

On July 21, 2021, the Department of Justice released a statement that a federal grand jury has charged a male suspect, 21-year-old Tres Genco of Hillsboro, Ohio, with plans to commit a mass shooting against women. He was also charged with the possession of illegal firearms. Genco self-identified as an “incel” and was active in the incel community on various internet forums.¹

According to an investigative article in Elle in 2016, the term “incel” was coined in 1993 and is short for “involuntary celibate.”² The incel community is made up of individuals identifying as male, who believe they are incapable of attracting women or finding any romantic or sexual partners. A main tenant of the incel philosophy is that these individuals believe they are inferior to other men, often referred to as “Chads,” who have more traditionally attractive physical features (e.g.: bone structure, eye color, height, etc.) The incel becomes resentful of these “Chads” and the women they believe are attracted to them and, in turn, become further isolated from society and any meaningful positive social connections.

BIT/CARE teams, counseling, and law enforcement should increase their knowledge on incels for several reasons. First, the incel’s attitude toward women reinforces negative stereotypes, harms development, and increases negative interactions. This leads to the potential for harm of women targeted by the incel as well as the further isolation and alienation of the incel from the larger community, leaving them to retreat and find their only solace in the dark chat rooms of the internet. This loneliness can lead to an increase in depression and risk of suicide. In extreme cases, their frustration percolates and grows, narrowing a focus on hurting the women who reject them and others who are successful and happy in relationships.

In this most recent case, Genco came on law enforcement’s radar in May 2020 after they received a call from someone who was concerned about him. According to the indictment that was released, the caller reported Genco had been “erratic and somewhat violent over the past several months and had just locked himself in the bathroom with a gun.” The caller also read part of Genco’s two manifestos he had written over the last few months, which included detailed plans to commit a mass shooting on May 23, 2020, with a “kill count” of 3,000 people.³

Police were able to place Genco in custody and discovered more concerning information once they located his manifestos. In his writings, he details his efforts at enrolling in basic training for the army with the sole purpose of learning how to kill women. According to the indictment excerpts, Genco also writes, “training will be for the attainment of one reality, the death of what I have been deprived most, but also cherish and fantasize at the opportunity of having but has been neglected of, women.” He later adds, “I will slaughter out of jealousy, hatred, and revenge . . . I will take away the power of life that they withhold from me, by showing there is more than just happiness and fulfillment, there is all encompassing death, the great equalizer that will bear all of us into its seductively calm velvet of silence and serenity.’

¹ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/ohio-man-charged-hate-crime-related-plot-conduct-mass-shooting-women-illegal-possession>

² <https://www.elle.com/culture/news/a34512/woman-who-started-incel-movement/>

³ <https://www.scribd.com/document/516762120/Tres-Genco-Indictment>

In addition to writing his manifestos, Genco took many steps towards planning and preparing for his attack. He researched different sororities and universities in Ohio, tried to obtain codes to police scanners for university police in the area, and he saved guides on how to construct M-16 assault rifles. His internet searches offer a glimpse into his motivations at the time he was arrested. A selection of his searches include: “planning a shooting crime,” “when does preparing for a crime become an attempt,” and “how many days until May 23,” along with more searches about his weaponry, including “difference between full auto and semi auto” and “homemade flash bangs.”

This case presents several examples of significant risk factors for targeted violence. Genco made a direct threat towards a specific group (college-aged women) and created an action plan and timeframe (May 23) for his attack. He had access to and acquired weapons, focused in on his target, had hardened thoughts around the target of his attack, and researched methods for completing his attack. For additional reference, we have rated this case and the writing excerpts that are available from his manifestos using NABITA’s Looking Glass assessment tool. The results of this tool can be found [here](#).

This case highlights the importance to train our community to recognize and refer potential leakage – or the indirect and direct mentions that an individual is considering causing harm to another. In this case, Genco leaked information about his planned attack to at least one person in the community that then had an opportunity to call and warn the public. In a school setting, BITs should engage in training and education to their community to help learn to identify and refer concerning behavior, or leakage.

This case lends itself to more in-depth research as it continues to unfold, and NABITA will continue to track its progression. In the meantime, we use this case as a reminder of the different risk factors for violence, the importance of our roles on BITs, and the need to identify and refer leakage to the BIT.

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