

True Crime and Gore Networks in NVE Incidents

An Analysis of 214 NVE-coded incidents in PERIL's NVE Tracker, 2014–2026.

214

NVE INCIDENTS
ANALYZED

47

LINKED TO THE
TRUE CRIME COMMUNITY

120

LINKED TO
GORE / SNUFF CONTENT

21

LINKED TO
BOTH

28%

OF ALL DEATHS COME
FROM THOSE 21

Nihilistic violent extremism does not have a single, unifying ideology, but its perpetrators are often part of distinct online subcultures. Two of those subcultures appear across incidents in the NVE Tracker: the fringe parts of the **true crime community (TCC)**, which venerates mass killers, and communities dedicated to **gore and snuff content**, which desensitize participants to violence. Two-thirds of all NVE incidents in the tracker have links to one or both. Crucially, while only 10% of incidents in the tracker are coded for TCC and Gore, events coded for both have been responsible for a disproportionate number of deaths from NVE attacks.

PATHWAY A

True Crime Community

Attack-oriented: plots, threats, and school shootings
47 incidents · 22%



OVERLAP

Both subcultures present

Rare, but disproportionately lethal
21 incidents · 10%



PATHWAY B

Gore / Snuff Content

Exploitation-oriented: sextortion and coerced harm
120 incidents · 56%

WHAT THESE SUBCULTURES ARE

CONTENT · COMMUNITY

True Crime Community (TCC)

A large online subculture centered on real-world crimes, criminal cases, and perpetrators, encompassing podcasts, documentaries, Reddit threads, YouTube channels, and social media accounts. The mainstream TCC is oriented toward analysis, victim advocacy, and morbid curiosity.

Its **fringe** components blur the line between examining violence and celebrating it. Killers are treated as celebrities and objects of fascination. TCC fandoms often produce fan art of notorious mass killers, while romanticizing their attacks. The fringe TCC shares similarities with militant accelerationism's **saints culture**, which venerates the perpetrators of mass violence and uses them to inspire future attacks.

CONTENT

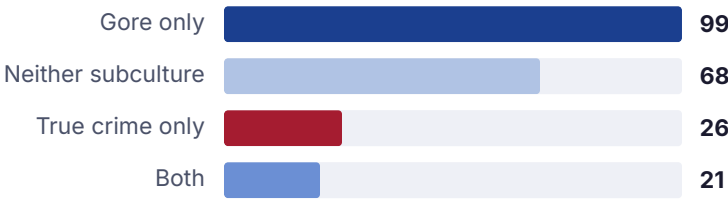
Gore / Snuff

Graphic imagery or video depicting real-world death, injury, or extreme violence, including content staged to simulate killing (snuff). In NVE networks, gore content serves as a mechanism of **status signaling, recruitment, and coercion**, and it normalizes violence as entertainment.

Producing, sharing, and consuming gore content is a common feature of sadistic exploitation networks, like 764 and The COM, and it can help perpetrators achieve status in those communities. The prolonged consumption of gore content erodes the psychological barriers to real-world violence. Recruiters use gore content to desensitize their victims to violence, maintain control over them, and increase their demands for extreme acts.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE INCIDENTS

MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE CATEGORIES



Every NVE-coded incident falls in exactly one category; the four sum to 214. **146 incidents (68%)** are coded for at least one subculture.

THE TWO SUBCULTURES

SHARE OF INCIDENTS WITH...	TCC	GORE	NEITHER
A school target	64%	18%	24%
Sextortion	13%	52%	12%
Coerced self-harm	9%	54%	7%
Coerced animal cruelty	0%	22%	0%
Physical assault or threats	11%	28%	15%
A juvenile perpetrator	53%	50%	25%

Percentages are within each subculture's incident set (TCC n = 47, Gore n = 120, neither n = 68). The TCC and Gore columns overlap on the 21 dual-coded incidents.

