

**The FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit (BAU)**, at the request of the FBI's Cincinnati Field Office and the Dayton Police Department, assessed the shooter's motivation for the Oregon District Mass Shooting, after considerable evidence-gathering over the course of their 2.5-year investigation. Their key findings are as follows (FBI Media Release; November, 2021):

- The shooter maintained a longstanding fascination with mass violence. He was also unable to cope with a combination of factors that plagued him for much of this life, including a 10-year struggle with mental health issues and stressors, and the consecutive losses of "stabilizing anchors" that he faced prior to the date of the mass shooting (FBI Media Release; November, 2021). Not only did the shooter have a lengthy history of mental illness that included suicidal and violent fantasies and desires, but he fantasized about serial killings, mass shootings, and murder-suicides for at least 10 years. Neither family members nor friends were apparently aware of any specific details pertaining to these forms of violence and killings.
- The shooter communicated no intentions to family or friends that a mass shooting was imminent. There were no obvious warnings that the shooter planned to commit any crimes.
- Much of what the FBI's BAU indicated is based on the Bystander Effect or Bystander Apathy. This effect is based upon socio-psychological theories regarding the likelihood that individuals will not react to assist victims in the presence of other individuals. In other words, observers are less likely to respond in situations that are ambiguous and due to the "inhibiting presence of multiple bystanders" (diffusion of responsibility) (American Psychological Association Bystander Intervention Tip Sheet, n.d.). In the case of Connor Betts, there is a strong probability that changes in his behaviors were also imperceptible; those specific behaviors that may have demonstrated his penchant for violence, an increase in perceived stressors, and/or suicidal intent.

- Lastly and with respect to interviews conducted with friends and peers, “Bystander Fatigue” may have been a significant factor in explaining why the shooter was never reported to law enforcement agencies or “the authorities” concerning his intent to commit violent acts. According to the FBI/BAU’s investigative report, this describes “passivity, inaction, or inattention to concerning behaviors observed by individuals who have a close, interpersonal relationship to a person of concern due to their prolonged exposure to the person's erratic or otherwise troubling behavior over time.” (FBI Media Release; November, 2021).

**Kathy Platoni, Psy.D., DAAPM, FAIS  
Clinical Psychologist  
COL (RET), US Army  
Dayton SWAT  
Member, Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame  
Member, Greene County Veterans Hall of Fame  
Editor, Combat Stress Magazine  
Clinical Director, Southwest Ohio Critical Incident Stress Management Team**