

A Fresh Spate Of Killings. The Look Beyond

Arguments have gone back and forth about whether mass killings are on the rise or not. A lot depends on how you define a mass killing. Leftists use more liberal definition (of course), allowing them to qualify more killings as “mass killings” or “mass shootings” than what the FBI uses.

Based upon the FBI’s definition, there isn’t any rise, but based upon the leftist definition, there is.

But there’s should be no question in anyone’s mind about the last week. Three mass killings in one week is way too much for any nation, even one as large as ours is. First there was the terrorist attack in Manhattan, where a supposed ISIS supporter drove a truck down a bike path, killing and maiming in his wake.

Then there was a shooter in the Denver Metro area, who entered a Wal-Mart and shot three people, before making his escape. Finally, there was the Sunday shooting in Sutherland Springs, Texas, leaving 26 dead and about 20 others wounded. All this, just a month after [the Las Vegas shooting](#).

The Texas shooting is still a breaking story, as I sit here writing this. Little is known, other than the name of the shooter and a few other details. Motive, the most important thing for the investigators to try to uncover, is still at doubt. But it is interesting to note that the church he attacked was attended by his ex-wife and her family.

Devin Patrick Kelly, the Texas shooter, apparently has a history of violence, having been court-martialed for domestic violence in 2012; a crime that led to his incarceration, loss of military rank and a bad conduct discharge, as well as his wife divorcing him. This raises the questions, could this have

been nothing more than a grudge killing?

Obviously, more details will come out as time goes on and the investigators look further into his life. One glaring fact stands out right now; that is, because of his history with violence, he should not have been able to buy a firearm legally. Yet somehow he did.

The Flaw in the System

One of the first things that investigators track down in a case of this type is where the murder weapon was purchased. In this case, the gun he used, [an AR-15](#), was purchased over the counter in an Academy Sporting Goods store in the city of San Antonio.

Having bought firearms in an Academy store before, I can assure you that they follow the law explicitly when selling firearms. So what went wrong?

There are three basic steps required for buying a firearm in the United States.

The first is filling out an ATF form 4473, Firearms Transaction Record. There are several questions asked on this form, mostly involving things that would deny one the right to purchase a firearm. Obviously, the killer in this case lied on that form, or he wouldn't have been able to make the purchase. But then, there's really nothing to stop people from lying on such forms, any more than there is to keep them from lying on their taxes.

The second required step is to prove that you are who you say you are. This is easily accomplished by presenting a driver's license, or other acceptable form of picture ID, preferably a government-issued one. Obviously, he was able to do that.

Finally, the seller has to contact NICS, the National Instant Criminal Background Check system, a sub-agency of the FBI.

This computerized database is supposed to have records of all crimes committed by anyone in the country. Since he had assaulted his wife and child in 2012, there should have been records of that in the database, denying him the ability to buy the gun he used in the crime. Yet, somehow, he did.

Adding a touch of confusion to the case, **Kelley was denied a Texas Concealed Handgun Permit**, which would make it seem that he couldn't pass the NICS background check. However, the background check for the Concealed Handgun Permit is much more extensive than that for purchasing a firearm. So it is possible that the NICS database didn't have all the data that was used in the Texas Concealed Handgun Permit background check.

This brings to light a major flaw in the background check system that is currently in use. The "loophole" in the system isn't the non-existent "gun show loophole" that gun grabbers love to talk about. Rather, it's the loophole created by the simple fact that not all the information seems to make it into the NICS database.

Here we have a man who was convicted of two counts of assault in a military court-martial and served time incarcerated for it. Yet that felony didn't keep him from buying a firearm, even though it should have. We don't need more gun laws; we need the ones on the books to be enforced.

One of the problems with the system is that there is no federal law requiring that states send mental-health information to the NICS, only state laws; and those only exist in 38 states. Even then, the states only send records on those who have been judged to have mental health issues in a court of law. Most people with mental health issues don't end up there.

Some are calling for doctors to be able to make that judgment call, without a court order. But that denies people the right

of to defend themselves before the judge's bench. If a doctor can claim that someone is mentally incapable of owning a firearm, then anti-gun doctors could literally say that of all their patients, without the patients having any recourse.

But while there is a mental health element to this particular shooting, that's not the big concern; at least, not as far as him buying a firearm. **His conviction for assault should have been enough for that.** Does this mean that there are crimes committed in the military, which are not being reported to NICS?

For that matter, how many federal cases, state courts and municipalities are really reporting all crimes to NICS? I would venture to guess that there are a lot. If that's the case, there are massive holes in the system, holes that are making it possible for criminals to legally buy firearms, just as we see in this case.

But with no penalty to states or municipalities for not reporting, there is no way to enforce this law.

Is This Like Other Mass Shootings?

The motivation behind the killing isn't just of interest to investigators, but to all of us. Is this another mass shooting, in the style of Sandy Hook and Columbine? Is it [a terrorist incident like San Bernardino](#)? Or, could there be another motive behind the shooter's actions?

Until investigators uncover the motive behind the killer's rampage, there is no chance of learning anything to help prevent any future such incidents.

