

Sick, not Stupid

✘ In the aftermath of the Sandy Hook shootings there has been talk of trying to do something about mental illness. The idea people are grappling with is trying to determine before the fact; who may be likely to commit the kind of horrific mass shootings as what happened in Connecticut. Along these lines the President, in his media event of a week ago, wants to have the CDC do a study on the subject. It should go without saying that there is certainly a mental problem involved when someone decides to commit mass murder. The goal should be to find the best way to prevent these events from occurring. Is this the best way to achieve that goal?

John Lott ("More Guns, Less Crime" author) in a recent Wall Street Journal Op Ed pointed out that there has been only one shooting where more than 3 people have been killed, in the last 60+ years where the victims were allowed to be armed. All other shootings took place where guns were prohibited. In a country where 39 of our states allow concealed carry, this fact cannot be a coincidence. Two recent examples of mass shootings drive this point home. These examples took place in states that allowed concealed weapons, but the location of the shooting did not.

Colorado allows the concealed carry of guns for those who have a permit. In the Aurora Colorado shooting at the premier of Batman where 12 were killed and 58 wounded last summer, the theater strictly prohibited guns. There were 9 theaters within a 20 minute drive of the home of the shooter that were showing this premier that night. This was not the largest, it was not the closest, but it was the only one of the 9 theaters that did not allow guns. This meant that he could kill with impunity without the risk of being shot himself. The act surely shows the behavior of a sick individual, but the location was thought out.

In the Ft. Hood shooting in 2009 where 13 soldiers were killed and 30 more were injured, guns were not allowed. It may seem strange that an army base does not allow weapons. In fact, it was civilian police who stopped the shooter. The largest Army base in the world called 9-1-1. This federal property located inside the state of Texas is under federal law, not the concealed carry law that Texas has adopted. If this sick perpetrator had tried this act anywhere outside the army base he would have likely been shot dead by a citizen or army personnel who are only allowed to be armed outside the base. It seems surreal that these trained professional soldiers can carry their weapons outside the base but not inside. The state of Texas trusts them more than the federal government who trained them. Again, if you analyze the decision of where the shooter decided to commit this heinous act, there is logic to it.

It is revealing that all of these sick, mentally ill, deranged people made the rational, thought out, logical decision to shoot people where they could do the most damage. They were almost guaranteed that their victims could not shoot back. Perhaps there are times when it can be determined who will commit such acts, but there is one sure way to allow people to protect themselves. A federal law allowing concealed carry would permit people to greatly reduce the impact of these shooters. The fact that these shooters and others made a cold calculated decision to only commit these killings where the victims were unarmed is instructive. Concealed carry could have prevented the attempt completely.