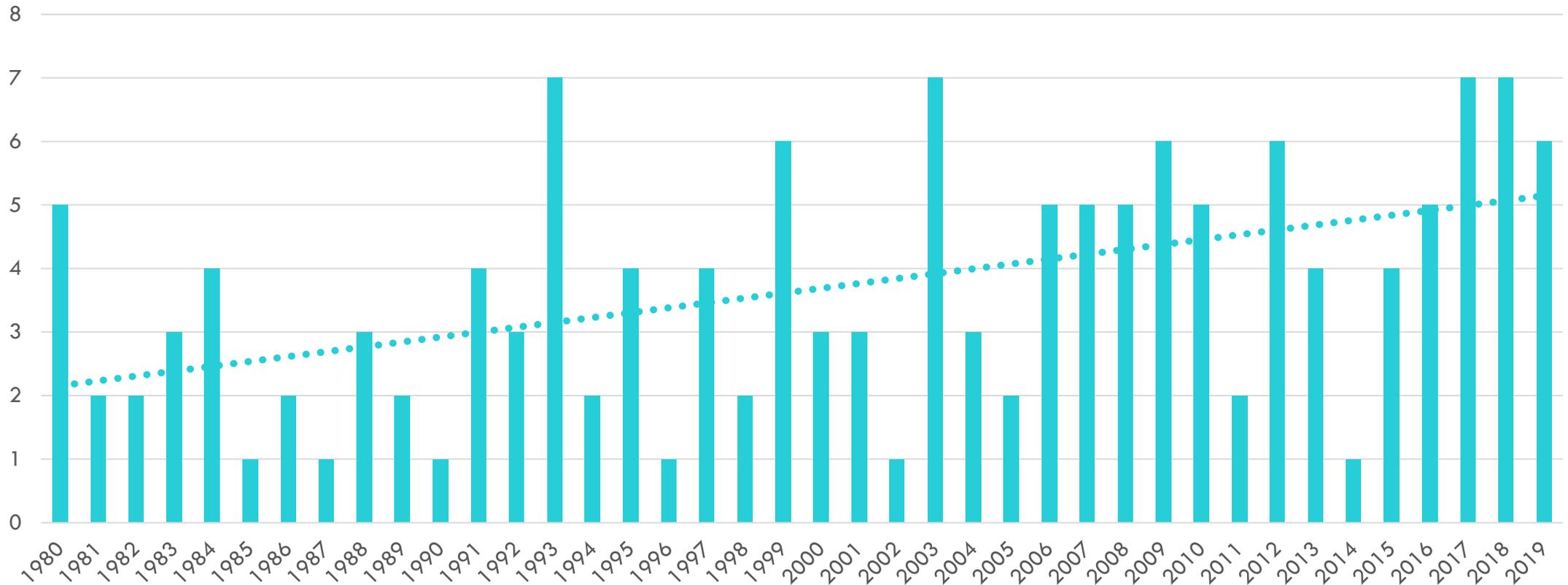
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

PUBLIC MASS SHOOTINGS (NON-FAMILY, NON-FELONY) (RAW COUNTS)



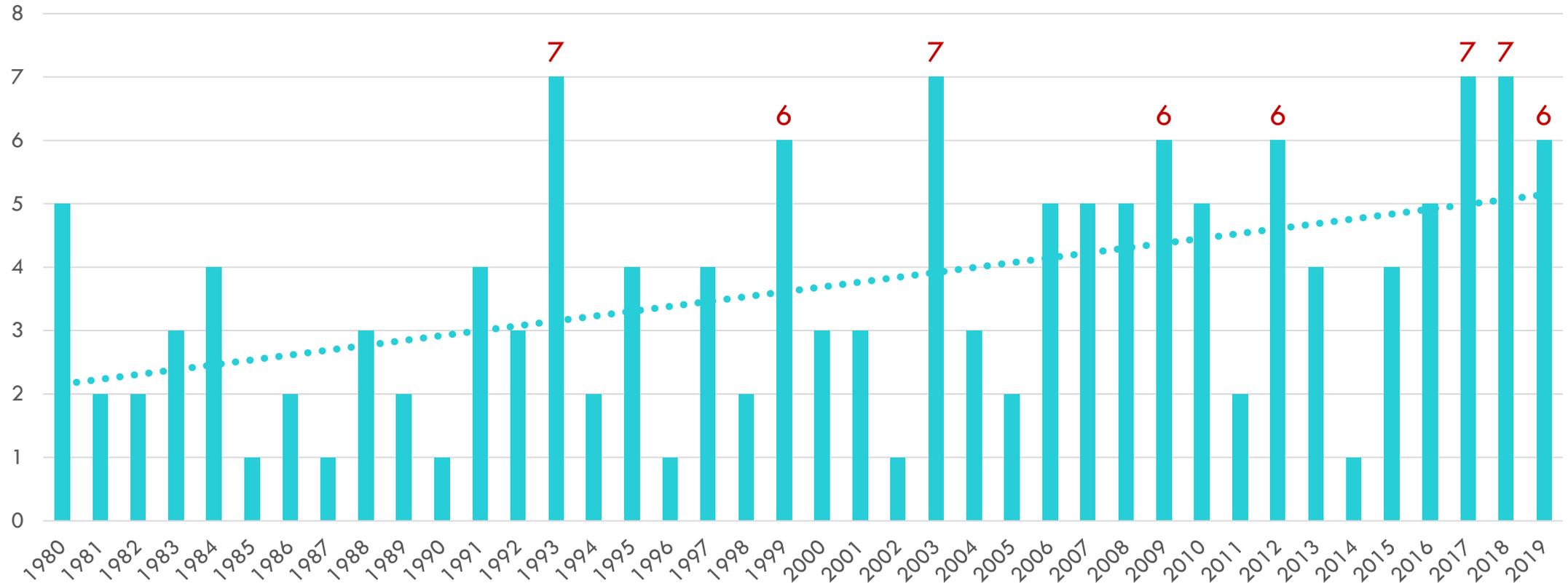
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

PUBLIC MASS SHOOTINGS (NON-FAMILY, NON-FELONY) (RAW COUNTS)



DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

PUBLIC MASS SHOOTINGS (NON-FAMILY, NON-FELONY) (RAW COUNTS)

