



2015 VIOLENCE AND DISRUPTION STATISTICS

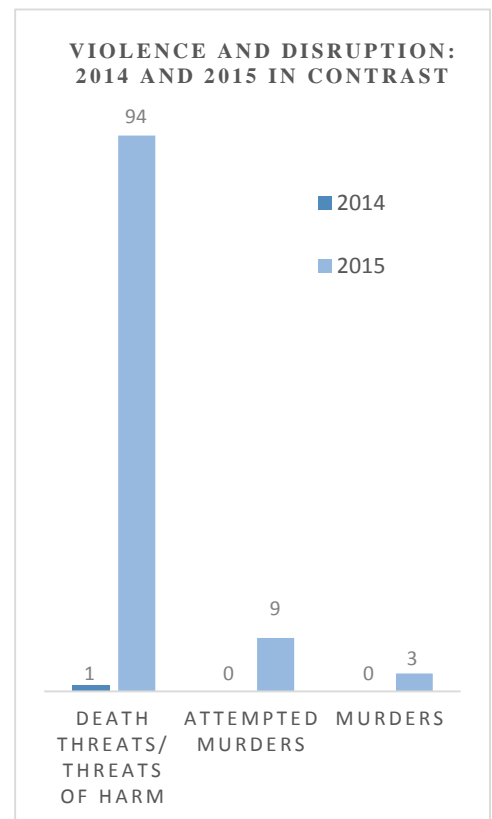
A dramatic escalation in hate speech, threats, and violence

The National Abortion Federation (NAF) has been compiling statistics on incidents of violence and disruption against abortion providers for almost 40 years. Our comprehensive database is an invaluable resource that enables us to report incidents of violence to law enforcement and detect patterns and trends in anti-abortion criminal activities.

Our 2015 statistics reflect a dramatic increase in hate speech and internet harassment, death threats, attempted murder, and murder, which coincided with the release of heavily-edited, misleading, and inflammatory videos beginning in July. Since 1977, there have been 11 murders, 26 attempted murders, 42 bombings, 185 arsons, and thousands of incidents of criminal activities directed at abortion providers. Three of those murders happened in November 2015, when Robert Dear opened fire at an abortion facility in Colorado Springs, killing three people and wounding nine others. This clinic is part of the Planned Parenthood Rocky Mountains affiliate, which was featured in the highly-edited, inflammatory videos. When police arrested Dear, he made a reference to part of the video smear campaign.

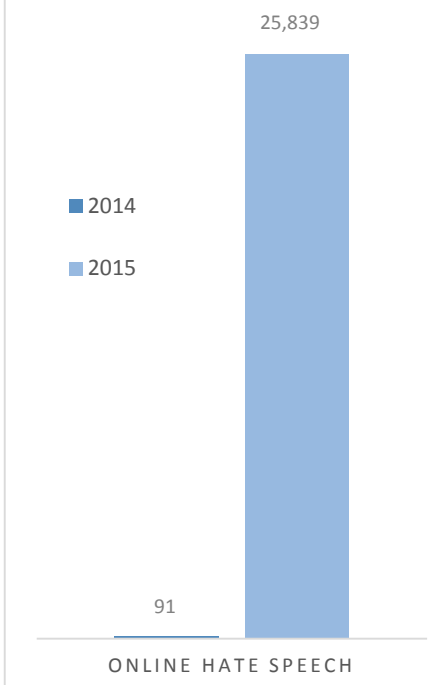
This attack in Colorado followed a documented and unprecedented increase in hate speech and threats immediately following the release of the misleading videos. After each video, social media, blogs, and news websites were filled with inflammatory comments about the doctors who were misrepresented in the videos, including that they were “evil,” “vile,” “inhuman,” “murderers,” and that abortion providers “deserve everything they have coming” to them.

