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Student Perceptions of Faculty, Staff, and Students Carrying Concealed Weapons on Campus

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ABSTRACT: Reactions to gun violence and potential policies regarding gun control are often reactions to fear with schools being the focal point of gun control dialogue. From elementary schools to college campuses, the concealed carry debate exists. Should we allow staff, faculty, and at the college-level, students to carry concealed guns? Students at a private college in Florida were surveyed in regards to their attitudes towards concealed carry and campus safety. We tested a number of hypotheses related to how much time students spend being exposed to media, student perceptions of safety, and their attitudes toward concealed weapons on campus. Results show low levels of support for armed campus safety and concealed weapons for faculty among our student sample. Students were even less comfortable with other students being armed on campus. In support of previous research, conservative students were more likely to believe the media spends too much time covering gun violence. While our results show mixed support of previous research on concealed weapons, our findings are particularly interesting due to our close proximity to two recent mass shootings in Florida.



In recent years, social cognizance of gun-related controversies such as concealed carry, and school campus safety has become increasingly relevant (Wolfson, Teret, Azrael, & Miller, 2017). Lately it appears that mass shootings can occur anywhere, which instills a high threat of gun violence in today's society. There have been reported mass shooting incidents at schools and college campuses, parks, government buildings, nightclubs, and other locations (Wolfson et al., 2017). Among others, certain places have become infamous and synonymous with gun violence, such as Columbine, Virginia Tech, and Sandy Hook (Nedzel, 2014). These high-profile school shootings have caused a great deal of concern and awareness for public safety. The aforementioned tragedies are greatly unwanted problems that the public has to address, and the loss of lives has prompted a debate regarding concealed carry and campus safety (Nedzel, 2014). In many cities within the United States, the news media cover any possible reports of gun violence frequently, sometimes without any new information being presented to the public (Wolfson et al., 2017). Society's perception of gun violence and opinions regarding concealed carry rights may be influenced by the amount of news coverage dedicated to public safety concerns. Moreover, the public perception of risk in certain places, such as college campuses may be swayed significantly by disproportional news coverage of gun violence compared to other social issues (Callanan, 2012; Wolfson et al., 2017; Yanich, 2001).

For example, more frequent television news and television crime-reality program consumption is significantly related to greater fear of crime (Callanan, 2012). This could be because news media spend more time covering this topic than any other social issue (Yanich, 2001). Of news

reports involving crime, the most prominent were of court proceedings involving murder, which allows the news station to cover a topic without using resources to uncover new information while also providing entertainment (Yanich, 2001). Further, commentary cultures and info-tainment news that present biased perspectives have the ability to create a moral panic, which encourages society to believe that a matter requires critical, instant, and continual awareness. When a condition becomes a threat to societal interests and values (e.g. public safety), a moral panic results (Arrigo & Acheson, 2016). Moral panic incidents can either dissipate or they can have long-lasting effects of adaptations within society. New legal and social policies are examples of long-lasting effects. Another example of a long-lasting effect is in the manner society perceives or conceives itself (i.e. the fear that school campuses are extremely vulnerable to danger or mass shootings) (Arrigo & Acheson, 2016). In America, gun violence and mass shootings have provided the mass media many occasions to establish a moral panic. Public cognizance and discussion have increased concerning the perceived and sensationalized threat in certain contexts. In particular, campus policies on the concealed carrying of guns have become prevalent political topics (Arrigo & Acheson, 2016).

This is an enduring and heated issue that has pulled society to trigger different responses (Birnbaum, 2013). In time, relentless news headlines covering gun violence and school shootings establishes and impresses upon the public that a campus is vulnerable and dangerously at risk. It implies that students and faculty are increasingly not safe (Birnbaum, 2013). In response, two opposing policies have been aimed to shoot down public safety concerns and reduce campus violence. One suggests that violence on campuses could be deterred by arming individuals [e.g., campus safety officers, and other faculty] (Birnbaum, 2013). On the other hand, it has been proposed that campus violence could be prevented by a complete ban on weapons. Both of these positions raise important questions. Would students on campus feel more safe or unsafe, with the implementation of concealed

carry policies (Birnbaum, 2013)?

Overall, there is limited knowledge concerning the public's viewpoints about concealed carry permissibility in places like schools and the prospect for deterring gun violence (Wolfson et al., 2017). Perceptions held by students are particularly noteworthy due to the significant manner in which they are affected by the campus policies (Arrigo & Acheson, 2016). Policies relating to campus-specific gun regulations have to be evaluated in conjunction with an idea of the relative impact it might have on students. Research on students' perceptions regarding concealed carry laws and campus safety issues will help provide elucidation for society on this critical matter (Arrigo & Acheson, 2016).