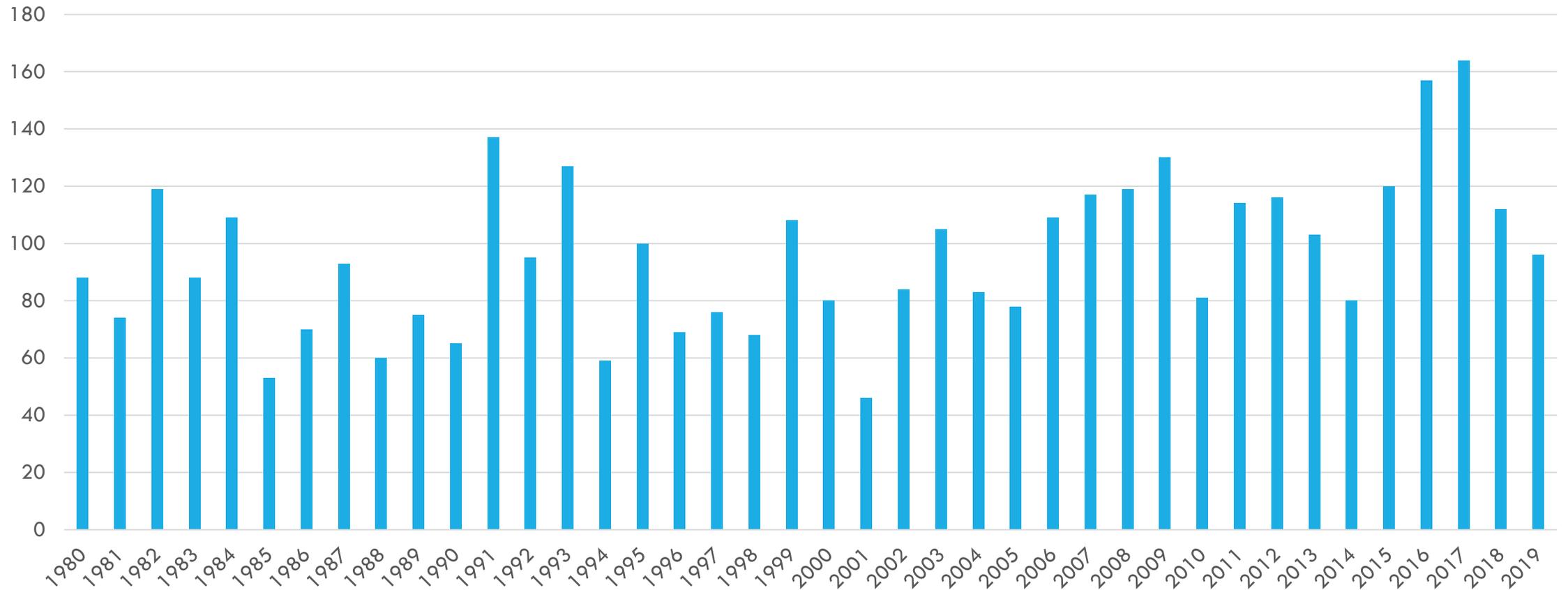


DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

- Number of victims killed per year ranges from 46-164
- Deadliest incidents happened in recent years
 - 06/12/2016: Orlando (49)
 - 10/01/2017: Las Vegas (58)
- ***Are mass shootings becoming deadlier?***

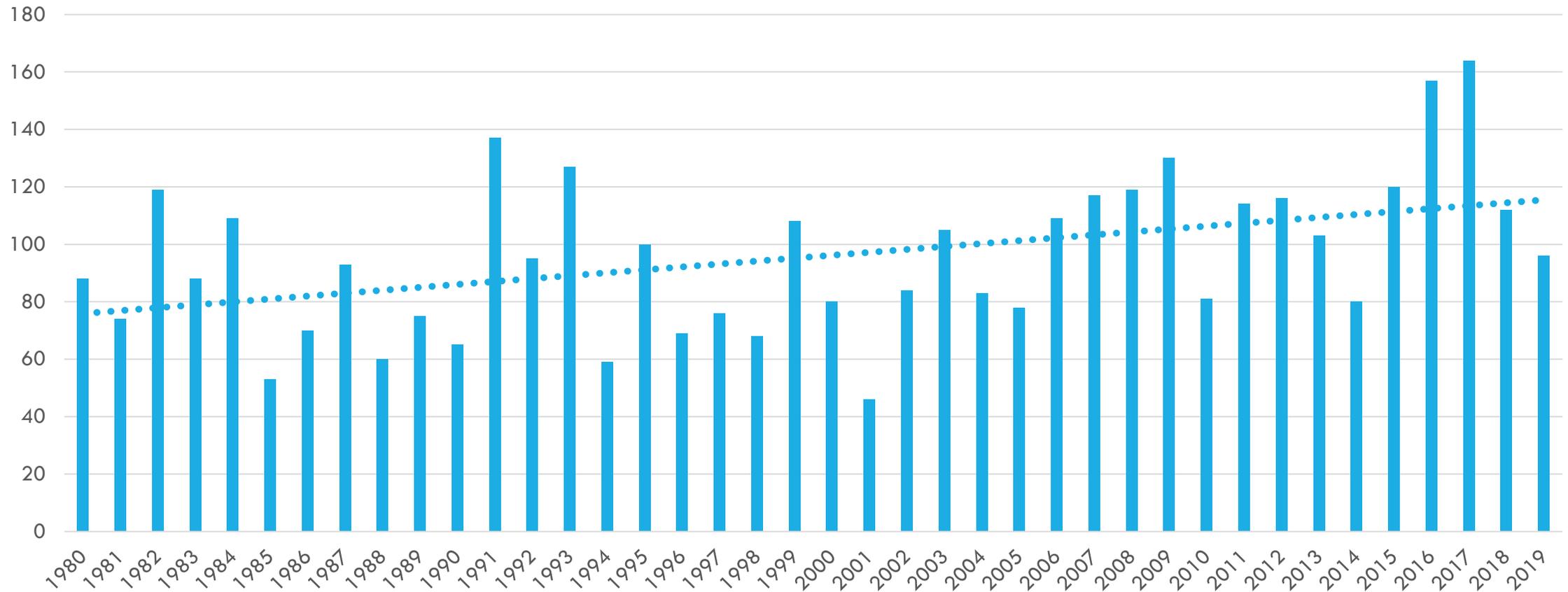
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

NUMBER OF VICTIMS KILLED IN MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



