

Do Brian Terry's Parents Deserve Less Attention Than Cindy Sheehan Got?

☒ There are many elements of the ATF's botched *Fast and Furious* gun-walking operation that are worthy of attention. It's a compelling story, really: The U.S. government loses track of an arsenal of weapons that end up being used by a Mexican drug cartel in the murder of a young border patrol agent named Brian Terry. Up to two hundred additional deaths across the border in Mexico are thought to be linked to the missing guns as well. A suspected federal cover-up ensues with the explanation for the failed operation morphing from a sheer denial of its mere existence to Attorney General, Eric Holder's total unawareness of who authorized it.

To me, however, the most intriguing thing about the story is the mainstream media's virtual blackout of it. While viewers of FOX News and listeners of conservative talk radio have been well aware of the details of *Fast and Furious* for over a year, the rest of the country hadn't a clue of its existence until President Obama exercised executive privilege to keep sealed documents pertaining to the operation from the U.S. Congress. It was that, along with the Republicans' threat of holding Eric Holder in contempt, that garnished *any* sort of attention from the establishment press.

And when that time finally came, most of the networks introduced the story as if it had no history. Anchors like Brian Williams and pundits like Rachel Maddow described it as some sort of out-of-the-blue, partisan side-show during an election year. The reality, of course, is that the *Fast and Furious* controversy started long before this election year.

The peculiar conduct of the media begs the question of why

they ignored it for so long. After all, this is the kind of story that they've been all over in the past: A young man is killed while bravely serving his country, after being put in harm's way by what is perceived to be a reckless decision by the government. The man's grieving family seeks answers and accountability and goes public out of frustration.

It sounds a lot like the plight of Cindy Sheehan from 2004 to 2006, and Pat Tillman's family. Both of those sympathetic stories received a huge amount of attention. They made magazine covers, and reporters were at the beckon call of the families whenever they wanted to vent their frustrations.

In the minds of the media, however, they've managed to rationalize the death of Brian Terry as a *completely* different circumstance. For starters, George W. Bush is no longer our president. That's enough of an explanation in itself. But additionally, border violence isn't a political issue that liberals want to bring attention to. It introduces complexities to the immigration debate that the Democratic party would rather avoid. War violence, on the other hand, worked quite well for the media when the goal was to hurt Bush.

Speaking of the war issue, isn't it absolutely miraculous how the anti-war movement either ceased to exist or was completely dumped by the media the moment Barack Obama took office? This despite the facts that Obama has escalated the war in Afghanistan and even started one of his own in Libya.

Back to the topic at hand...

In the era of Obama, a murdered border-agent and a government cover-up simply isn't that noteworthy to the media. It's just not as consequential of a story, apparently, as crude comments from Rush Limbaugh, Ann Romney's horseback riding, or Warren Buffett's secretary.

It's times like this when the value of the FOX News Channel is

underscored. Regardless of how you feel about FNC, there's no denying that the network provides a small counterbalance to the overwhelming liberal slant of the mainstream media. Without FOX, the public would be completely unaware of important, valid stories like this, and people like Brian Terry's parents would be left without any kind of voice.

You can't help but feel terrible for the Terry's. In addition to the loss of their son, they're having to deal with an environment where it often takes massive publicity to get *any* kind of results from our government. Thus, their calls for answers and accountability have largely gone unheard. And only because the overwhelming majority of the media was way too late to the game, are the Terry's now being insulted by snide people in the media who wish to write off their son's story as a mere political stunt.

The Terry's deserve better, and their plight deserves every bit as much attention and sympathy as Cindy Sheehan got.