While little is known at this time, first indicator fit the model of other mass killings. The killer has been described as "creepy," "crazy," "weird," "negative," "quiet" and "depressed." He was also an avowed atheist, which may have

something to do with his choice of targets. All of this lends credence to the possibility of some sort of mental disorder; although no real evidence has been brought to light, other than anecdotal evidence, to show any true mental disorder.

The other thing that appears to follow the pattern of other mass shooters was his obvious preparation. While it is still very early in the investigation to have any idea of how long he has been planning this killing spree, he bought his rifle back in 2014, three years ago. Could he have been thinking of this for that long?

Even if he didn't, this clearly wasn't a spur of the moment action. He showed up at his target area in full tactical gear, including a ballistic vest. That alone shows that he took the time to prepare. He clearly went to that church with the intent of committing mass murder and didn't want to be stopped before he could complete his objective.

This has led investigators to look into the possibility of Kelley being a member of a local militia group. Most militia groups are conservative, although since Trump became president, there have been some liberal ones that have risen up.

I would not be surprised if the investigative team finds extensive evidence in Kelley's home, showing how he had planned this crime. That would follow the pattern of other mass killers and show that this crime was more than one of passion, but rather another such crime caused by mental illness.

A Good Guy with a Gun

A common trait of mass shootings is that the killer ends their own life, as the culmination of their act. The exception to this rule is when someone else ends it for them.

In this case, the shooting spree was ended by a good guy with a gun, a local resident, who heard the shooting and engaged the shooter with his own rifle, hitting him in the side, through a gap in his body armor.

This caused Kelley to drop his rifle and take off in his SUV, with the man who shot him and another man in pursuit. Whether this was necessary or not is yet to be determined, as the killer ran his vehicle off the road, hitting a tree. When police arrived, they found him dead.

Whether the killer was finally done in by his own bullet, by the bullet fired by the local hero or by the police is something that we won't know until the autopsy is completed. But one thing is clear; as horrific as this crime was, it could have been worse, if it had not been for a good guy with a gun.

While leftists won't admit it, guns are used to stop crimes hundreds of thousands, or maybe even millions of times per year. One study puts the figure at 2.5 million. Statistics for this are hard to collate, simply because most of the time when an individual uses a gun in self-defense, it doesn't get reported.

There is no requirement to report a crime that didn't happen, and 70% of the time that lawful gun owners draw a gun in the face of a criminal, that's enough to cause the criminal to flee.

So, What Can We Do?

Ultimately, the big question for all of us is: How can we stop gun crime?

Those on the political left want to blame the crime on guns, outlawing them. They want to eliminate guns entirely and if they can't eliminate as many as they can. But unless they can

find a way to repeal the physical laws that make guns work, they can't eliminate them. All they can do by passing laws is make it harder for law-abiding citizens to defend themselves.

But as long as there are evil people in the world, there will be crime, even violent crime. The earliest recorded crime in human history was when Cain killed his brother Abel, and he didn't need a gun to do it. So until we can eliminate all problems with human morality (which is obviously impossible), people will continue to kill, maim and otherwise harm each other.

What we can do is to quit sensationalizing murder... or rather, the news media can. Mass killers are looking for their moment of glory, as a way to end their otherwise unremarkable lives. Going down in infamy may not be the best option, but in their minds, it's better than ending their lives as an unknown.

There is also a strong mental illness factor in mass murder, which has never been dealt with effectively. Over and over we hear of these cases, only to find that the murderers were either on psychosomatic drugs or should have been. That alone should be enough to legally deny them their rights to own firearms, by court order. Yet it isn't happening.

As a society, we need to figure out a better way of diagnosing and treating those with these sorts of mental illnesses. That part has to be done by medical professionals. But we also need to make the general population aware of who these people are, regardless of any privacy laws. We currently deny this right of privacy to sex offenders and I really can't see a whole lot of difference.

Will we ever be totally successful in diagnosing and treating the mental illness behind mass murder? I doubt it. But we can and should do a much better job than what we are doing now. It's time for Congress to take action, not to eliminate our Second Amendment rights, but to make these mental health

issues a priority and fund them appropriately.



The Real Answer

But the real answer is the one I mentioned earlier... the good guys with a gun. While I hope to never have to kill one of these mass murderers, I live every day as if I have to be ready to do so. I carry concealed from the time I get dressed in the morning, to the time I go to bed at night, even at church.

Sunday, before hearing about the Sutherland Springs shooting, I was talking with a member of our church, a retired police officer, who has a concealed carry license. Although he is licensed and was a firearms instructor while in the police department, his gun was in his car. So had this event happened in our church, he would not have been able to help.

There are four of us who carry concealed in our church, and I can guarantee you we will be meeting together to discuss strategy, should such a thing ever happen in our church. While I realize the likelihood of that is slim, I also realize that it is not impossible. So we will be ready, should it ever occur.

Ultimately, our safety is in our own hands. If you don't carry concealed, I'd like to recommend you start. Get your license, go to the range and practice, and be ready, should this ever happen to you.

While I would rather not have to kill a killer in my church, neighborhood store or anywhere else, I'd rather be part of the solution, than just stand there wondering if I'm going to become a statistic instead!

*This article has been written by **Bill White** for Survivopedia.*

References:

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