



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 9, 2017

Here's What 100 FBI Agents Know About the Las Vegas Shooter

It's been a week since Stephen Paddock shot and killed nearly 60 people at a concert in Las Vegas and wounded another 500 before taking his own life. Since then, [100 FBI agents](#) and other investigators have been combing Paddock's background to try to determine a motive. After spending thousands of man-hours searching his computers, residence, hotel room, vehicles, and banking connections, and checking into his mental health records, criminal behavior, and finances, they have uncovered an immense amount of information. They have interviewed hotel employees and viewed hours of videotape from hotel surveillance cameras. They've learned a lot, but they still don't have a motive.



And now they're asking the public for help. Today the FBI will post billboards near the scene offering rewards for any information that neighbors, bystanders, or other observers might be able to provide in their quest.

They have learned that Paddock's father's photograph appeared on the FBI's "10 Most Wanted" posters in the early 1960s. Once Benjamin Paddock was incarcerated, neither Stephen nor his two brothers, Eric and Bruce, had any more contact with him.

Paddock's teen years were uneventful. He played varsity tennis in high school, leaving behind an unremarkable record. He graduated from California State University with a business degree. His few friends remembered him as quiet, well-behaved, and facile in mathematics.

He took a job with the U.S. Post Office as a letter carrier and then became an agent for the Internal Revenue Service. After that he went to work for Lockheed (later to become Lockheed-Martin) auditing defense contracts.

He married and divorced twice, leaving no children. He started dabbling in real estate, buying up cheap houses and renting them out. He caught the California real estate boom in the early 1990s and rode it for all it was worth. In 2014 the real estate partnership he was in was liquidated, leaving him a multimillionaire.

Along the way he learned to gamble profitably, treating it not as entertainment but a business. He found that video poker worked best for him and he would spend hours off in the corner of a casino playing, and winning. The casinos in Las Vegas knew him well, especially when he started costing them money. They eventually stopped comping him his rooms and meals.

That's where he met his girlfriend Marilou Danley, a Filipino who worked at casinos in Reno and Las Vegas.



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He was generous with his money, and used some of his comps to treat his brother Eric and a nephew to \$1,000 dinners in Las Vegas. He sent \$100,000 to his girlfriend while she was in the Philippines to help her buy a home. He even sent cookies to his mother in Florida on her birthday.

He was an odd duck, but not dangerous. He drove a car wearing gloves, even in the summer, and kept the window shades pulled while he was at home. The investigators could find no footprint on social media, no criminal record, and no political ideology for the Las Vegas shooter.

He owned two airplanes and had a pilot's license.

He was prescribed Diazepam (Valium) by a local doctor in June, but suggestions that this somehow influenced his behavior were denied by Dr. Michael First of Columbia University. First said that although some of Diazepam's side effects could cause aggressive behavior, the extent to which Paddock carefully planned his attack over many months indicated that there were "deeper issues" involved than just simply taking Diazepam. Investigators searching for those "deeper issues" remain in the dark.

When police examined his 2017 Chrysler Pacifica they found 50 pounds of Tannerite, a patented target explosive used for long-range shooting. When a high-velocity round hits a target many yards down range, it explodes, indicating a hit and eliminating the need for the shooter to go downrange to inspect the target visually. Some investigators have raised the possibility that Paddock had so much Tannerite in his car that he hoped/planned/expected that it would explode if police were to target it. Again, speculation.

Some investigators got excited when they thought officers saw flashes coming from the fourth floor of Paddock's hotel, which Snopes quickly put to rest, as there were no broken-out windows on the fourth floor. The flashing light was a strobe light that had been flashing for hours before Paddock started shooting, and the police and SWAT team heading up the stairs to the 32nd floor most certainly would have heard gunfire as they hit the fourth floor. Another dead end.

Investigators remain stymied when checking on claims by an Islamic terrorist group that Paddock was one of their "soldiers." They could find no credible evidence that this 64-year-old white man had somehow been radicalized and assimilated into the Jihad.

Nothing more appears in the media about the mysterious "Antonio" — an alleged hotel employee who claimed that he served Paddock and a guest one day before Paddock rented his room at Mandalay Bay. But they did learn that Paddock had been casing Las Vegas for at least two weeks prior, having found that he had rented a three-room suite at the Ogden luxury condominium complex overlooking the concert area for two weeks before he took his perch at Mandalay Bay.

They wondered how anyone could move dozens of rifles and ammunition, using 10 suitcases, into his hotel room without anyone noticing. What investigators learned is that that happens all the time: Media crews supporting various events bring video and audio equipment by the case into rooms, so Paddock's efforts went unnoticed.

They got excited when they discovered a note on the table next to his body, but were disappointed to learn that it was essentially undecipherable, and not a much-hoped-for suicide note. Investigators said the note was "significant to the gunman" but to no one else.

They also got excited when they learned that there is a public shooting range not far from where Paddock lived in Mesquite, especially when they uncovered video footage of him driving down the road



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to the range. But further investigation proved fruitless: Paddock never fired a single round from any of his rifles at that range.

One thing missing was any evidence whatsoever of any interest by Paddock in things spiritual or eternal. He never attended church, so far as the investigators could tell, nor did he ever express an interest in God or His creation and purpose. Paddock was completely and totally a secular man, living for the “now.” When something snapped — and that something remains unknown — Paddock had the resources to inflict terrible damage and horror on people he didn’t know and never would know, for purposes that investigators are still unable to discern.

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.

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