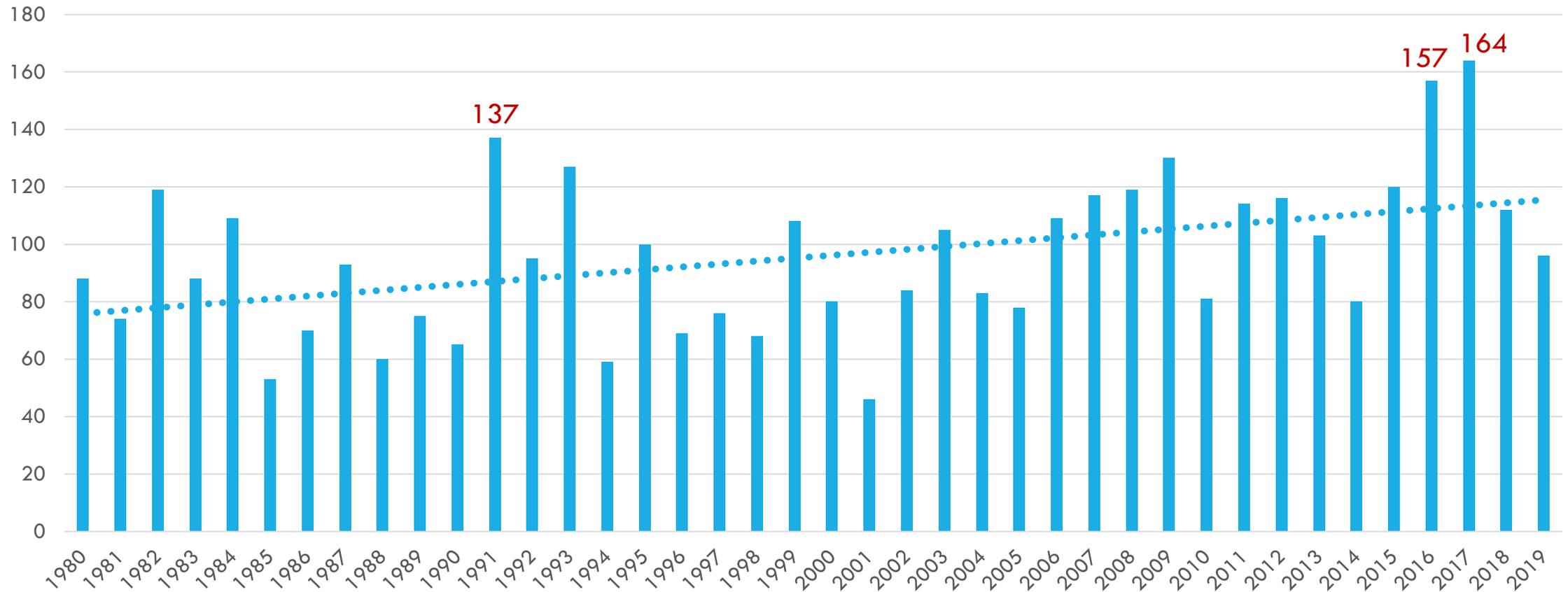
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

NUMBER OF VICTIMS KILLED IN MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



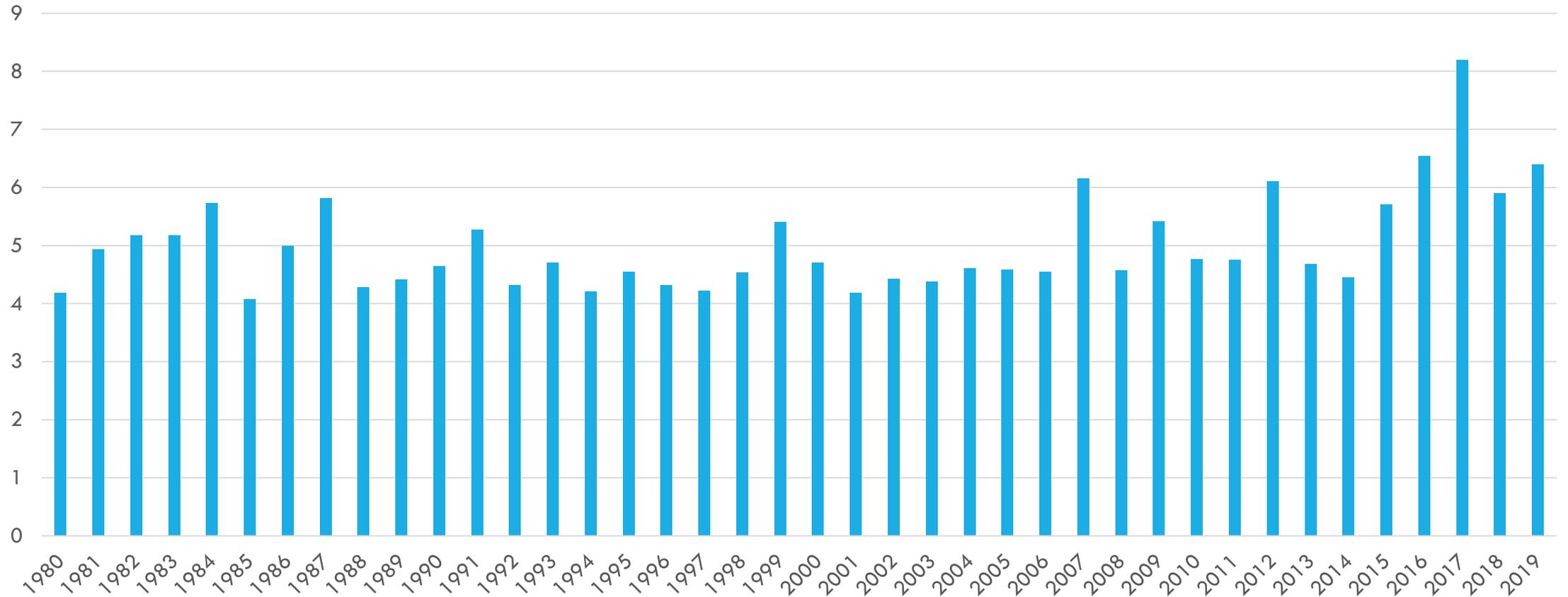
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

NUMBER OF VICTIMS KILLED IN MASS SHOOTINGS (RAW COUNTS)



