



## Explaining Suicide: Patterns, Motivations, and What Notes Reveal

By Cheryl L. Meyer, Taronish Irani, Katherine A. Hermes, Betty Yung

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**Explaining Suicide: Patterns, Motivations, and What Notes Reveal** By Cheryl L. Meyer, Taronish Irani, Katherine A. Hermes, Betty Yung

The rate of suicides is at its highest level in nearly 30 years. Suicide notes have long been thought to be valuable resources for understanding suicide motivation, but up to now the small sample sizes available have made an in-depth analysis difficult. ***Explaining Suicide: Patterns, Motivations, and What Notes Reveal*** represents a large-scale analysis of suicide motivation across multiple ages during the same time period. This was made possible via a unique dataset of all suicide notes collected by the coroner's office in southwestern Ohio 2000–2009.

Based on an analysis of this dataset, the book identifies top motivations for suicide, how these differ between note writers and non-note writers, and what this can tell us about better suicide prevention. The book reveals the extent to which suicide is motivated by interpersonal violence, substance abuse, physical pain, grief, feelings of failure, and mental illness. Additionally, it discusses other risk factors, what differentiates suicide attempters from suicide completers, and lastly what might serve as protective factors toward resilience.

- Analyzes 1200+ suicide cases from one coroner's office
- Identifies the top motivations for suicide that are based on suicide notes
- Discusses the extent to which suicides are impulsive vs. planned
- Leads to a better understanding on how to prevent suicide
- Emphasizes resilience factors over risk factors

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- Rank: #719287 in Books
- Published on: 2017-01-18
- Original language: English
- Dimensions: 9.02" h x .69" w x 5.98" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 288 pages

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **About the Author**

Cheryl L. Meyer has blended together a unique combination of degrees including a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology, a Ph.D. in Social Psychology and a law degree. Her research has an interdisciplinary focus incorporating legal, educational, psychological and sociological perspectives. Dr. Meyer's research interests focus on forensic psychology, specifically intrafamilial violence, and program evaluation. She has published several books, been quoted widely in newspapers or magazines, and has appeared on numerous radio and television shows, most notably, 60 Minutes. Dr. Meyer is a Professor at Wright State University School of Professional Psychology. From 2010-2015 she was awarded the title Board of Trustees University Professor for her outstanding contributions beyond the confines of her own discipline.

Taronish. H. Irani is a licensed clinical psychologist working at The Counseling Center at SUNY Buffalo State College. She is an early career psychologist who received her Master's degree in Clinical Psychology (2005) from University of Mumbai, India and a Psy.D. degree in Clinical Psychology (2012) from Wright State University, Ohio. She completed her APA Accredited internship from Louisiana State University Health Science Center (LSUHSC), School of Medicine, and her post-doctoral fellowship from the Center for Behavioral Medicine-Affiliate Hospital of University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) School of Medicine. Some of her clinical and research areas include trauma informed care, diversity issues, consultation, psychology education and training, violence and suicide prevention, forensic psychology, international psychology, higher education, program evaluation & program development, and severe and persistent mental illness.

Katherine A. Hermes is chair of the History Department at Central Connecticut State University (2012-), where she has taught since 1997. She was co-coordinator of the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program at CCSU from 2006-2008. Formerly she was a lecturer in history at the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand, from 1992-1997. She received her law degree (J.D., 1992) from Duke University School of Law and her Ph.D. in History (1995) from Yale University. Her fields of specialty are Early American history, the Atlantic World, legal history and Native American history. She is currently working on a project studying concepts of harm in North American indigenous and colonial societies.

Betty Yung led this project but passed away before she could see it come to fruition. Yung served as officer of grants, research, evaluation and accreditation for five years at Wright State University and in 1988 joined School of Professional Psychology as a grants and proposals writer. Yung's areas of specialty included violence prevention and health disparities for minority populations. She was a grant reviewer for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on family violence initiatives. Yung co-authored texts and videos on violence prevention for juveniles.

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