The one thing both subcultures share is young participants.

Juvenile perpetrators were responsible for 42% of incidents linked to the TCC only, 47% of incidents linked to gore only, and 67% of incidents where both subcultures were present. Juvenile perpetrators were only responsible for 25% of incidents where neither TCC nor gore were present. Whatever else separates the two subcultures, both attract young participants, and their convergence attracts the youngest, which is where prevention has to reach them.

PATHWAY A · TRUE CRIME: FROM FANDOM TO TARGET SELECTION

HOW IT WORKS

TCC-linked incidents predominantly involve **attacks or attempted attacks** rather than sadistic exploitation. Of 47 incidents linked to the TCC, 19 were foiled or failed plots and 16 were completed attacks; only 8 involved child exploitation.

A signature of TCC-linked events is common target selection. 64% of TCC-linked incidents targeted a school, versus 26% across the tracker as a whole (30 of the 55 school-targeted NVE incidents on record had a TCC link). These incidents often involved public imitation: manifestos, “saint” iconography, and the explicit emulation of prior attackers.

Group affiliation is uncommon. The most common group attribution for TCC-linked incidents is *Unaffiliated* (25), followed by the incel movement (11). 764 appears in only 8.

TCC-LINKED INCIDENTS



Incidents are multi-coded, so categories sum to more than 47.

CASE EXAMPLES · TRUE CRIME PATHWAY

Glenwillard, Pennsylvania. Aidan Harding wrote on Instagram in 2019 that he had a “plan” for a high-kill-count attack, describing the Columbine attackers as having “kickstart[ed] a revolution” that he was going to finish. He was later charged with possession of material involving the sexual exploitation of a minor.

Greenbrier, Arkansas. Abilene Almanza was arrested after threatening to commit a mass shooting at an elementary school. She reportedly told investigators that she idolizes past mass shooters and considers them to be her “best friends.”

Sources: NVE Tracker records #1484 and #1711.

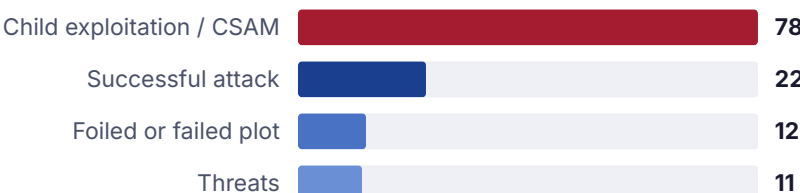
PATHWAY B · GORE — DESENSITIZATION TO VIOLENCE

HOW IT WORKS

Gore-linked incidents overwhelmingly involve sadistic exploitation. **78 of 120 involve child exploitation or CSAM.** The production of videos and images of coerced self-harm appears in 54% of the incidents, versus 33% across the tracker. **27 of the incidents involved the production of gore content depicting coerced animal cruelty.**

Affiliation with 764 is present in 94 of the 120 incidents, followed by Maniac Murder Cult (12) and Order of Nine Angles (11). Where the true crime pathway is predominated by unaffiliated actors, gore content is closely associated with known exploitation networks.

GORE-LINKED INCIDENTS



Incidents are multi-coded, so categories sum to more than 120.

CASE EXAMPLES · GORE PATHWAY

764's origin. Bradley Cadenhead was introduced to “The Gore,” an online community built around violent videos, by another boy while in juvenile detention. After his release he reconnected with it on Snapchat, was invited into a server, and went on to found 764 on Discord in January 2021.

Albany, New York. Aaron Corey, who went by the online alias “Baggeth,” was arrested on charges related to the receipt of child sexual abuse material. During a review of his electronic devices, it was discovered that he was active on a Telegram channel dedicated to the distribution of self-harm imagery and related gore content. While in prison awaiting trial on the charges, Corey was charged a second time for allegedly attempting to hire a hitman to kill two FBI special agents and a federal prosecutor assigned to his case. He reportedly directed the hitman to record the killings and sell the videos on gore sites.