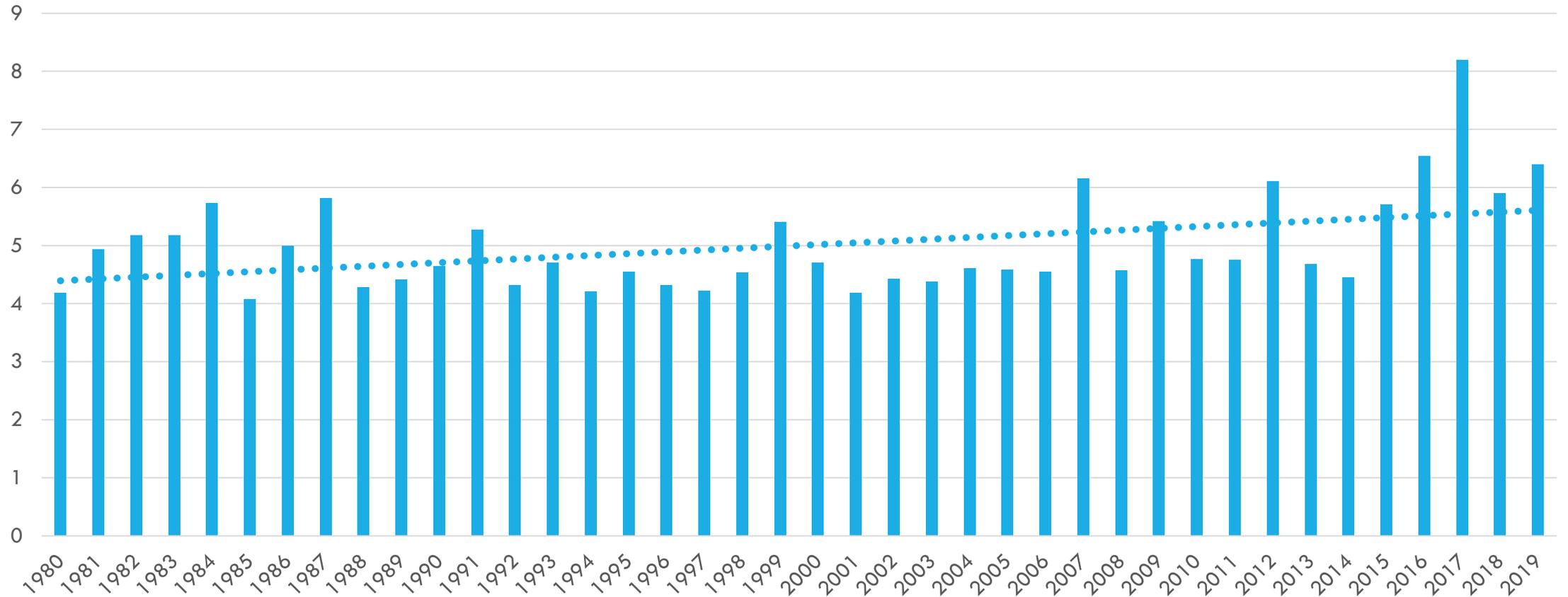
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

NUMBER OF VICTIMS KILLED IN MASS SHOOTINGS (AVERAGE PER INCIDENT)



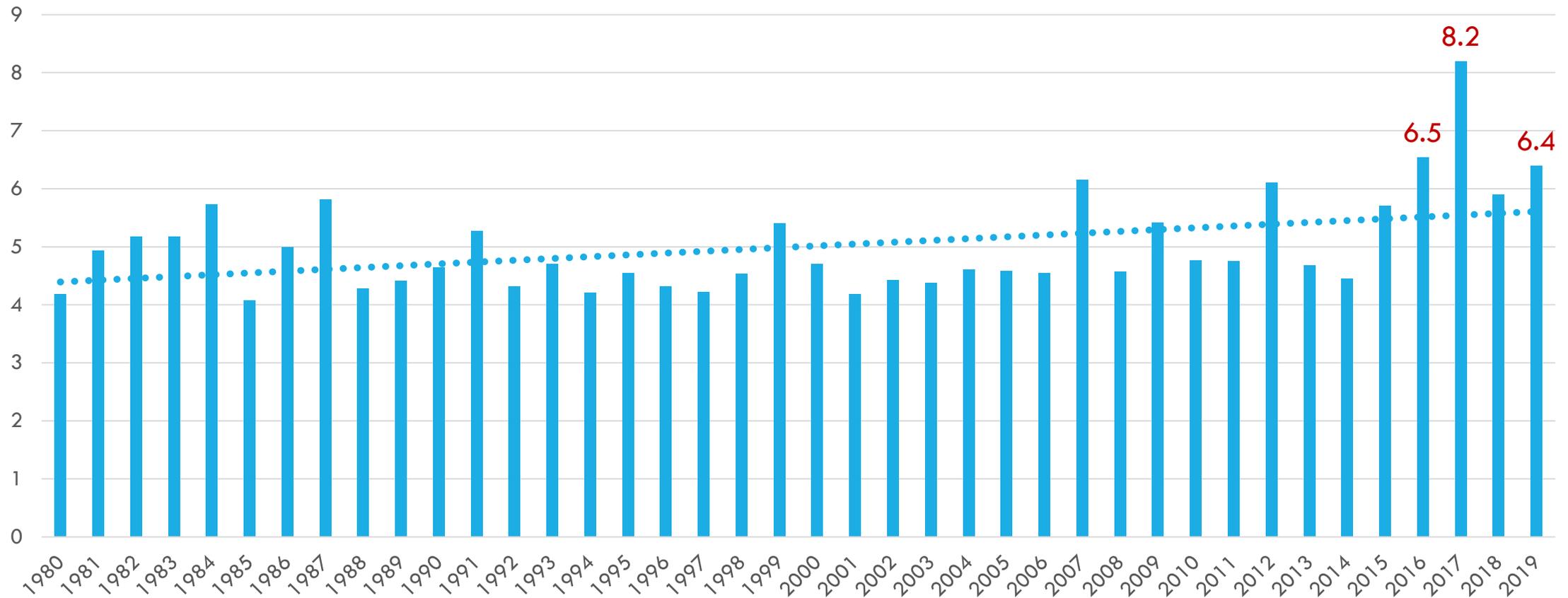
DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

NUMBER OF VICTIMS KILLED IN MASS SHOOTINGS (AVERAGE PER INCIDENT)



DATA THUS FAR: 1980-2019

NUMBER OF VICTIMS KILLED IN MASS SHOOTINGS (AVERAGE PER INCIDENT)



NEXT STEPS

- Currently coding each incident
 - Incident, individual, situational, and contextual characteristics
 - Data will be merged with additional state-level and census information
- Upon completion of coding, will be able to conduct more rigorous and informative analyses to advance knowledge
- The data will be made publicly available upon completion of the project



THANK YOU!

