Columbine: The Power of Denial
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The official memorial for the Columbine High School shootings was a modest structure located near the school but invisible from it. It was a strictly local enterprise built without federal funds. This chapter considers the almost immediate demolition of the library where most of the deaths occurred and the refusal to acknowledge or even name the two shooters, who also killed themselves, anywhere in the memorial or in anniversary ceremonies. Arguably, the local faith-based cemeteries with their commemorative markers for the victims function as equally (if not more) important memorials as the official complex. In this highly religious community with a strong evangelical Christian base, spiritual interpretations dominated the various narratives that emerged to explain the shootings. However, two films by award-winning directors, Roger Moore (Bowling for Columbine) and Gus Van Sant (Elephant) suggest alternative interpretations, raising issues that might have been explored in a memorial museum.