

## **Mixing Blood and Books – Killings at Universities: Campus Violence – What Are The Options?**

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*Killings at Virginia Tech, killings at Northern Illinois State University, and killings at The University of Alabama-- will your University be next? But killings at The Appalachian School of Law were stopped quickly BEFORE the police arrive. With these deadly facts as reality, past research shows that the nationwide economic downturn and recession has caused cities and governmental organizations to lay off police and law enforcement personnel. Even prisons are being shut down! Likewise research analysis has shown the impact on business safety resulting from the recession. There are fewer jobs, less money, less police/law enforcement, less prisons, and more crime. More firearms are being purchased by members of the business community and citizens in general. Layoffs of police impact college and university communities who have always relied on local police and law enforcement to assist in the security challenges faced by the University community. The research following details options for continued campus safety in an age of police and law enforcement layoffs. Options vary from doing NOTHING to turning the University into an armed camp!!! Constitutional rights of the Second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Amendment are discussed in the context of community and university safety. The dynamics of 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment constructionism are analyzed.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Daily the grim reality of declining economic value in the world and the USA are conveyed to citizens via a variety of sources. It was reported by Aversa, (2009) that in the first three (3) months of 2009 alone, Americans have lost one and one third trillion dollars of their assets. That is trillion not billion! Likewise, research by Nykodym, Patrick and Toussaint (2010) detailed declining lifestyle via job loss, layoffs, and downturns in addition to declines in net worth. Declining value of real estate, homes, retirement savings, as well as cuts to current job income, threats of job loss are a reality of life in current times (Nykodym, Patrick & Toussaint, 2010).

Past research has shown that the nationwide economic downturn and recession has caused cities and governmental organizations to lay off police and law enforcement personnel (Nykodym, Patrick & Toussaint, 2010). Past research analysis has also shown the impact on community safety of the recession.

There are fewer jobs, less money, less police/law enforcement and more crime (Nykodym, Patrick & Toussaint, 2010). Compounding the challenges of joblessness, less income, less net worth, and police layoffs, is the closing of prisons! Luhby (2009) reported that the State of Michigan will shut down eight (8) prisons to save money. In Michigan, a state hammered by auto industry meltdowns now adds prisons to its shuttered facilities (Luhby, 2009). The Governor of Michigan offered an excellent view of the future where citizens will need to use “self-help”. The Governor stated, “Michigan government can no longer afford to be all things to all people” (Luhby, 2009). Michigan is NOT alone; another twenty-five (25) states are moving toward prison closings (Luhby, 2009). Research by Luhby (2010) concluded that government workers were candidates for titled “Endangered Species.” Luhby (2010) found 231,000 less government jobs in less than two (2) years and 22,000 lost jobs in June of 2010 alone. The research noted that unlike federal government jobs state and local government job loss were now cutting into teachers, firefighters and police (Luhby, 2010).

### **Security in Our Cities and States Due to Police Layoffs**

The security of urban and rural areas is hit by the downturn in the economy and budget cut backs. Research by Troy (2009b) reported that jurisdictions both rural and urban would have to start paying for security patrols by the county sheriff. In difficult economic times, voters will be asked to approve as much as two and one half million more to pay for what had been free law enforcement. Mill levy increases could be as high as 5.1 (Troy, 2009b).

Grossman reports in The Wall Street Journal that longer police-response times, as well as less-frequent snow plowing and trash pickup result in more businesses leaving cities such as Detroit (2009). The death spiral continues due to the lack of social service with Police/Law Enforcement and Fire protection at the top if listed concerns. Geller (2009) adds that foreclosure of homes leads the former homes to being abandoned. Additionally forty (40) percent of abandoned buildings become victims of fires. The rate of fires in unoccupied buildings is three (3) times higher than in occupied buildings (Geller, 2009). More and more police and fire efforts are being consumed by responding to fires in foreclosed former homes in the USA.

After reduced police force numbers and patrols, a senior citizen was attacked in broad day light and robbed. The elderly victim remains in critical condition (Yonke, 2009).