Jillian Turanovic

Associate Professor

Director, Crime Victim Research and Policy Institute

College of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Florida State University

Email: jturanovic@fsu.edu

THE
VIOLENCE
PROJECT

Reflections on Researching the Lives and Crimes of Mass Shooters

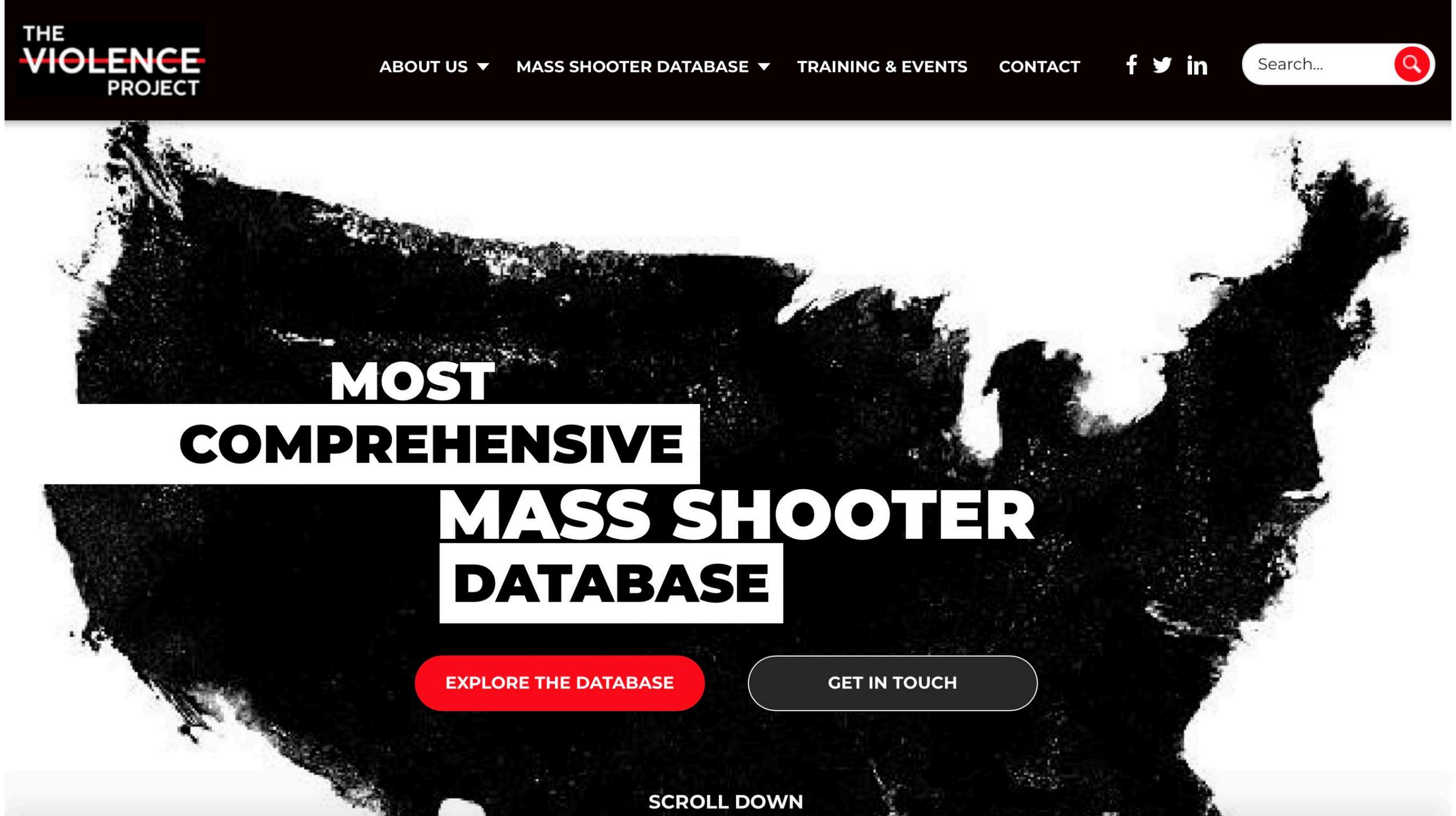
Jillian Peterson

James Densley

Goal – Public Criminology

- “...**four or more victims** are murdered with firearms—not including the offender(s)—within one event, and at least some of the murders occurred in a **public location** or locations in close geographical proximity ... and the murders are not attributable to any other underlying criminal activity or commonplace circumstance.”

(Congressional Research Service, 2015)



**MOST
COMPREHENSIVE
MASS SHOOTER
DATABASE**

EXPLORE THE DATABASE

GET IN TOUCH

SCROLL DOWN

The Database: 166 Different Variables

Primary Sources:

- Written journals / “manifestos” / suicide notes etc.
- Social media and blog posts
- Audio and video recordings
- Interview transcripts
- Personal correspondence with perpetrators

Community Variables:

- *Data for closest census tract year*
- U.S. Census
- FBI UCR
- Google Maps

Secondary Sources (all publicly available):

- Media (television, newspapers, magazines)
- Documentary films
- Biographies
- Monographs
- Peer-reviewed journal articles
- Court transcripts
- Law Enforcement records
- Medical records
- School records
- Autopsy reports

150 mass shooters
(from 1966 to 2017 – *The Washington Post*)

31

Alive and currently incarcerated

29

-2 not “not guilty by reason of insanity” or hospitalized

26

Not pending litigation or appeals (3 letters from attorneys)

9

responses (2 declined, 2 denied)

5

interviewed

Dear Miss Peterson

8-21-18

I received your letter requesting to have an interview for your study.

Sorry I did not respond in a timely manner concerning this request, however

P.S. Equanimity isn't bliss but this is one of the insidious methods of brainwashing that has been taught to my race of people which is the overall outcome of our ignorant behavior. Conscious enlightenment about one's history & knowledge of self is a beautiful thing without it I would have let you trick me into further exploitation of my race of people & allowed you to continue to falsely portray us as monsters who have no regard for human life!! I know this wasn't the response that you was looking for, so please don't be put off or offended by my intellectual comments.

1. You mentioned that there were some scary and confusing incidents from your childhood-what were they?

I was shown pornography as a child and it disgusted me. My father would sometimes hit or grab my mother. He was sometimes hard on me but he did it out of love.

2. What tests did you have trouble with in fifth grade? What happened as a result of you having trouble with those tests?

Vocabulary tests. My grades suffered.

