



**JEFFERSON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

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May 15, 2000

Dear Citizen:

The investigation of the shootings that occurred at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999, has been completed. The conclusions of the investigation are contained in this report, which we now submit to our community.

What follows is the account of a spring day last year, when two Columbine students attacked their classmates and teachers with an arsenal of firearms and explosives. Within the span of 16 minutes, the gunmen had killed 13 people and wounded 21 others. A savage act of domestic terrorism, their crime is the deadliest school shooting in the history of the United States.

Because the shootings ravaged many lives, we feel an obligation, in the interest of public safety, to document the final moments of the deceased and provide the public with a shared understanding of that day. This report explains how the crime was planned and committed. It also describes the work of those who answered the call for help. By day's end on April 20, the responders numbered nearly 1,000 and represented the entire law enforcement, fire and medical services community of metropolitan Denver.

In preparing this report, we have relied on the work of approximately 80 investigators from all levels of government. Under the direction of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, the investigators contacted students, teachers and others who might have information about the crime. In all, investigators completed more than 4,400 leads. They examined videotapes, 911 recordings, ballistic reports, medical and autopsy reports, and physical evidence collected at the scene and the conspirators' residences.

Although the investigation approached conclusion in January 2000, the case remains classified as "open" in the event new information comes to light. To protect our ability to pursue this case further should the opportunity present itself—and to preserve the privacy of witnesses who are not yet in the public eye—we have excluded certain names and details from this report. Whenever possible, however, we have presented full documentation to provide a complete understanding of these events. We have chosen to present this report in CD-ROM format so that audio and video recordings may be included.

Among the significant findings of the 10-month investigation into the Columbine shootings are these:

1. Initial 911 calls included mention of a shooter on the high school roof. The man witnesses saw was an air conditioning repairman, who hid on the roof during the shootings. He was not involved in the crime.
2. The gunmen fired their first shots at about 11:19 a.m. and injured the last victim at 11:35 a.m. By shortly after noon, the killers, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, had died at their own hands.
3. The gunmen were in the library for 7 ½ minutes. In that time, they shot and killed 10 people and wounded 12 more. They carried more than enough ammunition to kill all 56 people in the library.
4. Physical evidence does not indicate the presence of a third shooter. No known evidence suggests that anyone had prior knowledge of the killers' plans.
5. Surveillance videotapes clearly demonstrate that two 20-pound propane bombs were placed in the cafeteria the morning of April 20, 1999, and not the night before as has been rumored. No bomb was hidden in the kitchen.
6. According to their writings and videotapes, the gunmen planned to kill far more people. Had the two bombs in the cafeteria functioned properly, all 488 people in the room may have died.
7. The murderers carried two 20-lb. propane bombs, all of the pipe bombs, CO<sub>2</sub> bombs and other explosive devices into the school with them on April 20. They carried those devices in duffel bags and backpacks or in ammunition pouches strapped to their bodies. The remaining explosives were left in their cars.
8. In their yearbooks, videotapes, journals and computer files, Klebold and Harris listed 67 people they disliked for various reasons. Only one of those individuals was actually injured, and there is no evidence that he was specifically targeted on April 20.
9. Based on their writings, Klebold and Harris expected the bomb they placed south of the school near Wadsworth Boulevard to divert attention from the school for a longer period of time. The failure of the cafeteria bombs to detonate and the arrival of responding officers apparently caused the gunmen to re-evaluate their planned attack, since they had never listed the school library as a destination point.
10. On April 20, officers contacted suspicious persons near Columbine High School as well as friends and acquaintances of Harris and Klebold. Based on some media portrayals, many believed those persons had been arrested or were involved in the crime. In fact, all of those people were interviewed and released.

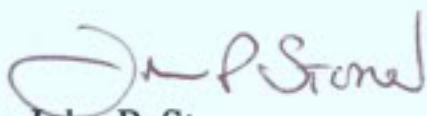
In addition to providing information about the crime and law enforcement response, this report acknowledges staff from numerous government, mental health and nonprofit agencies who came forward to serve our grieving community. In response to the shootings, our community has received unparalleled support from professionals throughout the nation and the Denver metropolitan area.

Upon receiving a briefing about the law enforcement response to this horrible crime, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno commented that these professionals had "shown the nation

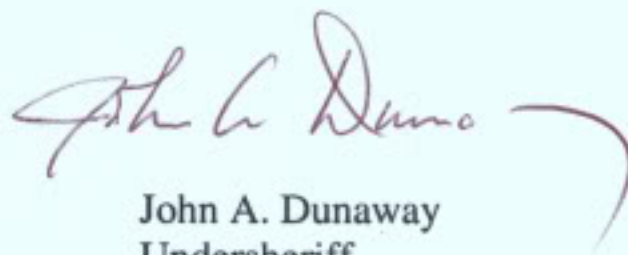
and the world America's finest in crisis." We agree, and wish to express our deep appreciation for their assistance.

While this report establishes a record of the events of April 20, it cannot answer the most fundamental question—WHY? That is, why would two young men, in the spring of their lives, choose to murder faculty members and classmates? The evidence provides no definitive explanation, and the question continues to haunt us all.

While our community struggles with that question and grieves those who were lost, we remain united in one hope—that our nation shall never see anything resembling the tragedy at Columbine High School again.



John P. Stone  
Sheriff



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