

Somehow, I was connected to three of the four people murdered 50 years ago during the Kent State University tragedy considering we had a 20,000 plus student enrolment including graduate school on campus. It still is a bit traumatic for me as I was there among the other graduating undergrads. At the exact time of the shooting, I was in the office of one of my psychology professors, Dr. Joseph (Joe) Danks, discussing the research project I was involved with when he said, "Did you hear that? That's gunfire!"

It is a bit of a blur remembering the sequences leading up to the shooting. The tension the night before had me volunteering with an arm band to help control the rioting in the hope the National Guard were told who we were – peaceful students amongst the angry rioters throwing things at the Guardsmen. I was quite scared in attempting to calm some of the protesters to maintain their distance. When I heard they burned the ROTC building, as a Canadian, I wondered what immunity I would have if any mass charges were laid as I just wanted to get back to my off-campus apartment. I secretly travelled alone via the wooded old part of the campus when a helicopter picked me up with its spotlight hovering overhead. I ducked into a heavy grove of trees and remained absolutely still expecting a command to be blurted out or worse, gunfire. After an undetermined time, it left me and I scampered across the short remaining part of the campus and headed home.

The next day, there were armed Guardsmen on the roofs of off-campus buildings watching us coming and going but the campus closed. My poor mother couldn't contact me as all the lines were jammed but I finally got through to relieve her stress. It was on all the news in Canada. Prior to the night before the day protest in which the shootings took place, armed Guardsmen were at all campus lecture building entrances. This was mainly due, IMO, because the Black Panthers came to the campus. I wondered if I was going to graduate as all I had left was a major paper for a biology class and my psychology thesis based on my research.

Three of the four slain students were Jewish in a campus that was predominantly Protestant. I don't believe there was any proven connection of intent nor do I hold that belief due to the specific situation but it is an interesting and unfortunate statistic.

My mother and brother-in-law came to Ohio for my graduation about one month later. Shortly after returning to Canada, I left for Europe, travelling all over and working in both England and Spain. I could not feel comfortable even returning to North America for a little over two years upon which, the rest is my own work and personal history not related to the aforementioned event.

Shortly after the KSU shootings, I was taking a fourth year senior class in psychology with the late Dr. Wes Zaynor. It was seminar-based because there was only a handful of students at that level in class. Jeff Miller was a freshman at the time majoring in psychology in which Dr. Zaynor, with whom I became friends, knew Jeff – I believe he was either Jeff's student advisor or had him in a class and got to know him in that brief first year @ KSU for Jeff. When the class session was over, I stayed to chat with Wes and he absolutely broke down and cried in reminiscing about such a recent tragedy which touched him personally. That experience is indelibly imprinted in my memory.