3. My mother was raised on a mid-sized farm (cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, ducks, horses, corn, oats, barley, wheat), one of four children. Her mom & dad were hardworking, catholic, alcoholic & abusive (physically) to each other & their children. She had one child prior to meeting my father (my sister, [redacted]). When she became pregnant with me, her dad wanted to kill my dad, so they took off & ended up in New Mexico, where I was born ([redacted]). With a new grandson & a collie puppy they went back home & modified my grandfather. Mom worked as a care provider at the State mental home in Colquhoun, N.C. She worked hard, kept a clean house, cooked two-three meals a day & cared for us kids ([redacted]) as well as she knew how. She was quick to punish when we did wrong, cursed & smoked (rarely

+36 Community Stakeholder Interviews

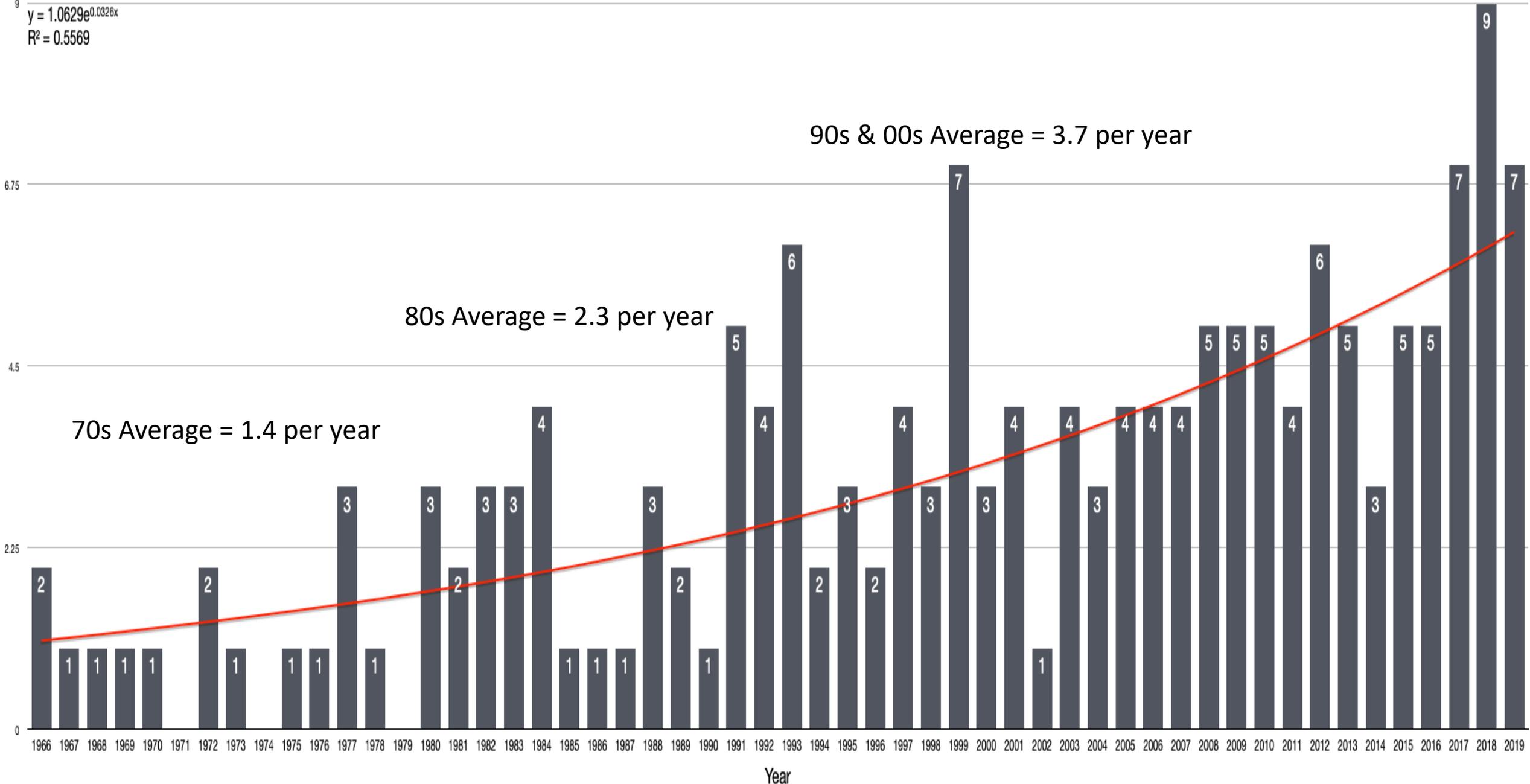
Recruitment – publicly available data (emails), snowball sample

- Perpetrators (n=5)
- **Perpetrator Perspective (n=15)**
 - Spouse
 - Parents
 - Siblings
 - Extended family
 - Childhood friends
 - School personnel
 - Social workers
 - Work colleagues/supervisors
 - Shooting survivors
- **Averted shootings (n=4)**
 - Perpetrator
 - Parents
 - School personnel
- **Victim Perspective (n=5)**
 - Parents and family members
- **First Responders, Stakeholders (n=12)**
 - FBI Investigators
 - Security consultants
 - Mental health practitioners

Mass Shootings in the United States, 1966–2019, By Year (N=168)