The online hate speech took many forms, including clear threats of harm to individuals. After the CEO of a tissue procurement organization was featured in one of the inflammatory videos, an individual leveled death threats against her online. He stated that the CEO “is a death-profitteer” and “should be hung by the neck using piano wire and propped up on the lawn in front of the building. . .” The person went on to identify where the CEO lived and stated: “I’m going there . . . I’ll pay ten grand to whomever beats me to [CEO] . . . [CEO] must die . . .” The same individual offered a reward online for the murder of a doctor, posting, “I’ll pay ten large to whomever kills [Doctor]. Anyone. Go for it.” Both of these targeted individuals had to employ extensive security measures to protect themselves as a result of these postings. NAF uncovered and provided these threats to the Department of Justice (DOJ). The FBI investigated, and the individual who made the threats was arrested and is now being prosecuted.



The number of reported death threats increased dramatically from one in 2014 to 94 threats of direct harm in 2015. Following the videos, one member received a voicemail that said someone planned to, “...pull a Columbine and wipe everyone out...” and an unknown male called a hospital switchboard in North Carolina saying, “We will kill all [hospital] abortion doctors...”

VIOLENCE AND DISRUPTION: 2014 AND 2015 IN CONTRAST



Recognizing that NAF staff could not adequately document or retrieve all of the threats, NAF hired an outside security firm to specifically track online threats. They began their work in mid-November. With increased tracking capabilities, we were able to identify more than 25,000 incidents of hate speech and threats in just six weeks. We estimate that if enhanced tracking had begun immediately following the release of the illegally recorded videos, the number of online threats and hate postings would be well over 100,000.


Through our monitoring work, we uncovered another anti-abortion extremist who called for arsons at every abortion clinic in the country. He posted online, “One person setting fire to an abortion clinic will not do anything but thousands setting fire to an abortion clinic will speak volumes....It is not violent to set a building on fire...If thousands rallied together to set each murder house on fire, we would see the end of abortion...” NAF identified the perpetrator and shared this threat with law enforcement officials who were able to investigate and interview the perpetrator. This type of rhetoric incites some to take the law into their own hands by firebombing clinics and threatening abortion clinic staff. Within three months of the post, facilities in Washington, Louisiana, California, and Illinois were victims of arson. Additionally, a facility in New Hampshire experienced extreme vandalism when an individual broke into the facility and used a hatchet to destroy medical equipment, exam rooms, computers, phones, and plumbing fixtures, flooding the entire clinic. The clinic was closed for nearly six weeks for repairs.

NAF members reported more harassment and threats in 2015. The number of clinic blockades nearly doubled from 2014 to 2015. Incidents of picketing at facilities, which had been decreasing in previous years, increased from 5,402 in 2014 to 21,715 reported incidents in 2015—a number larger than numbers reported for any other year.

After a doctor was secretly recorded and featured in one of the misleading videos, anti-abortion extremists began picketing in front of her personal residence. Not only did abortion opponents cause disruption in her neighborhood, they also distributed flyers that said, “[Doctor] murders children at Planned Parenthood with your consent.” As a result of these direct threats and acts of intimidation, this doctor had to take extraordinary measures to help ensure her and her family’s safety.

Additionally, the number of hoax devices or suspicious packages found in or around abortion facilities increased four-fold in 2015. These threats have the potential to shut down facilities, sometimes for an entire day, thereby preventing women from obtaining abortion care.

The sharp rise in threats and violence in 2015 is alarming, and directly correlates to the release of inflammatory videos aimed at demonizing providers. We cannot continue to allow anti-abortion extremists to use violence to advance their own personal, political agendas. Nor can we continue to allow them to contribute to a climate that encourages violence against abortion providers. We’ve seen firsthand what can happen when abortion providers are targeted and demonized: clinic staff are threatened, facilities are set on fire, and doctors are murdered. Law enforcement and communities across the country need to seriously address these threats so that violence doesn’t continue to escalate. We cannot be silent or ignore this dangerous, unacceptable, and often criminal behavior.

