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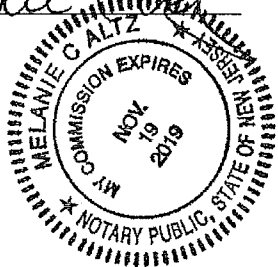
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## Nation &amp; World

## Calls to limit publicity of mass killers

Research: Coverage in media could incite others

Jorge L. Ortiz  
USA TODAY

If Virginia Beach authorities have their way, the gunman who killed 22 people and injured four others in Friday's shooting rampage won't join the ranks of infamous mass murderers in U.S. history.

To that end, they're vowing his name will no longer cross their lips publicly.

By declining to use DeWayne Craddock's name beyond his initial identification as the shooter, Police Chief James Corvera and other officials in the Virginia resort town are joining a growing movement toward depriving mass killers the notoriety many of them are believed to crave.

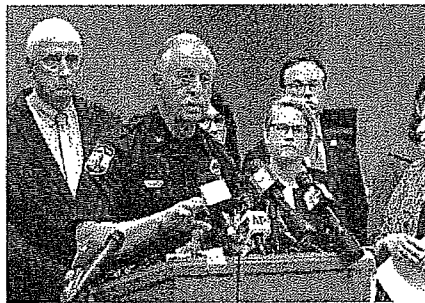
Several studies have shown media coverage of these kinds of crimes tends to incite others, with Arizona State University researchers in 2015 determining that each mass shooting increased the chances of another one occurring within the next 13 days.

"What you often see is they're basically saying, 'This person was a nobody who became famous or got a lot of attention, and I want to get that same reward, even if it goes about it in a somewhat different way,'" said Adam Langford, an associate professor of criminology at the University of Alabama who has studied mass shootings.

Efforts to prevent that so-called contagion effect, also known as copycat effect, have prompted calls for the media to deemphasize coverage of the perpetrators, perhaps telling little about their backstories and withholding their photos. Some of the requests have come from survivors of last year's massacre in Parkland, Florida.

Public officials are also joining the cause.

Corvera said in a news conference



Virginia Beach Chief of Police James Corvera vows not to utter the name of the gunman in Friday's massacre. MEGAN RAYMOND/VIA USA TODAY NETWORK

"Journalists do need to think about what is our role and responsibility in covering this."

Nicole Dahmen  
Associate professor, University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication

hours after the assault that the shooter "will be forever referred to as the suspect because our focus now is the dignity and respect to the victims in this case and to their families."

After a hate-fueled assault on two New Zealand mosques in March resulted in 51 deaths, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern expressly avoided mentioning the name of the attacker, an avowed white supremacist so thirsty for recognition that he livestreamed the mass-

question that is emerging in newsrooms across the country is how to perform that duty while minimizing harm.

Does the public interest in the identity of the assailant outweigh the impact such publicity might have on future such incidents? How important is it for people to find out what the shooter looks like?

Dahmen said her research and that of her colleagues suggests changes are necessary in reporting about the aggressors in mass murders. She mentions CNN's Anderson Cooper and most recently the San Diego Union-Tribune's editorial board — but not its news department, which is separate — as early adopters of the no-name policy.

"It's about ethical, responsible coverage," Dahmen said. "We don't name riot victims. We don't name rape victims. We have changed the way we report on suicide. This is a time to revisit how we report on 'who.' For example, use the name once. Don't use the name in editorial coverage. Don't use the name in headlines. Don't repeat the name over and over. Don't use previous perpetrators' names in stories about new mass shootings. The point is not to give the perpetrator the sick, twisted fame, infamy."

Like Langford, Dahmen advocates withholding photos of mass murderers, although he goes a step further in arguing there's not much value in making the name public, as long as the attacker has been apprehended or is dead. She favors a one-time mention of the name, and not publishing any monographs.

These suggested approaches to mass media coverage wouldn't necessarily be followed by users of social media, but they would represent a major step in limiting the amount of coveted exposure killers receive.

"The mass shooting problem is not journalists' fault," Dahmen said. "But journalists do need to think about what is our role and responsibility in covering this."

More recently, Denver-area authorities asked reporters to focus attention on the victims of a May school shooting that left one dead and eight injured, rather than the assailants.

In some instances, as in last June's killing spree at the Capital Gazette newsroom in Annapolis, Maryland, and after the November 2017 assault on the church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, law enforcement authorities initially refused to release the suspect's name to the media.

The advocacy group No Notoriety, founded by the parents of one of the victims of the 2012 bloodshed in a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, espouses a similar approach: Downplay the name and image of the attackers and highlight the innocent people harmed by their acts of violence.

Nicole Dahmen, associate professor at the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication, said a

## PUBLIC NOTICE

PSC No. 89 – Gas – Schedule for Gas Service  
PSC No. 87 – Gas – Schedule for Gas Service  
PSC No. 88 – Gas – Schedule for Gas Transportation Service  
PSC No. 118 – Electricity – Schedule for Electric Service  
PSC No. 120 – Electricity – Schedule for Electric Service  
PSC No. 121 – Electricity – Schedule for Electric Service (Street Lighting)

On May 20, 2019, New York State Electric & Gas Corporation (NYSEG) filed with the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) a plan with testimony, exhibits and proposed delivery rate changes to the above referenced tariff schedules for service.

The changes contained in that filing would increase annual delivery revenues by approximately \$156.7 million (20.4% Delivery/10.4% Total) from NYSEG's electric operations and by approximately \$6.2 million (3.0% Delivery/1.4% Total) from the company's natural gas operations, to become effective April 2020.

The PSC may approve, modify or reject any or all of the proposed tariff changes. The complete NYSEG filing may be examined on the company's website (nyseg.com), or the PSC website (psc.ny.gov).

These cases are open and public. Individuals may provide comments directly to the Secretary of the PSC or offer comments at a public statement hearing hosted by the PSC (Reference Case Nos. 19-E-0378, 19-G-0379). As the case proceeds, documents pertaining to the case are posted on the PSC website.

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