2010s Average = 5.6 per year

$y = 1.0629e^{0.0326x}$
 $R^2 = 0.5569$



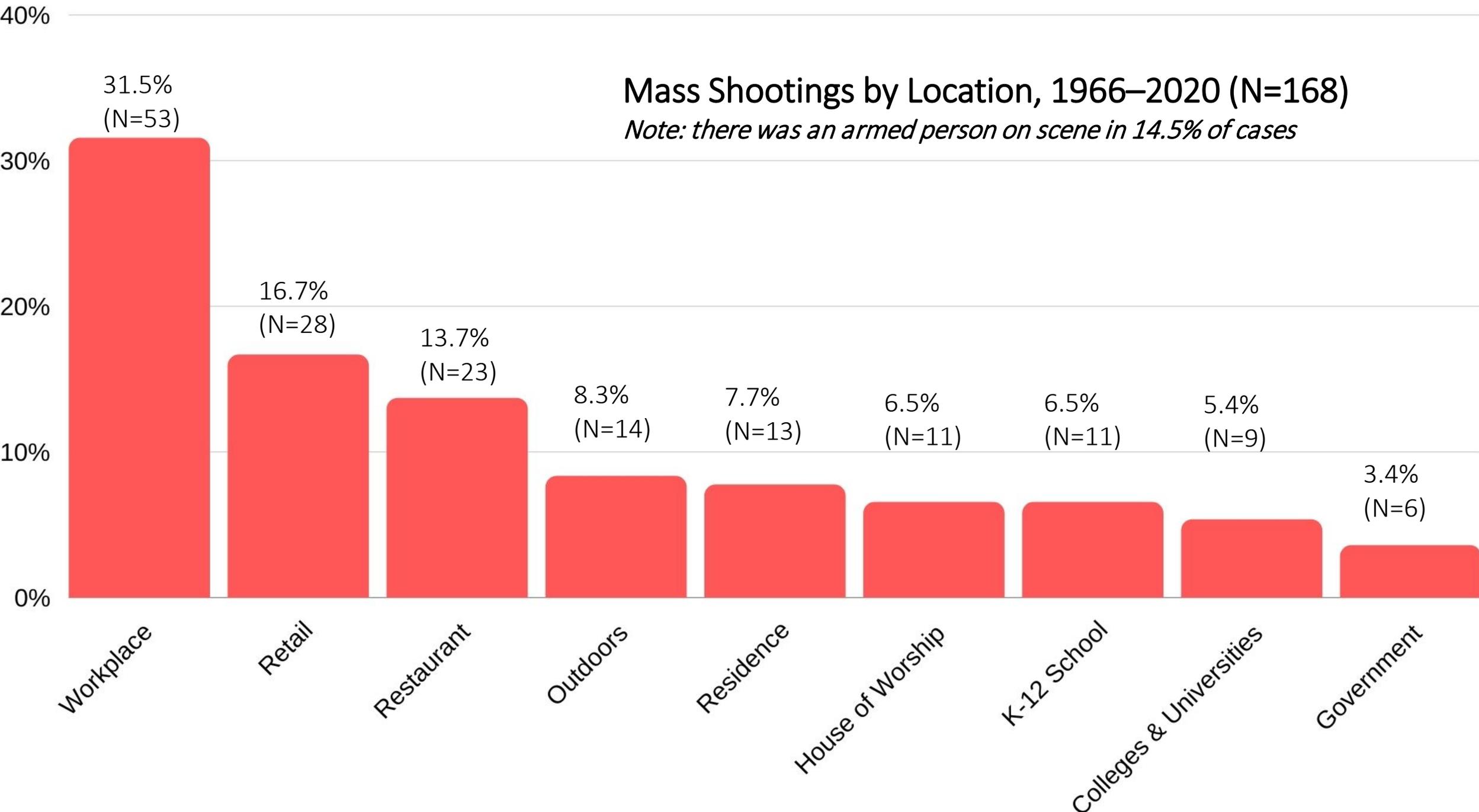
70s Average = 1.4 per year

80s Average = 2.3 per year

90s & 00s Average = 3.7 per year

Mass Shootings by Location, 1966–2020 (N=168)

Note: there was an armed person on scene in 14.5% of cases



Variable

%

Variable

%

Immigrant

15.1%

Domestic
Violence

27.9%

Military

28.5%

Violent Video
Games

14.0%

Criminal Record

64.5%

Bullied

17.4%

Violent History

62.8%

In Crisis

80.2%

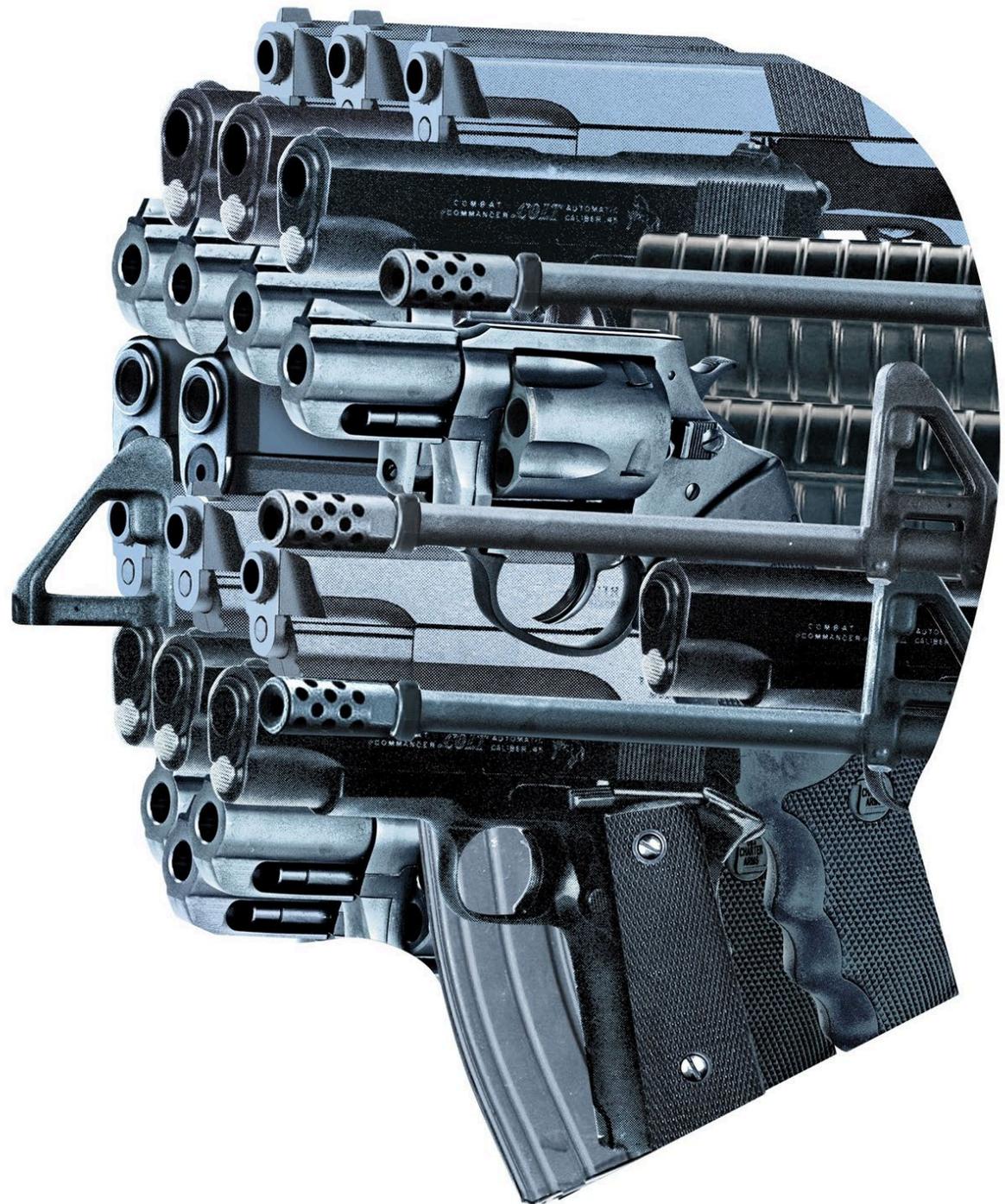
In Crisis

80.2%

Days 13.8%
Weeks 15.9%
Months 29.7%
Years 40.6%

Increased agitation 66.9%
Abusive behavior 41.9%
Isolation 39.5%
Losing reality 33.1%
Depressed mood 29.7%
Mood swings 27.3%
Inability Daily Task 24.4%
Paranoia 23.8%

0 18.8%
1-4 43.15%
5+ 37.7%



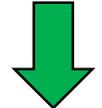
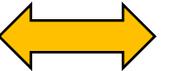
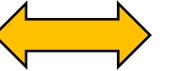
Variable	%	Variable	%
Hospitalization	19.8%	Any Mental Health	69.9%
Counseling	29.1%	Mood Disorder	15.7%
Medication	23.3%	Thought Disorder	26.7%
Family History	16.8%	Autism Spectrum Disorder	6.4%

