

# A Sniper in the Tower: The Charles Whitman Murders

Gary M. Lavergne

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On August 1, 1966, Charles Joseph Whitman ascended the University of Texas Tower and committed what was then the largest simultaneous mass murder in American history. He gunned down forty-five people inside and around the Tower before he was killed by two Austin police officers. During the previous evening he had killed his wife and mother, bringing the total to sixteen people dead and at least thirty-one wounded. The murders spawned debates over issues which still plague America today: domestic violence, child abuse, drug abuse, military indoctrination, the insanity defense, and the delicate balance between civil liberties and public safety. "An outstanding job of chronicling one of the most significant cases in the annals of American crime. . . . Lavergne skillfully researched, documented, and analyzed a case that in many ways defined the concept of 'mass murder' . . . will likely become a classic in anyone's library of true crime editions."--James Alan Fox, Dean of Criminal Justice, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, and an authority on mass murder



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