	NAF VIOLENCE AND DISRUPTION STATISTICS (Summary by Decade)				
	INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE & DISRUPTION AGAINST ABORTION PROVIDERS				
	1977 to 89	1990 to 99	2000 to 09	2010 to 15	Totals
Violence					
Murder ¹	0	7	1	3	11
Attempted Murder	0	16	1	9	26
Bombing	25	15	1	1	42
Arson ¹	64	96	14	11	185
Attempted Bombing/Arson ¹	37	39	20	2	98
Invasion	247	117	25	15	404
Vandalism	244	575	570	145	1,534
Trespassing ²		193	1,864	621	2,678
Butyric Acid Attacks	0	100	0	0	100
Anthrax/Bioterrorism Threats	0	47	614	2	663
Assault & Battery	58	53	71	21	203
Death Threats/Threats of Harm ³	70	247	88	111	516
Kidnapping	2	1	1	0	4
Burglary	20	35	98	36	189
Stalking ⁴		404	110	45	561
Totals	767	1,945	3,478	1,024	7,214
Disruption					
Hate Mail/Harassing Calls	192	6,327	6,210	2,381	15,110
Hate Email/Internet Harassment ⁵			345	26,120	26,465
Hoax Devices/Suspicious Packages ⁶			160	63	223
Bomb Threats	237	245	129	22	634
Picketing ⁷	847	29,937	110,600	49,524	190,908
Obstruction ⁸				968	968
Totals	1,276	36,509	117,444	79,079	234,308
Clinic Blockades					
Number of Incidents	385	289	87	83	844
Number of Arrests ⁹	24,380	9,447	4	5	33,836

All numbers represent incidents reported to or obtained by NAF. Actual incidents are likely much higher.

¹ Incidents recorded are those classified as such by the appropriate law enforcement agency. Incidents that were ruled inconclusive or accidental are not included.

² Tabulation of trespassing began in 1999.

³ Death Threats, as of 2015, include any reported or discovered "Threats of Harm."

⁴ Stalking is defined as the persistent following, threatening, and harassing of an abortion provider, staff member, or patient away from the clinic. Tabulation of stalking incidents began in 1993.


⁵ Tabulation of email harassment began in 2002. As of mid-November 2015, enhanced technology allowed for an increased ability to uncover Hate Email/Internet Harassment.

⁶ Tabulation of hoax devices began in 2002.

⁷ NAF changed its method of collecting picketing data in 2012. Obstruction was separated into its own category.

⁸ Tabulation of Obstruction began in 2012. Obstruction is defined as the act of causing a delay or an attempt to cause a delay in the conduct of business or prevent persons from entering or exiting an area. This would apply to violations of the FACE Act.

⁹ The "number of arrests" represents the total number of arrests, not the total number of persons arrested. Many blockaders are arrested multiple times.

	NAF VIOLENCE AND DISRUPTION STATISTICS (1990 - 1999)										
	INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE & DISRUPTION AGAINST ABORTION PROVIDERS										
	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Totals 1990-99
Violence											
Murder ¹	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	2	0	7
Attempted Murder	0	2	0	1	8	1	1	2	1	0	16
Bombing	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	6	1	1	15
Arson ¹	10	8	19	12	11	14	3	8	4	7	96
Attempted Bombing/Arson ¹	3	1	13	7	3	1	4	2	5	0	39
Invasion	19	29	26	24	2	4	0	7	5	1	117
Vandalism	26	44	116	113	42	31	29	105	46	23	575
Trespassing ²										193	193
Butyric Acid Attacks	0	0	57	15	8	0	1	0	19	0	100
Anthrax/Bioterrorism Threats	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	35	47
Assault & Battery	6	6	9	9	7	2	1	9	4	0	53
Death Threats/Threats of Harm ³	7	3	8	78	59	41	13	11	25	2	247
Kidnapping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Burglary	2	1	5	3	3	3	6	6	6	0	35
Stalking ⁴				188	22	61	52	67	13	1	404
Totals	15	10	22	278	91	107	72	93	49	3	1,945
Disruption											
Hate Mail/Harassing Calls	21	142	469	628	381	255	605	2,829	915	82	6,327
Hate Email/Internet Harassment ⁵											
Hoax Devices/Suspicious Packages ⁶											
Bomb Threats	11	15	12	22	14	41	13	79	31	7	245
Picketing ⁷	45	292	2,898	2,279	1,407	1,356	3,932	7,518	8,402	1,808	29,937
Obstruction ⁸											
Totals	77	449	3,379	2,929	1,802	1,652	4,550	10,426	9,348	1,897	36,509
Clinic Blockades											
Number of Incidents	34	41	83	66	25	5	7	25	2	1	289
Number of Arrests ⁹	1,363	3,885	2,580	1,236	217	54	65	29	16	2	9,447

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Numbers prior to 2013 represent the U.S. and Canada only. Numbers from 2013-2015 represent the U.S., Canada, and Colombia.