Role of Psychosis

0. Psychotic symptoms played no role in the crime - **69.8%**
1. Psychotic symptoms played a small role in the crime - **11.0%**
2. Psychotic symptoms played a significant role in the crime, but was not the only motivation - **8.7%**
3. Psychotic symptoms completely motivated the crime - **10.5%**

31% of mass shooters were suicidal *prior* to their attacks,
40% were suicidal during,
and 59% died on the scene

The motivations of mass shooters	Overall (n=172)	1960-1999 (n=77)	2000-2015 (n=66)	2016-2020 (n=29)
Employment	40 (23.3%)	25 (32.5%)	12 (18.2%)	3 (10.3%)
Interpersonal	35 (20.3%)	14 (18.2%)	15 (22.7%)	6 (20.7%)
Psychosis	33 (19.2%)	13 (16.9%)	15 (22.7%)	5 (17.2%)
Domestic	27 (15.7%)	11 (14.3%)	11 (16.7%)	5 (17.2%)
Relationship	26 (15.1%)	13 (16.9%)	9 (13.6%)	4 (13.8%)
Legal issue	22 (12.8%)	11 (14.3%)	8 (12.1%)	3 (10.3%)
Racism	14 (9.3%)	5 (6.5%)	6 (9.1%)	5 (17.2%)
Fame	12 (7.0%)	5 (6.5%)	3 (4.5%)	4 (13.8%)
Religious hate	9 (5.2%)	1 (1.3%)	5 (7.5%)	3 (10.3%)
Misogyny	7 (4.1%)	5 (6.5%)	2 (3.0%)	0 (0.0%)

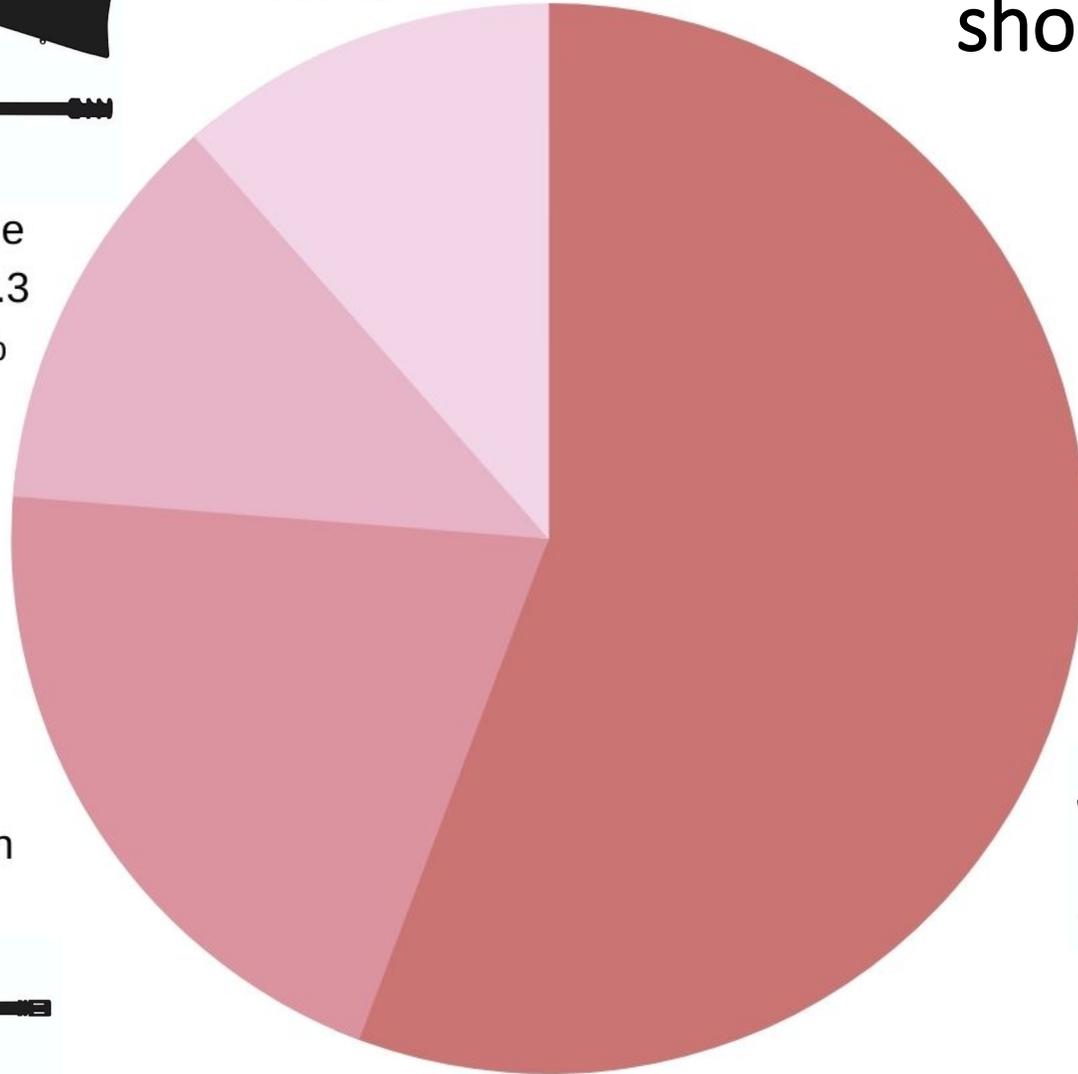


% of guns used in mass shootings by type



Shotgun
11.5%

Rifle
12.3
%



Handgun
55.7%



Assault Weapon
20.5%



Interview Data

- Importance of case studies
- Subjective narratives
- Interviews on both sides
- Trauma, coping, resilience
- Validity check for public data
- Warning signs and crisis points

TRAUMA

Adverse childhood experiences are common among mass shooters

CRISIS

Mass shooters reach breaking point — often it is a suicidal crisis

SOCIAL PROOF

Violence is scripted in our culture. Mass shooters study other mass shooters. They get radicalized online.

OPPORTUNITY

Mass shooters need the means to shoot and access to people and places they target

Implications

- Firearms – closing loopholes and safe storage
- Drills and hard security – insiders not outsiders
- Suicide prevention and crisis intervention
- Avoiding punishing threats
- Reporting systems for leakage
- Coverage in the media
- Social media companies



Thank You

- jpeterston68@hamline.edu
- james.densley@metrostate.edu
- www.theviolenceproject.org
- 2 articles under review
- Book release in 2021 (interviews)

Thank you

Questions and Answers

Please submit questions to “**all panelists**” in the **Q&A** box.

Indicate which presenter the question is for.