

## Street Level Red Teaming: The Cop Killer

By Fred Leland

What is your preconceived perception of what I (the person who wants to assault or kill) you looks like? Is it a person with raggedy clothes, long hair and a ratty looking beard who comes from the poor side of town? Or is it a Charley Manson lookalike you have in mind? Do you perceive me the one who will assault or kill you if given the opportunity by only my size and physical characteristics? Have you ever given any thought to what makes me tick (**COP KILLER MINDSET**)? Have you thought about why on most occasions I will avoid YOU, the cop? But if cornered or about to be taken off the street and put into jail, I will do everything in my power to remain free. That everything includes assaulting or killing you if necessary. You see Mr. Policeman I have made the decision, I will not go, I will not be arrested, and you will not stop me, long before I have met you.

The fact is we **cop killers** come in all shapes, sizes, colors and socioeconomic backgrounds. But we **cop killers** do have some things in common the cop should be aware of, apply to his knowledge base and then develop the skill set to observe, orient, decide and act accordingly when the cop, offender and circumstances encounter on the street.

My life was not all bad, but neither was it all that good, either. On average the **cop killer** is male and 26 years old. I am single with no strong ties to family although this varies as I may have been married and then divorced. My family background may have been stable as a kid, a good percentage of us **cop killers** grew up much like you in comfortable, average or marginal, but self-sufficient home economically speaking. Believe it or not, a small percentage of us (about 10%) came from advantaged homes while only about 15% of us **cop killers** come from sub-marginal (poor) economic homes. So we are in some ways not much different at least in how we were raised.

In many cases the **cop killer** suffered from physical and psychological abuse. I learned to solve problems by using arguing, shouting or physical violence. It seemed to work so I began to refine my techniques and I have used them often on the street. I learned to commit crimes and take advantage of the justice system early on as a child because the significant others in my life had been involved in criminal activity. I have learned my craft from the experienced criminal and someone I admired and cared about. This way of life feels right to me because it's what I know. It's how I live! You should remember this!

I have committed crimes myself; the crimes vary involving the most serious type's murder, rape, sexual assaults, robbery and burglary and weapons violations. But us **cop killers** are not always participating in violent serious crime. Many of us participate in low level crimes such as larceny and theft, vandalism, disorderly conduct and the vast majority of us (75%) are involved in drugs. Many of us also abuse alcohol or drugs, making us even more unpredictable when you encountered by you.

My employment history I would describe as unstable or in many cases I am chronically unemployed. Some of us **cop killers** hold jobs as laborers, clerks or in the service industry or even sales but commit crimes to help support ourselves. About 25% of us have served our country in the military and have been honorably discharged. While in the military we received formal weapons and tactical training. This

puts at least some of us on equal or higher ground with you when it comes to our abilities of reading our adversary and our environment and in our abilities to out-position you physically and psychologically. So often times you deal with me on a professional basis and have no idea **I am** the one if pressed who will not comply with your intent.

I learned from direct experience that crime pays, until you get caught! I do not want to get caught, so, I learned to deceive you and how to fight if my deception fails. This is how I adapted and got what I wanted out of life and you are not about to take that from me. Do you understand?

In no way do I want you to think that these are the only attributes and traits of a **cop killer**. There are many complex social and psychological issues that contribute to creating an individual who willfully kills or attempts to kill a law enforcement officer. But what I mention here are many of the commonalities you need to beware of to avoid becoming a victim of MY intent. You see, us **cop killers** have a say in this game as well and you best be aware!

*The source of this short post is adapted from the Federal Bureau of Investigation report; **Violent Encounters: a Study of Felonious Assaults on Our Nations Law Enforcement Officers**. This study took from 1992-2006 and covered over 800 incidents of felonious assaults against officers and direct interviews with cop killers.*

We need to train smart and hard to create and nurture the proper mindset and fight complacency. Understanding the deadly mix, of OFFICER, OFFENDER and the CIRCUMSTANCES you find yourself in are the keys to your winning on the street. You must strive to understand more about every call, every incident, and every encounter as these three components converge as they greatly influence each event. Your alertness and ability to adapt to the situation and altering just one of these components may prevent the **cop killer** by disrupting his decision making cycle (OODA Loop), enhancing yours. The alternative is to high a price to pay.

Stay Oriented

Fred