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MARK  
BELLING

# Mass-shooting zombies are a product of our Godless culture

## Passing inane gun laws misses the whole point

A grand total of four days after the El Paso mass shooting and three days after the one in Dayton, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel plastered a headline on top of page one declaring state legislative Republicans were not moving any legislation to deal with mass shootings. Three days! The Legislature is not even in session, many lawmakers are off on vacation and we had barely even learned any details of the two shootings (like the fact that the Dayton guy was a leftist who loves Elizabeth Warren and hates Trump). Still, the newspaper was spewing out sensationalistic headlines about the GOP not doing anything.

One could make the point that America's cities, totally controlled by Democrats, have been awash in gun violence for a half-century and those Democrats haven't done anything about that, but let's actually take the Wisconsin biased media on its point. The Legislature is supposed to do something. What? That, of course, is the rub. None of the proposals would actually stop any mass shootings because they focus on guns and not behavior.

But that isn't the point here. People want to DO SOMETHING!

People have been warning for a long time what would happen to a society that replaced Judeo-Christian values with our godless non-judgmentalism. They have been proven correct.

What they don't want to do is actually understand what is going on because that would mean they'd miss an opportunity to bash Republicans, President Trump, supporters of the Second Amendment and those of us who think passing ineffectual feel-good legislation shouldn't be a substitute for intelligent decision-making.

Here are some things that most of the mass shooters — not counting Muslim terrorists — of the past two decades have in common:

1. There is no indication they believe in Jesus Christ, or for that matter, any god.
2. Their parents are divorced and there is little sign of the presence of a father.
3. There are indications of drug use,

correct.

rather:  
3. There are indications of drug use, particularly marijuana.

4. They are obsessed with violence and usually have a fascination with

video games.

5. They have few friends and are irrationally alienated.

6. They have no fear of the consequences of death (like going to hell).

7. They are nobodies who want to be famous.

We reap what we sow and we have created a society without judgment. We have embraced sex without responsibility. We have purged God from virtually all elements of daily life. We have allowed millions to medicate themselves with potent marijuana. We have given millions of kids anti-depressant medications without ever confronting the reasons they are depressed. We have embraced a non-judgmentalism that tells young people all decisions and lifestyle choices are valid. We worry about a president's tweets but not about the fact that most video games realistically portray mass killing.

And our response to this is pass more gun laws? That's like taking a cough drop when you're having a heart attack. It may make you feel better but it's an act of irrelevancy.

Cutting to the unpleasant chase, you are not very likely to commit a mass shooting if you believe the instant you die you will go to hell for eternity. While he wasn't really a mass shooter, consider Jake Patterson, the zombie that killed Jayme Closs' parents and abducted her. This was a guy living only in a warped present with no fear of long-term or eternal consequences. He, like the mass shooters, was a moral blank slate. His empty stare revealed his empty morality. Passing a gun law to address guys like him is the same folly as believing gun legislation is a way of stopping mass shootings.

So who is it that threw God out of public life, that told us free love and free sex was beautiful and had no consequence, that made divorce as easy as buying a Big Mac, that mocked moral judgment, that told us pot is harmless, that turn public schools into non-judgmental, valueless indoctrination camps and medicated an entire generation of kids depressed because their parents seemed to hate each other?

Uh, that'd be the liberals. The same ones that now want us to pass a bunch of gun laws.

People have been warning for a long time what would happen to a society that replaced Judeo-Christian values with our godless non-judgmentalism. They have been proven correct. The people that have been wrong for decades are now demanding we pass a bunch of new laws that will not be obeyed by people literally hellbent on mass shootings.

More background checks? Most mass shooters lack a criminal record. Ban high-capacity magazines? Bring two guns, or better yet, buy the banned magazine illegally. There will be easy ways around all of the inane laws now being proposed. They will accomplish nothing other than to: a) distract our attention from the real problems, and b) imply that our biggest problem is access to guns and not a growingly depraved culture.

But, hey, we can say we DID SOMETHING!

(Mark Belling is the host of a daily WISN radio talk show.)

## TODAY'S INSPIRATION

*"For me, every hour is grace. And I feel gratitude in my heart each time I can meet someone and look at his or her smile."*

— Elie Wiesel

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Blaming a few segments of society won't solve gun problems

To the editor:

I am writing in response to Mark Belling's piece, "Mass-shooting zombies are a product of our Godless culture" (Oconomowoc Enterprise, Aug. 22).