### *The Virginia Tech Massacre*

On the morning of April 16, 2007, the students of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and the nearby residents of Blacksburg, Virginia were awoken to a tragic mass shooting by a gunman who was a student of the university. The perpetrator, Seung-Hui Cho, killed 32 people and wounded many others before committing suicide. The massacre is the deadliest peacetime shooting incident by a single gunman in United States history, on or off a school campus (MSNBC, 2009a).

Cho was a senior at Virginia Tech majoring in English. During middle school, he had been diagnosed with and was treated for a severe anxiety disorder and continued receiving therapy and special education support until his junior year of high school. While in college in 2005, Cho had been accused of stalking two female students. At least one professor had asked him to seek counseling.

The killings occurred in two separate attacks on the campus in Blacksburg, VA. The first attack occurred around 7:15 a.m., when two people were shot and killed at a dormitory. More than two and a half hours later, 31 others, including the gunman who shot himself, were shot and killed and 15 others were injured. Victims were found in different locations around the building. The first attack started as students were getting ready for classes or were on their way there. The university did not evacuate the campus or notify students of that attack until several hours later (Hauser, 2007).

The attacks received international media coverage and drew criticism of U.S. laws and culture from commentators around the world. It sparked intense debate about gun violence, gun laws, and gaps in the U.S. system for treating mental health issues. Also the perpetrator's state of mind, the responsibility of college administrations, privacy laws, journalism ethics, and other issues were raised. Television news

organizations that aired portions of the killer's multimedia manifesto were criticized by victims' families, Virginia law enforcement officials, and the American Psychiatric Association.

Other critics note that individuals are making a living from the Virginia Tech massacre. Are persons “living for the 32 victims” ? Or are they living OFF the 32 massacred individuals? (Rise of the Anti Media, 2011).

#### *Northern Illinois University Shooting*

Less than one year after the tragic event that took place at Virginia Tech University, the country was again stunned to learn that another similar event had occurred at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, IL. On February 14, 2008 at approximately 3:05 p.m., a gunman (Steven Kazmierczak) dressed in black stepped from behind a curtain at the front of a large lecture hall at Northern Illinois University on Thursday and shot 21 people, five of them fatally, then shot and killed himself (Bohn, 2008). Northern Illinois University Campus Police were on the killing site within minutes. But The Police arrived too late.

The university's official website reported the possibility of a gunman on campus at 3:20 p.m., within 20 minutes of the shooting. The website then warned students, "There has been a report of a possible gunman on campus. Get to a safe area and take precautions until given the all clear. Avoid the King Commons and all buildings in that vicinity." By 3:40 p.m., all NIU classes were canceled for the remainder of the day and the campus was closed by NIU officials as part of a new security plan devised after the Virginia Tech shooting 10 months earlier (Johnson, 2008).

A spokesman for the ATF stated that agents were dispatched to the scene to assist and to help trace the weapons used. The FBI also sent agents to assist. According to police, Steven Kazmierczak removed the hard drive from his laptop computer and a computer chip from his cell phone and did not leave a note that could help explain why he chose a geology class on Valentine's Day to open fire (Fox News, 2008).

#### *University of Alabama Shooting*

On February 13, 2010, at a biology department meeting at the Huntsville campus, biology professor Amy Bishop allegedly shot and killed three professors, and injuring three other members of staff, two of which were also professors. The incident occurred around 4 p.m. that Friday. According to the Huntsville Police Chief Henry Reyes, there were a number of people also in the room at the time of the incident that was not injured. Police responded within one minute of the emergency call. The university responded by issuing an e-mail alert to all students stating, “There has been a shooting on campus. The shooter has been apprehended. Everyone is encouraged to go home, classes are canceled tonight. ...Counselors are available [on campus].” Some students told the local news that they had not received the alert despite having signed up for the e-mail warnings. Some said they received the alert an hour after the shootings were reported. (Abcarian and Fausset, 2010)