	NAF VIOLENCE AND DISRUPTION STATISTICS (2000 - 2009)										
	INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE & DISRUPTION AGAINST ABORTION PROVIDERS										
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Totals 2000-09
Violence											
Murder ¹	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Attempted Murder	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bombing	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Arson ¹	2	2	1	3	2	2	0	2	0	0	14
Attempted Bombing/Arson ¹	3	2	0	0	1	6	4	2	1	1	20
Invasion	4	2	1	0	0	0	4	7	6	1	25
Vandalism	56	58	60	48	49	83	72	59	45	40	570
Trespassing ²	81	144	163	66	67	633	336	122	148	104	1,864
Butyric Acid Attacks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Anthrax/Bioterrorism Threats	30	554	23	0	1	0	0	1	3	2	614
Assault & Battery	7	2	1	7	8	8	11	12	6	9	71
Death Threats/Threats of Harm ³	9	14	3	7	4	10	10	13	2	16	88
Kidnapping	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Burglary	5	6	1	9	5	11	30	12	7	12	98
Stalking ⁴	17	10	12	3	15	8	6	19	19	1	110
Totals	215	795	265	143	152	761	474	249	237	187	3,478
Disruption											
Hate Mail/Harassing Calls	1,011	404	230	432	453	515	548	522	396	1,699	6,210
Hate Email/Internet Harassment ⁵			24	70	51	77	25	38	44	16	345
Hoax Devices/Suspicious Packages ⁶			41	13	9	16	17	23	24	17	160
Bomb Threats	20	31	7	17	13	11	7	6	13	4	129
Picketing ⁷	8,478	9,969	10,241	11,348	11,640	13,415	13,505	11,113	12,503	8,388	110,600
Obstruction ⁸											
Totals	9,509	10,404	10,543	11,880	12,166	14,034	14,102	11,702	12,980	10,124	117,444
Clinic Blockades											
Number of Incidents	4	2	4	10	34	4	13	7	8	1	87
Number of Arrests ⁹	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	4

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	INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE & DISRUPTION AGAINST ABORTION PROVIDERS						
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Totals 2010-15
Violence							
Murder ¹	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
Bombing	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Arson ¹	0	1	5	0	1	4	11
Attempted Bombing/Arson ¹	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Invasion	0	0	0	8	1	6	15
Vandalism	22	27	12	5	12	67	145
Trespassing ²	45	69	47	264	78	118	621
Butyric Acid Attacks	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Anthrax/Bioterrorism Threats	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Assault & Battery	4	3	7	0	1	6	21
Death Threats/Threats of Harm ³	2	2	6	2	1	94	111
Kidnapping	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burglary	13	8	5	0	1	9	36
Stalking ⁴	7	1	6	20	4	9	47
Totals	95	114	88	299	99	325	1,024
Disruption							
Hate Mail/Harassing Calls	404	365	452	420	367	373	2,381
Hate Email/Internet Harassment ⁵	44	17	41	88	91	25,839	26,120
Hoax Devices/Suspicious Packages ⁶	8	2	7	2	9	35	63
Bomb Threats	12	1	1	4	1	4	23
Picketing ⁷	6,347	4,780	5,706	5,574	5,402	21,715	49,524
Obstruction ⁸			79	396	251	242	968
Totals	6,815	5,165	6,286	6,484	6,121	48,208	79,079
Clinic Blockades							
Number of Incidents	1	5	6	3	23	45	83
Number of Arrests ⁹	0	0	4	1	0	0	5

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