Literature Review

The media plays a significant role whenever a mass shooting or school shooting occurs (Meindl & Ivy, 2017). The news is where many people initially learn about the occurrence of gun violence. Although the media is a valuable source of public information, the news can elicit tremendous fear in society (Meindl & Ivy, 2017). In reference to people's perceptions, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors, fear is also very influential. Research findings suggest that there is a contagion effect that can arise from the media (Meindl & Ivy, 2017). The contagion effect is a theory that addresses how behaviors spread. When one person engages in a particular behavior, there is a likely chance that another may partake in that behavior or perform a behavior with similar characteristics. Generalized imitation is a model of this theory and explains the possibility of people partaking in behaviors similar to those that an individual has observed or been made aware of (Meindl & Ivy, 2017). Generalized imitation is learned, and it is gradually reinforced through experiences. Additionally, it is an important contributing factor to why things may occur. Individuals are more likely to imitate a behavior, when the behavior is exhibited by a model who has a higher social status and is believed to be competent [e.g., a news anchor] (Meindl & Ivy, 2017). Typically the news will provide extensive coverage when gun violence occurs. Moreover,

the coverage will be repeatedly depicted and will extend over a long period of time, which can cause a public panic (Meindl & Ivy, 2017).

It is important to note that the duration and the frequency of coverage also influences the amount of fear that is perpetuated. It can be argued that increased news coverage of school shootings results in an increase of fear for public safety. Moreover, it can be argued that less coverage and less hyped headlines will decrease overall interest in the event, which could also limit generalized imitation (Meindl & Ivy, 2017). For example, one study found a significant relationship to fear of crime and exposure to news media, yet this same study did not find a relationship between fear of crime and exposure to crime dramas (Callanan, 2012). This means viewers are likely to believe news reports are realistic representations of gun violence, which in turn influences their level of fear. However, altering the manner in which the news media covers gun violence may be difficult because the sensationalizing of a story brings in more viewers, more revenue, and higher ratings. Additionally, the emergence of social media complicates media portrayals of gun violence because it derives from an individual source and not a corporate entity. The general public needs to be made aware of the media's role in this issue. There is a noteworthy connection between the media's reach and society's motivations for certain behaviors [e.g., the increase in public panic about violence on campuses] (Meindl & Ivy, 2017).

Increased cognizance of the gun violence issue has permeated the policy making in both legislation and schools (De Angelis et al., 2017). Driven by the concept that concealed guns will prevent violence and deter crime, a number of state legislatures have attempted to establish looser restrictions on concealed carry regulations for college campuses. Research by De Angelis et al., (2017) suggests that there is not much known about the relationship between the fear of crime and the support for looser concealed carry rules on colleges. However, it has been reported that the fear of crime is strongly related to the support for concealed carry (De Angelis, Benz, & Gillham, 2017).

The academic world is inundated by the issues related to gun violence and gun control, which serves as an impetus for researching this matter (Dierenfeldt, Brown, & Roles, 2017). Gun violence and control is a large problem that derives partly from cultural influences. Strategies to implement meaningful change have to be addressed, in order to abate the growing public concern (Dierenfeldt et al., 2017). Today, many colleges and campuses still prohibit concealed carry on campus. Therefore, it is a controversial, ongoing issue and debate (De Angelis et al., 2017). Regarding the policy that opposes loosening concealed carry regulations, it is argued that college campuses are generally safe environments and serious crime is a very rare occurrence.

Despite the great deal of media coverage on gun violence and new policies, there is still very limited knowledge about how students perceive the policies and violence. More attention and research needs to be devoted to the perceptions of students (De Angelis et al., 2017). Research by Jang, Dierenfeldt, and Lee (2014) focused on student perceptions, explored and examined their attitudes on legalizing concealed weapons on campus. Assessing student attitudes at a four-year university, they found 27.9% of participants strongly disagreed and an additional 22% disagreed with legalizing concealed weapons on campus (Jang et al., 2014). More participants either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the legalizing of concealed carry on campus than expressed positions in favor of concealed carry (Jang et al., 2014).