### **Security on Our College and University Campuses Due to Police Layoffs**

Research by Chi & Griffith (2008) titled “Shooting prompts safety concerns” detailed the challenges of campus life. Student data revealed increased rates of crime, as “My car got broken into and they stole my radio, I think the police are more into busting kids for stepping on the sidewalk with a beer than looking into suspicious things” (Chi & Griffith, 2008, p. A3). Other data reveals, “The only time I see cops . . . is when they trying to bust a party” (Chi & Griffith (2008, p. A3). As well as the former close coordination of university Campus Police with local police will change due to less local police being able to help and back up the smaller campus police (Chi & Griffith, 2008). With rising city police layoffs, Troy (2009a) detailed, “citizen groups to step up efforts to deter crime.” Further, Troy (2009a) reported “this summer [after the police payoffs] is going to be crazy. A lot of people are going to die”

### **Guns, Firearms, and Ammunition Sales Increase**

While data appears to exist on the negative impact of guns the example can be given of Michael A. Bellesiles and his book *Arming America* (Knopf, 2000). *Arming America* (Knopf, 2000), was PRAISED

for several years until it was proven that his "facts" that guns were NOT an important part of USA history were proven to be forged and even created (Cramer, 2006). Patrick (2008) in a counter point cites the primary research of Cramer (2006) that "...250 primary and 200 secondary sources to systematically plot the presence of gun ownership and use through the Colonial, Revolutionary and Early Republic periods. "That gun ownership and gun use goes to the very roots of the USA. For example, so many "crack shots" showed up in Virginia that a shooting competition was held to select the 500 needed for a regiment. Newspapers report regularly explosive fires caused by persons drying gunpowder at fireplaces. Pennsylvania records 575 tons of lead shot production in a year. Gun rarity? NOT in America (Patrick, 2008).

### **How Safe is a Campus That Has CCW( Carry Concealed Weapons )???**

Research by Patrick (2010) details that gun free zones could well be killing zones (p. 20, Ch. #2). The Virginia Tech killer disregarded all law and morality in his murderous sociopath conduct. So why not allow legally licensed faculty, staff and students to carry on campus? Since most states require a CCW (Carry Concealed Weapons) holder to be 21 years of age most traditional students would not qualify. The straw man argument of "gun filled" dorms ---- is that, an argument made of straw. Furthermore Kopel (2006) posited "defending our schools" from the "lone psychopath" by citing Israeli and other nation's schools where teachers may go armed. An armed teaching staff has NOT endangered the students in those environments.

There are 24 states that expressly prohibit concealed carry on college campuses by persons with a valid concealed handgun license/permit. These states are Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, and Wyoming. Texas law specifically prohibits concealed carry on campus but includes a clause which allows an individual college/university to 'opt out' of the law and allow concealed carry (Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, 2009). Though in a minority, a number of universities – from large public schools such as Colorado State and the University of Utah to small private schools such as Hamline in Minnesota – let students carry concealed handguns on school property (Lott, 2008). According to Hamline University's Annual Security Report as of 2008, there were no incidents of any violent crimes on campus over 10 years (Hamline University, 2010). Many more schools, from Dartmouth College to Boise State University, let professors carry concealed handguns. Again, with no evidence of problems (Lott, 2008).

#### *Colorado State University*

After the last two major incidents of shootings at Virginia Tech and at Northern Illinois University, much attention was turned to the possible solution adopted by Colorado State University. Colorado State has allowed concealed weapons on campus for 10 semesters without incident (Smalley, 2008). Long before it was required by law, and certainly before it was popular to do so, Colorado State made crime statistics available through this publication and other campus and community media. In doing so, the University community has become aware of safety concerns and what is happening around them (CSU, 2008).

#### *University of Utah*

Utah is the only state to allow students and teachers to carry a concealed gun on all college and university campus. As with Colorado State University, nine state universities in Utah's system have allowed concealed weapons in university classroom buildings since 2006 (Smalley, 2008). Utah legislators and law enforcement authorities said they knew of no modern-day shootings at the university. But one lawmaker cited a shooting rampage in Mississippi in 1997 as an example of how allowing others on campus to arm themselves can improve safety: After a teenager shot two students to death at Pearl High School, an assistant principal chased the gunman down outside and held him at bay with a .45-caliber pistol he kept in his truck (MSNBC, 2009b).

