

Out of Sight, Out of Mind: An Analysis of Family Mass Murder Offenders in the US, 2006-2017

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Purpose

This research was conducted to closely examine case characteristics of the most common type of mass murder events, family mass murders. The current study utilizes the USA Today database, Behind the Bloodshed, and public news articles to assess 163 family mass murder incidents that occurred from 2006 to 2017.

163

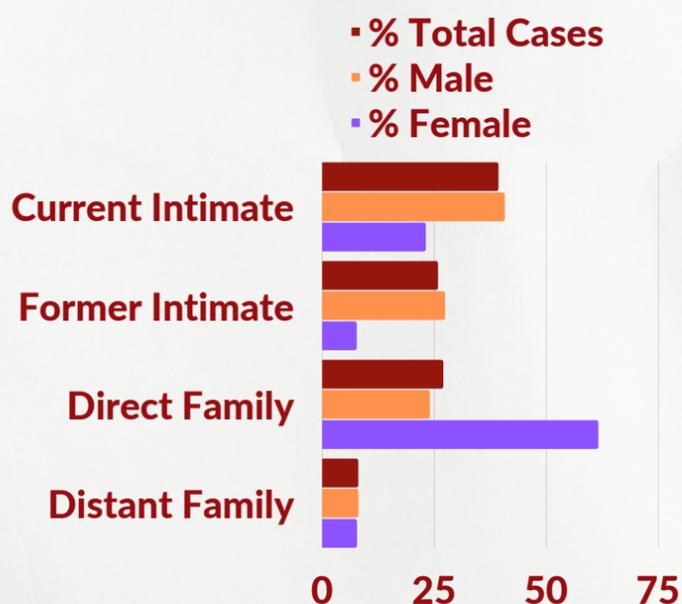
Defining Family Mass Murder

We define family mass murder as any event where four or more victims are murdered not including the offender, in one or more locations in close proximity to each other, without a cooling off period, where a majority of the victims were related to each other and have an intimate or familial relationship with the offender (Diaz, Toohy, Fernandez, Huff-Corzine, & Reckdenwald 2022).

Results

Using information from the USA Today Database Behind the Bloodshed, we found there were an average of 14 family mass murders annually, most often committed by a current or former intimate male partner, motivated by a relationship issue, using a firearm as the weapon of choice.

OFFENDER TYPE BY OFFENDER GENDER, 2006-2017



Female family mass murder offenders were less likely to kill an intimate partner and more likely to have reports of mental illness, whereas male offenders were more likely to kill an intimate partner and involve reports of a relationship issue as motivation for the killing.

WEAPON USED IN FMM INCIDENTS, 2006-2017