Sources: 764 Relational Network node profiles (Cadenhead); NVE Tracker records #1573, #1701.

WHERE THEY CONVERGE: 10% OF INCIDENTS, 28% OF ATTACK FATALITIES

LETHALITY BY SUBCULTURE

SUBCULTURE	INCIDENTS	KILLED	INJURED	ATTACKS
Both	21	19	85	43%
True crime only	26	10	17	27%
Gore only	99	5	175	13%
Neither	68	33	62	19%

“Attacks” is the share of each subculture coded as a successful attack. The 21 incidents coded as TCC and gore are only 10% of NVE events in the tracker but account for **28% of victim deaths** and **25% of injuries**.

WHAT CONVERGENCE LOOKS LIKE

Evergreen, Colorado. A 16-year-old student at Evergreen High School opened fire on his classmates, wounding two before taking his own life. Analysts discovered that the student had been active on a popular gore site prior to the attack and that he had developed a fascination with previous mass shooters, including the Columbine attackers and the perpetrator of the 2019 Christchurch mosque attacks. The student reportedly acquired tactical gear to use in the attack that would allow him to emulate past mass killers.

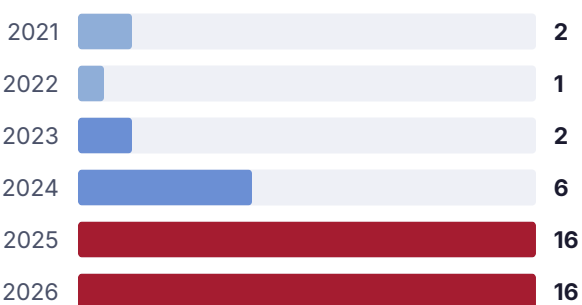
Sources: NVE Tracker record #1557.

An Outsized Impact.

TCC and Gore Networks produce an oversized portion of NVE-related fatalities and injuries, involve a larger percentage of youth perpetrators than other NVE subcommunities, and are growing rapidly. Based on these data, it is clear that youth-oriented prevention efforts should focus on these two pathways.

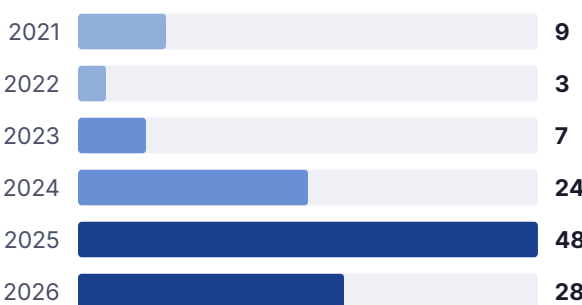
BOTH PATHWAYS ARE RECENT

TRUE CRIME-LINKED INCIDENTS PER YEAR



2026 is a partial year (through 21 August 2026).

GORE-LINKED INCIDENTS PER YEAR



2026 is a partial year (through 21 August 2026).

Of 47 true-crime-linked incidents, 43 occurred in 2021 or later; of 120 gore-linked incidents, 119 took place in 2021 or later.

Methodology. This brief analyzes the incidents coded **NVE = Yes** in PERIL's NVE Tracker, spanning 23 May 2014 to 21 August 2026. TCC is coded for incidents with a documented tie to the true crime community or its fringe, and Gore is coded for incidents involving the consumption, production, and/or circulation of gore or snuff material. **Reading the percentages:** the TCC and Gore columns in the comparison table are calculated within each subculture's full incident set. The 21 incidents coded for both TCC and Gore appear in each chart. Crime-type and group fields are multi-select and can sum to more than the segment size. **Caveats:** counts reflect what is publicly documented and represent a floor, not a ceiling. This material concerns child sexual exploitation, self-harm, and suicide; if you or someone you know is in crisis, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988) is available in the United States.