According to their website, The University of Utah follows the state's uniform law giving the right to bear arms in Utah, including the college campus. However, The University of Utah enforces state law regulating firearms on campus. This enforcement occurs in two ways. First, University police will investigate and take appropriate action, up to and including referral for criminal prosecution, when violations occur. Second, the University will consider any violation of state law regulating firearms to be a violation of University Policy. Accordingly, such a violation is subject to disciplinary action under University disciplinary policies applicable to faculty, students, and staff ([www.utah.edu](http://www.utah.edu)).

The classic argument is that a college campus which permits faculty, staff, and students who are over age 21 and who are licensed CCW (Carry Concealed Weapons) license holders are less safe. The data above shows that where CCW is permitted on a college campus death on campuses via guns do not increase.

It is believed by some that ONLY campus police should be armed. Yet, facts show another picture. On January 26, 1992, Campus Police Officer Jeffery Michael Hodge while on duty and in the uniform of the Campus Police, took a co-ed behind a campus building and shot her 14 times. Hodge is currently serving a life term for this murder (McIntyre, 1993).

### **Students for Concealed Carry on Campus**

According to the Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, there are two reasons to allow licensed concealed carrying of deadly weapons on a college campus. "The first is a legal entitlement to self-defense which holds true in the countless other locations within a given state, without the need to demonstrate a need for self-defense. The second reason is the actual need for self-defense. Critics of Students for Concealed Carry often claim that because colleges are often safer environments with fewer crimes per capita than the rest of the United States, concealed carry and armed self-defense are unnecessary." (Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, 2009)

The SCCC cites several occasions where guns were useful in defending persons while on campus:

- Utah, September 18, 2007 - A Utah Valley State College licensed to carry a concealed weapon shot a pit bull that was attacking him. The animal survived the shooting, and at the student's request, no charges were filed against the dog's owner.
- Ohio, April 24, 2007 - After a man demanded entry to a University of Akron student's apartment and threatened him with a gun, the student returned fire with a roommate's gun. The suspect then fled the scene.
- Florida, September 8, 2006 - Two South Florida Community College students were attacked outside their apartment, but one used a .45 handgun to shoot one of the attackers in the chest. The other fled.
- Kentucky, May 2, 2005 - A University of Kentucky student was cleared of wrongdoing after shooting a Louisville man who was robbing him outside a Lexington apartment complex. (Students for Concealed Carry on Campus, 2009).

### **Possible Solutions to the Problem**

As controversial as the subject of this matter is, so are the possible solutions to this increasing problem in the United States. These possible solution alternatives vary in levels of involvement and depend greatly on various factors such as the level of attention to the problem; available funding that can be allocated toward a solution to the problem, the level of involvement and willingness of universities and college to fix the problem of "random" shootings and other gun-related violence on campus.

#### *Do Nothing*

The first possible solution is to do absolutely nothing. Since there are over two thousand universities and college campuses in the United States, there are many that have never experienced, or have experienced very little gun-related incidents on their campuses. For these, the need for a solution is very

small and doing nothing may be the best solution for them. There are, however, universities that have experienced major incidents of gun violence, such as Virginia Tech and more recently, University of Alabama and Ohio State University (Hall, 2010).

#### *Follow the Clery Act*

The second possible solution is to follow the guidelines and procedures of the Clery Act which requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose their information about crime on and near their respective campuses. If universities were to increase their level of attention to the necessity of the Clery Act and adhere to it more proactively, the campus population would be more aware of criminal activities that are taking place around them. This extremely low cost method or possible solution can also deter criminals or those that may be tempted to carry out heinous gun-related crimes, since the publications of these acts will also include the manner it was dealt with, and show the readiness of the campus to deal with such incidents.