Researchers Cavanaugh, Bouffard, Wells, and Nobles (2012) explored the perceptions of students. This study utilized a pool of students from two institutions based in Texas and Washington (Cavanaugh et al., 2012). The study reported finding that a large percentage of the participants had low levels of support and comfort, when asked about allowing concealed carry guns on campus. When asked about on- and off-campus location, the majority of the participants reported different opinions. The majority of reports had higher levels of support and comfort for concealed carry guns in locations off campus. Cavanaugh et al. (2012) found that

student participants were three times more likely to self-report that they were not at all comfortable with the concept of concealed carry being permitted on their college campus, in contrast to being very comfortable. This finding suggests that students may regard a college campus as a unique environment that is perceived to be safer than an off-campus location (Cavanaugh et al., 2012).

Campus locations (e.g. region of the country) may also influence student opinions about this matter, and it behooves researchers to investigate and help inform policy (De Angelis et al., 2017). In the U.S., every state permits individuals to carry a concealed weapon; however region of the country can influence overall support for these policies (Ghent & Grant, 2015). Research on Missouri voters by Ghent and Grant (2015) reports that individuals who support the right to carry are motivated by violent crime. Voter approval for the right to carry a concealed weapon increased by around seven-tenths of a percentage point, when an increase in the violent crime rate was reported (Ghent & Grant, 2015). In comparison to other research, perhaps region of the country in which a campus is located could influence student support for conceal-carry policies.

Beyond region of the country in which the college is located, political affiliation is likely to be correlated with a student's support of concealed weapons on campus. Regarding voter demographics, the right to carry was supported notably more by those who were affiliated with the Republican political party, which has conservative values and vehemently supports the right to own a gun (Ghent & Grant, 2015). Additionally, 48% of voters supported the right to carry, and of that percentage around 2% of the voters had a permit to carry (Ghent & Grant, 2015). The findings suggest that there is a belief in the idea carrying a concealed weapon deters crime. Voters may have been motivated to vote in support of the right to carry because of their belief in the connection between violent crime and carrying a concealed weapon as a deterrent to crime.

Lastly, other research has shown gender to be a significant factor with attitudes towards

concealed weapons. For example, women are less likely to support concealed weapons on campus even after a violent event (Patten, Thomas, & Viotti, 2013). Among gun owners women were less likely than men to support guns in public places (Wolfson et al., 2017). Other research has indicated men are more likely to seek a concealed handgun license and would carry a weapon on campus if legally able to do so (Bouffard, Nobles, & Wells, 2012). Bouffard et al.'s (2012) findings are particularly interesting to the researchers in the current study because our college, as a private college in the state of Florida, could change our rules and permit concealed weapons on campus. Men in another study also reported greater levels of comfort with guns in the community and on campus (Cavanaugh et al., 2012). Overall, we expect our results to echo these studies with men showing greater support and comfort with guns and concealed weapons on campus.

Hypotheses

Based on the previous literature we hypothesize:

1. The majority of students will report feeling safe on campus.
2. Students that report feeling safe on campus will have lower levels of support for concealed weapons on campus.
3. Male students will be more likely to support concealed weapons on campus.
4. Students who identify as Republican/conservative will be more likely to support concealed weapons on campus in comparison to students of other political affiliations.
5. Students who support concealed weapons on campus will be exposed to a variety of news and social media.

Methodology

We conducted a research study in order to better understand college student perceptions regarding concealed weapons on campus and safety concerns. The college used in this research project is located in Florida, and is only a few hours away from two incidents of random mass shootings in the last few years—more specifically, the Pulse night club shooting in Orlando

and the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. This college campus provides a vital research opportunity that is relevant to today's issues concerning gun violence and safety issues.

To obtain our sample, two students and one faculty member distributed 130 surveys in five face-to-face classes. Before students could participate they were read a research script that stated, "As part of this study you will be asked to take an approximately fifteen-minute survey containing questions, which concern information about perceptions of conceal carry laws and campus safety." Students were also instructed to not complete the survey again if they did so in another class. Beyond asking students to not write their name on the survey we also did not track students in the course who declined to participate in these courses. Due to not tracking class attendance, student participation and those declining to participate, we are unable to report a non-response rate.

Every participant reviewed a consent form prior to deciding to partake in the study. After signing a consent form, each participant received the same survey which contained 30 questions. When the survey was completed, the researchers collected the data for analysis. While 30 items were on the survey questionnaire, in this section we focus on the variables we will discuss in the results section. All survey data was coded and analyzed using the program, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, commonly known as SPSS.

