

Opinion: The Homegrown Homophobe

Posted by [Jacqui Atkielski](#) On 06/13/2016

Photo credit to [Pulse Orlando Facebook Page](#)

ORLANDO, FL -- Victims' cellphones buzzed and rang until the batteries died as investigators combed the Pulse Night Club in Orlando during the aftermath of the worst mass shooting in American history early on Sunday morning. It has been called the worst terrorist attack since the events of September 11, 2001.

Snapchat videos and other video footage archive the sound of gunshots ringing. There are images of blood on the bathroom floors as people tried to hide from the shooter, and party goers laying helplessly on those floors or in the street as law enforcement and emergency personnel attempt to rescue them.

What kind of human makes the decision to cut people's lives short because they have a different lifestyle he doesn't prescribe to?

The shooter is the villain in this story, growing arrogant on the fear of Muslim insurgents and his personal distaste towards openly gay relationships. He wasn't shipped over here from the Middle East to wreak havoc on American soil. This man was a homegrown homophobe.

How did he slip through the fingers of the very people that are supposed to protect civilians from these nightmares?

I'm getting goosebumps trying to understand the horror of the mass shooting. My heart goes out to the people who lost their lives in Orlando. Nobody deserves this kind of suffering.

The names of the dead are trickling slowly through the media like the tears on their loved ones' faces. Never again can his victims hold their loved ones close, share a birthday, or celebrate other milestones like marriage or creating a family.

This homegrown homophobe was intolerant of others he perceived as different. He wanted to change the world to suit his needs and goals, and destroy innocent lives in the process. He must have felt entitled to changing the world because they are uncomfortable with anyone they think is different or wrong. His feelings gave him no right to play God and murder innocent party goers.

And to call 911 to brag about the evil he let loose on the world, to pledge allegiance to the one group that Americans fear the most right now.

Instead of tackling the root of the problem in this story, we claim that our second amendment rights would be violated. That we should be able to spend our money however we want to.

There isn't enough of the right kind of gun control.

I'm not talking about limiting the average citizen's purchasing power, telling them they can't own weapons of any kind. Nor am I advocating that everyone should have the right to carry a weapon casually.

My family is pro-gun, and I have experience with weapons, shooting for sport or food. My grandparents are homesteaders out west, and they chose a life where they have to hunt for their meat. They need weapons to take down animals to survive.

A while back, I spent the day with one of my college friend's families, and had the opportunity to shoot a variety of guns such as semi-automatic rifles, pump action rifles, shotguns, and pistols. The power behind all of those weapons made me nervous. But I wanted to experience the kick-back, the slight smoke of the bullet being projected, the loud crack of the air as the bullet sank into its hopeful target, and the success of making the target.

My friend told me that if I have a loaded weapon in my hand, I was responsible for whatever I decided to shoot. That I needed to be prepared for the consequences of handling a loaded weapon, even if I were to accidentally kill someone.

An American citizen should be able to purchase non-automatic weapons for self-protection, or the protection of their property or loved ones. They need a yearly background check and a mental health test. When they have those results on hand, I don't see any issue with purchasing a gun on the same day. The tests would prove that the customer isn't a criminal and has no existing mental issues.

These weapons should be considered as a last resort, and should be handled with respect. Guns are powerful tools or dangerous weapons, depending on the finger pulling the trigger. They should be stored properly, in a safe or at least unloaded.

There should be a more stringent list of goals to obtain or achieve before being able to purchase an automatic weapon. A responsible gun-owner should be educated and licensed before being able to purchase anything more than a rifle or handgun.

If a citizen is marked on an FBI Terrorist Watch List, they should not be able to purchase weapons of any kind. These people should be limited in their purchasing power.

There would have to be a background check performed before I am allowed to make the purchase. Information regarding a customer's mental health history and the potential to be on any terrorist watch list, past or present, should also be considered during a purchase of a weapon. Businesses should have access to this kind of information to be able to refuse a sale.

There are ways to get around laws when purchasing weapons, and that cannot be helped. There is no point in policing a private sale. But there is more to be done with gun shows, legal sales of weapons, and businesses making profit on selling those weapons.

If a licensed business owner helped a terrorist wannabe fulfill his darkest dreams by selling him weapons, they should be penalized through fines or some other means. They need to hear the message that they have the potential to indirectly help a mentally unstable man turn into a murderer. Why is profit more important than a person's life?

