

Murder and Extremism in the United States in 2018

Each year, ADL's Center on Extremism (COE) tracks murders perpetrated by all types of extremists. The 2018 Murder & Extremism report provides key insights into the crimes, including motivations behind these violent attacks.

2018 was a particularly active year for right-wing extremist murders: every single extremist killing — from Pittsburgh to Parkland — had a link to right-wing extremism.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Every year adherents of a variety of extreme causes kill people in the United States; ADL's COE tracks these murders.
- In 2018, domestic extremists killed at least 50 people in the U.S., a sharp increase from the 37 extremist-related murders documented in 2017, though still lower than the totals for 2015 (70) and 2016 (72). The 50 deaths make 2018 the fourth-deadliest year on record for domestic extremist-related killings since 1970.
- The extremist-related murders in 2018 were overwhelmingly linked to right-wing extremists. Every one of the perpetrators had ties to at least one right-wing extremist movement, although one had recently switched to supporting Islamist extremism. White supremacists were responsible for the great majority of the killings, which is typically the case.
- Deadly shooting sprees were a major factor in the high death toll. Five of the 17 incidents involved shooting sprees that caused 38 deaths and injured 33 people.
- The perpetrator of one of 2018's deadly shooting sprees, at a yoga studio in Tallahassee, was connected to the misogynistic incel/manosphere movement. In the wake of this attack and a similarly-motivated killing spree in Toronto, Canada, ADL's COE now tracks such incidents as extremist-related killings and has updated its database to include an earlier incel-linked incident, Elliot Rodger's 2014 shooting spree.
- Firearms remain the weapon of choice for extremists who kill. Guns were responsible for 42 of the 50 deaths in 2018, followed by blades or edged weapons.

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**SPEAK OUT AGAINST HATE AND EXTREMISM –
PARTICULARLY FROM THE FAR-RIGHT.**

ENACT LAWS TO FIGHT DOMESTIC TERRORISM

Recognizing that far-right extremism is a major threat of this new era, the United States Congress should enact laws to focus specifically on domestic terrorism, including close examination of the utility of enacting a statute that explicitly recognizes and punishes domestic terrorism as a crime.

**EXPAND DIALOGUE BETWEEN CIVIL SOCIETY
AND TECH SECTOR**

In the last several years, civil society and the technology sector have partnered on a range of projects to adapt for the digital era. For example, ADL has been proud to be part of Twitter’s Trust and Safety Council and to work with Facebook, Google, Microsoft and Twitter as members of our Problem-Solving Lab. ADL has worked with tech companies in myriad ways to help them improve their approach to dealing with hate and extremism on their platforms. However, those efforts are still nascent.

**IMPROVE FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL
RESPONSES TO HATE CRIMES**

Every state should enact comprehensive, inclusive hate crime laws. Effective responses to hate violence by public officials and law enforcement authorities can play an essential role in deterring and preventing these crimes.

**REFRAME PREVENTION STRATEGIES TO
PROMOTE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO
COUNTER FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISM**

Congress and state legislatures should authorize and appropriate grants for research and services to better understand the drivers of extremist hate and fund evidence-based programming to counter it.

**PROMOTE ANTI-BIAS AND CIVICS
EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ELEMENTARY
AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

Recognizing the limits of legal responses to hate violence, Congress and the Department of Education should increase federal funding for inclusive school climate, anti-bias education and hate crime prevention.



Read the Full Report online:

www.adl.org/murderandextremism2018