Having been alarmed by Mr. Belling's columns in the past, it is safe to say that he obsessively pins the blame of enormous issues squarely on the shoulders of his least favorite political party and anyone he can alienate with his extreme religious views. I am embarrassed that my local newspaper continues to print his often prejudiced column, and sad to say that I am one of so few to call him out on it. As a teenager, I watch certain adults in this country pin blame on anyone but themselves, much like toddlers on a playground when asked who is at fault. In his latest column, Mr. Belling gleefully points out that the Dayton shooter "was a leftist who loves Elizabeth Warren" (the shooter posted a tweet in favor of her over Donald Trump), as if this is somehow an offense comparable to murdering people. Viewpoints like these are the reason we have such a divided country and a government that fails to act out of fear of losing support of their half of the population.

Throughout his piece, Mr. Belling uses religious ideals to paint two pictures: the perfect individual and one who is not. The former hates liberals and the latter is a shooter. He expects his beliefs to be accepted as truth and ignores the fact that there are people who follow other religions in the world as well as people who choose not to follow a religion and, yet, are not shooters. Following this, he regards any attempt at gun control as "inane" and "irrelevant."

I happen to think that, given the increased frequency of mass shootings, common-sense gun laws are, in fact, extremely relevant. I don't see Mr. Belling's enumerated list of logic forming any real-life solutions, unless he plans to start a non-profit organization to help at-risk "nobodies" find God. While he works on that, I, and the rest of my generation, would love to start creating actual change.

A problem this big cannot have a single solution, but common-sense gun laws would be a start. Politicians and radio hosts who attempt to analyze this problem with a narrowed point of view continue to miss the entire picture.

Yes, part of the problem begins in troubled households. Yes, part of the problem may be inspired by violent video games. Yes, part of the problem surrounds mental health. And YES, part of the problem is a result of a lack of common-sense gun laws. Blaming the entirety of the problem on single cause, on a single party, on a single group of people you irrationally deem "Godless," however, will take us zero steps forward. Pinning blame is a lot different when there are lives on the line.

No laws that protect children are inane. No attempt at peace is wasted. The often-used saying "thoughts and prayers" does nothing for the 5-year-old who never got to start first grade, and will not help prevent the next mass shooting. Will stricter gun laws solve everything? Of course not! Are they a start? Yes! It is time to start taking steps forward, including rethinking current gun laws. You do not need to be anti-Second Amendment in order to change gun laws; you only need to recognize that things have changed over the past 228 years. Muzzleloading muskets and flintlock pistols are not the weapons used in mass shootings.

Why are you so afraid of change, Mr. Belling? Does banning assault rifles or high-capacity magazines harm you? Or would a "win for the liberals" bruise your ego? When will you realize this is not a partisan issue? This is a human issue.

Blaming gun violence on a political party or lack of religious belief will get this country nowhere. As sarcastically stated by Mr. Belling himself, "people want to DO SOMETHING!"

Yes, we do want to do something. We want to stop reading columns in which you complain about and blame others for the state of the nation for paragraphs on end. We want to start reading about a country that rises above partisan feuds and takes steps forward make much-needed change.

Isabella Nichols  
Oconomowoc

### Evers right to seek to expand background checks

To the editor:

A columnist in the Oconomowoc Enterprise recently argued against better background checks on gun sales. The columnist was whining that it was simply too much of a burden for those who purchase a gun to go through a

standard background check. I couldn't disagree more and there are many who agree with me. According to a 2018 Marquette Law Poll, 81% of Wisconsinites support better background checks.

Background checks save lives but current federal law requires only licensed gun dealers to run background checks on gun sales. That creates a loophole in which criminals, domestic abusers, and those suffering from severe mental health can buy guns from strangers on the internet or from private sellers at gun shows.

Better background checks are the foundation for common-sense gun safety laws. Take the case of the Wisconsin spa worker who was murdered in 2012. That year, Zina Daniels got a restraining order against her estranged husband who had a history of domestic abuse. That meant he couldn't buy a gun under federal law but due to the loophole in the background check laws, he found a stranger online at a gun website and bought a gun — with no background check. Soon after, he murdered Daniels and two other women and injured four others at a Brookfield spa. Ms. Daniels was my daughter's hair stylist at the time.

It's been 25 years since national laws have been updated. Reports have noted nearly 1 in 4 guns were purchased through this loophole.

The right to bear arms doesn't overrule our other rights guaranteed in the Constitution to "justice," "domestic tranquility," and "general welfare."

I commend Governor Evers' efforts to pass better background checks in Wisconsin. We need them at the national level even more. It's past time to take action.

Cindy Chada  
Oconomowoc

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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