VIOLENCE GOES TO COLLEGE

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The Authoritative Guide to Prevention and Intervention

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This book is dedicated to
Tanner Johnson Thomas
Nicholas Rex Thomas
Theresa Tafoya
Richard Tafoya
May they someday have violence-free college experiences.

FOREWORD

VIOLENCE GOES TO COLLEGE is an invaluable resource for understanding, preventing, and providing solutions to the growing problem of violence on college campuses. This timely work provides a comprehensive approach to addressing the ever-increasing problem facing our youth today. The authors combine their expertise in violence prevention and law enforcement techniques to create a how-to manual equally applicable to both professional and lay readers.

The conceptualization of violence as a virus with various causes, strains, and manifestations lends itself to effective analogies to demonstrate our vulnerabilities as well as our ability to fight the disease that is reaching near-epidemic proportions. Examples are fact-based, contemporaneous, and illustrative of the wide range of violence that routinely takes place on college campuses. From mass murders, hate crimes, riots, and date rape to hazing among both fraternities and athletes, this book demonstrates the need for different approaches and responses for the various types of violence in terms of prevention, intervention, and dealing with the aftermath.

The researchers provide a background for understanding the origins and causes of violence, as well as catalysts such as alcohol, peer acceptance, and individual versus group motivations. The book additionally addresses barriers to intervention such as secrecy and lack of reporting both at the student and administrative levels.

This prevention and solution-oriented guide offers realistic answers for all those concerned with the effective resolution to violence on college campuses. "Action beats reaction" is a common phrase among law enforcement professionals that is fittingly applied here. The authors detail specific strategies beginning with physical environmental factors, promotion of alternatives to violence, implementation and composition of a Threat and Violence Assessment Team (TVAT), and compilation of a crime report database. The book further emphasizes policy development complete with sample policy statements and reporting forms specific to different strains of violence. In addition, the authors describe enforcing consequences appropriate to the infraction and managing the aftermath to maximize healing on an individual and community basis.

While *Violence Goes to College* is theory-based and research-driven, it pre-

sents real answers to real issues. The authors avoid hype and sensationalism as they address urban legends and debunk faulty advice to potential victims. This compelling book demonstrates that although college campuses are not immune to violence, awareness and planning are the antibody.

ELIZABETH M. PRIAL, PSY.D.
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PREFACE

OVER THE COURSE of the last few decades, violence has infected new areas of society such as the workplace, schools, and religious sanctuaries. As violence prevention experts, we have been observing and intervening as the violence spreads to new locations. College campuses are not immune.

- According to a *Chronicle of Education* survey, universities reported 951 arrests for weapons-law violations in 1997, a 4.4 percent increase from the previous year (August 1999, *Student Affairs Today*).
- In August 1999, Florida A&M University cancelled classes after a homemade bomb exploded in a bathroom on campus. The speculated motive was racial hatred.
- In 1999, The Harvard Injury Research and Control Center reported that 3.5 percent of 15,000 college students surveyed across the country said they had a gun at school; this figure rose to 7 percent among students who "binge drank." Binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in one sitting. Even more disturbing, this figure rose to over 12 percent of students who said they needed a drink "first thing in the morning."
- In March 1999, a riot broke out in East Lansing, Michigan, after Michigan State University's basketball team lost to Duke University. During the outbreak, students and others burned police cars and caused more than a half million dollars in damage.
- According to the National Center for Victims of Crime in Virginia and the American Medical Association, one in every four women is raped or sexually assaulted during their collegiate experience.

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.

Violence Goes to College is 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

user-friendly resource will provide 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. *Violence Goes to College* offers hope that somewhere between Pollyanna and paranoia, campuses can find a healthy balance between reasonable protection and personal freedom.

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, non-sexual assault, arson and bombing.

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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 or management advice. If the reader has a specific need or problem, the services of a competent professional should be sought to address the particular situation.

The foreword is the opinion of Dr. Prial and does not constitute an endorsement by the FBI.

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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

"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 blindsided, 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 sexual-