#### *Warning Alert Systems & Surveillance Cameras*

The third possible solution is the use of warning alert systems and surveillance cameras, to immediately warn students, members of staff, and other personnel in and around the campus of activities that may endanger them. Lockdown Drill Security is practiced as a method of building skills to cope with the possibility of campus violence. An additional possibility is to train academic personnel with an EMERGENCY CODE SYSTEM. Below are some possible options:

##### **EMERGENCY CODES:**

CODE Adam	(color) = light blue – infant/child abduction
CODE BLACK	Bomb threat
CODE BLUE	Medical emergency response team
CODE BROWN	Missing Adult patient
CODE GREEN	Internal evacuation
CODE RED	R.A.C.E. (Rescue, Alarm, Confine, Extinguish/Evaluate) P.A.S.S. (Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep)
CODE WHITE	Snow/Transportation emergency
CODE GRAY	Severe Weather/Tornado Procedure
	• Phase 0 - Severe Weather/Tornado Watch
	• Phase one - 1–14 victims expected
	• Phase two - 15 or more victims expected
CODE ORANGE	Chemical, Biological, or Radioactive Incident
	• Phase 0 - Potential
	• Phase one - 1–14 victims expected
	• Phase two - 15 or more victims expected
CODE YELLOW	MASS CASUALTY DISASTER PROCEDURE
	• Phase 0 - disaster warning
	• Phase one - 1–14 victims expected
	• Phase two - 15 or more victims expected

The surveillance cameras would allow on-duty security and local police forces to track the location of the incident when it occurs, and respond accordingly. Furthermore, close monitoring of these cameras might even prevent criminal incidents from occurring. The main drawback to this recommendation is the potentially high cost of installing this integrative system and the cost of hiring additional personnel to monitor the activities from a control room. With the increase in the number of layoffs of local police officers all across the country, it seems unreasonable to request additional availability of the local law enforcement to cooperate with college campus security. Or is it?

### *Train and Implement Dedicated S.W.A.T. Team*

The fourth possible solution is to allocate funding to training a S.W.A.T. team to deal with incidents of gun violence on campus. The main prohibiting factor to this option is funding. With the increasing number of layoffs as previously mentioned, coupled with the strained budgets of universities due mainly to the economic downturn, many college campuses will find it difficult at this point in time, and even in the future, to allocate such funds to such a solution.

### *Allow Students and/or Faculty & Staff to Carry Concealed Handguns*

The last, but not least, possible solution is to allow students of legal CCW age and faculty and staff that possess valid permits to carry a concealed weapon on campus. In most every state the age is 21 to obtain a permit to carry a concealed weapon, therefore only faculty, staff, administration, graduate students and a very few undergraduates would be exercising their Second Amendment Rights. The carry concealed permit holder is trained and does NOT have a criminal past. There can be first responders (The Campus Police) but trained faculty, staff and older students are IMMEDIATE responders since the event is happening in real time in their academic environment. The mere mention of this alternative has been known to be controversial, but has been proven to be effective in many regions of the United States. As detailed above carry concealed weapons has been successful on several college campus with no negative-results. Additional support comes from the shootings at The Appalachian School of Law. Blood and books mixed again on January 16, 2002 in Brundy, Virginia USA, where a former student killed three (3) and wounded three (3) others. Murder victims were the Law School Dean, a Professor and a student. Before the shooter could kill any more -- he was confronted by two (2) other armed students. His fellow students with guns drawn yelled at the shooter to DROP YOUR GUN!!! The killer dropped his gun and was overpowered by several other students (Lott, 2002). If ALL the students would have been unarmed MANY more faculty and students would have died. The two (2) ARMED IMMEDIATE RESPONDERS (armed students stopped the killing and bloodshed. First responders (police) are GREAT but first responders (Police) generally arrive AFTER the killings have been completed!!

## **SUMMARY**

To do NOTHING is NOT an answer. Additionally the Clery Act is LAW — to collect, keep and distribute information on campus violence is a legal requirement. A combination of campus/university police, warning alert systems and surveillance cameras, as well as a trained and aware faculty, staff, & student body is the most comprehensive method. To place TOTAL RELIANCE on campus/university security or even in the hands of the campus police and local law enforcement is difficult and ill-advised in the current prolonged economic downturn where more and more law enforcement officers are being laid off and therefore response times are longer.

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