

Sandy hook elementary paper



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

On December 14, 2012, 20-year-old Adam Lanza fatally shot twenty children and six adult staff members in a mass murder at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. It was the second deadliest mass shooting by a single person in American history, after the 2007 Virginia Tech Massacre. At some point before Adam Lanza, 20, arrived at school, he killed his mother Nancy Lanza. He grabbed three guns from the house - a semi-automatic AR-15 assault rifle and 2 pistols - and went to the elementary school wearing black fatigues and a military vest. Classes were under way at the school.

Approximately 700 students were present (CNN, 2012). Earlier this year, the school principal, Dawn Lafferty, ordered a new security system installed that required visitors to be visibly identified and buzzed in. As part of the security system, the school locked its doors each day at 9: 30 a. m. The door was locked when the gunman arrived. Authorities now know the gunman used "an assault weapon" to "literally (shoot) an entrance into the building (CNN, 2012). When Principal Lafferty heard loud pops, she, school psychologist Mary Sherlach and Vice Principal Natalie Hammond went out to investigate.

Only Hammond returned from the hallway alive. She was wounded. At 9: 30 a. m. , as announcements were read over the loudspeaker to the students, shots were heard across the school. Students described being ushered into bathrooms and closets by teachers after hearing the first shots (CNN, 2012). Lanza moved toward two classrooms of kindergartners and first-graders, police said. In one classroom was Lauren Rousseau, a substitute teacher who was filling in for a teacher out on maternity leave. The gunman shot all 14 students in the classroom, law enforcement officers said (CNN, 2012).

In another classroom, Victoria Soto, 27, moved her first-grade students away from the door. The gunman burst in and shot her, according to the father of a surviving student. Six students were killed in that classroom. At the police station, dispatchers began to take calls from inside the school. Officers say the first emergency call about the shooting came in at 9: 30 a. m. Police and other first responders arrived on scene about 20 minutes after the first calls. Police report that no law enforcement officers discharged their weapons at any point.

The gunman took his own life, police said. He took out a handgun and shot himself in a classroom as law enforcement officers approached, officials said. Twenty students, ages 6 and 7, and six adults were killed at the school. Police secured the building, ensuring no other shooters were on site. Police then escorted students and faculty out of the building to a nearby firehouse (CNN, 2012). As reports of the shooting made their way around town, frantic parents descended on the firehouse where the children had been taken.

By nightfall, the firehouse became a gathering point for parents and family members whose loved ones would never walk out of the school (CNN, 2012). The shootings prompted renewed debate about gun control, the ban of certain types of semi-automatic firearms and magazines as well as the effect violent video games have on society. Senator Dianne Feinstein of California introduced legislation that would ban the sale and manufacture of 157 types of semi-automatic weapons, as well as magazines holding more than 10 rounds of ammunition.

The goal of the bill, she said, is “ to dry up the supply of these weapons over time. ” Unfortunately Senator Feinstein’s bill was killed in the senate and no

gun control laws passed (Steinhauer, 2013). The attention has also turned on restricting violent video games from being sold to children. Researchers found that typical college students who played violent video games for 20 minutes at a time for three consecutive days showed increasingly higher levels of aggressive behavior each day they played.

Other researchers have conducted a comprehensive review of 136 articles reporting 381 effects involving over 130, 000 participants around the world. These studies show that violent video games increase aggressive thoughts, angry feelings, physiological arousal (e. g. , heart rate, blood pressure), and aggressive behavior. Violent games also decrease helping behavior and feelings of empathy for others. The effects occurred for males and females of all ages, regardless of what country they lived in (Whitaker & Bushman, 2012). The effects of these games go beyond making players more aggressive.

People who played first-person shooting games were more accurate than others when firing a realistic gun at a mannequin and more likely to aim for and hit the head. Gender is also an issue when it comes to violence. Males are largely responsible for more than 99% of mass shootings. Being a male does not mean that one will become a killer but being a male in a culture that has some measure of gender inequality and links masculinity with violence does make it likely. (Raskoff, 2013) To date, no women have perpetrated such mass killings using guns.

Women are usually less socially isolated than men. They are raised to be more connected to others and to share their issues while men are encouraged to figure things out on their own and hold in their emotional

distress. (Raskoff, 2013) Social class is also relevant when analyzing why these mass shootings occur. The shooters tend to be young men from middle or upper middle class backgrounds. This could explain the access they have to legal automatic weapons, along with their invisibility to law enforcement and the hyper visibility to the media.

Vandalism or acting out behaviors are perceived and dealt with differently at the different social classes. Shootings occur much more in working class or poverty-stricken. (Raskoff, 2013) According to recent research, a link has been suggested between anti-depressant pharmaceuticals, depression and violence. Antidepressants are supposed to make people feel happier and more at ease, but a study has linked several prescription antidepressants to an increased risk of violent behavior, including physical assault and homicide. In addition, they can lead to addiction and serious withdrawal symptoms.

The United Kingdom has banned nearly all antidepressants in kids in 2004 due to the increased risk of suicide. The United States, however, is still allowing big Pharmaceutical companies to rake in the profits from these deadly, mind-altering drugs (Dr. Mercola, 2008). Entertainment is also an issue when it comes to violence. According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, television programs display 812 violent acts per hour. Further, the typical American child will view more than 200,000 acts of violence, including 16,000 murders, before they turn 18 (Chou, 2013).

According to Jane Brown, a professor at the University of North Carolina, The more violence children see in the media, the more violent video games they

play, the more likely they are to be aggressive in their own lives. She adds that watching the movie " Kill Bill" may not make people want to kill someone in real life, but young people who are naturally aggressive see violence in the media and think it's an appropriate way to solve conflict (Chou, 2013). There are many different factors that contribute to violence and we need to address them in order to curb the amount of murders and shootings in the United States.