At the beginning of the questionnaire we asked students to report some basic demographic or background characteristics, such as their sex, ethnicity/race, and political affiliation. These variables were measured as follows: SEX (male or female); RACE (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Other) and POLITICAL (Democrat, Republican, Independent, and Other). Ethnicity/race and political affiliation were later collapsed into dichotomous variables in order to meet t-test and multiple regression requirements. Race became White and all other races, while political affiliation became Republican and all other political affiliations.

Another hypothesis for this research study

purports that those who are actively involved with social media or pay attention to the news on a regular basis will report stronger attitudes regarding concealed carry, and they may feel less safe. Previously cited research studies, have described the contagion effect, which is when public panic or fear is spread through news and social media. Due to social media and news exposure as a possible factor in their attitudes toward concealed weapons, students were asked to report the following information: how many hours per day they spent on social media (open-ended question), if they have notifications enabled on their social media accounts (yes or no), and how many hours per week they estimated they spent watching the news on television or online (open-ended question).

Utilizing a Likert scale with contingency questions, the student participants also answered questions about their perceptions of safety on campus and concealed weapons. The Likert scale included the following measures of agreement to choose from: (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). The participants in our study reported their level of agreement, concerning the following two items: "The media spends too much time covering gun violence" and "I feel unsafe on campus" (reverse coded for data analysis). After reporting their perceptions of safety and media coverage of violence students were asked to use the same Likert scale to indicate their comfort and willingness to be around guns generally and weapons on campus. Seven items were combined to create a scale assessing their overall acceptance of guns and weapons. Possible scores on this scale ranged from seven (low level of acceptance) to 35 (high level of acceptance). The seven items we used to assess students' acceptance of guns generally and weapons on campus included the following: "I feel comfortable being around people with guns"; "I feel safe being around people with guns"; "Campus safety/security should be armed with guns"; "Faculty should be allowed to have concealed weapons at [school name]"; "I would feel safer if faculty had concealed weapons at [school name]"; "Students should be allowed to have concealed weapons at [school name]" and "I would feel safer if students had concealed

Table 1: Student Sample Demographics and Independent Variable Characteristics

	<i>n</i>	%	Mean
Sex			
Female	70	65.4	
Male	37	34.6	
Ethnicity/Race			
Asian	4	3.7	
Black	9	8.4	
Hispanic	13	12.1	
White	80	74.8	
Other	1	.9	
Political affiliation			
Conservative	36	33.6	
Independent	10	9.3	
Liberal	45	42.1	
Other	16	15.0	
Hours per day on social media	107		3.62
Hours per week watching news media (online or television)	107		3.27

weapons at [school name]”.

Results

After the surveys were coded, data from all of participants were analyzed. In total, there were 107 completed surveys collected. The subsequent information elucidates on the findings, regarding students’ opinions and attitudes towards concealed weapons and campus safety issues. Table 1 depicts the demographic and background characteristics of our sample. Regarding race and sex, a majority of participants were White and female, which were both proportional to the student population of our small, private college.

In Table 2 we report student perceptions of campus as a safe place and media coverage of gun violence. As we hypothesized, a majority of students on campus reported feeling safe (85.1%). Also shown in Table 2 we were interested in

knowing how many students disagreed with the questionnaire item, “the media covers too much gun violence.” In other words, do students feel gun violence coverage is “not too much” given our world of 24-hour news coverage? Less than half (36.4%) of students disagreed with this statement. We discuss possible explanations for these findings within the discussion section of the current paper.

In order of our hypotheses, we believed students that reported feeling safe on campus would have lower levels of support for concealed weapons on campus. Overall, students’ mean score of acceptance was an 18.85 (7-35 score range, $SD = 8.67$). Students were most likely to support armed safety (72.9% agreed or were neutral to them carrying guns), then armed faculty (58.9% agreed or were neutral to them carrying concealed weapons), and lastly other students (32.7% agreed or were neutral to them carrying concealed weapons). In order to further test these relationships we conducted a t-test comparing two groups of students—those who reported feeling unsafe versus all other students (i.e. students who reported feeling neutral or agreeing they felt safe on campus). Our t-test was not statistically significant, $t(99) = .087$, $p = .244$. Students who reported feeling unsafe on campus ($M = 18.73$, $SD = 7.1$) were not significantly more likely to have higher scores on our acceptance of concealed weapons on campus scale in comparison to other students ($M = 18.57$, $SD = 6.63$).

Our next hypothesis was that male students would be more likely to support concealed weapons on campus than female students. The

Table 2: Student Perceptions of Campus as a Safe Place and Media Coverage of Gun Violence

	<i>n</i>	%
I feel safe on campus		
Agree	86	85.1
Disagree	15	14.9
Media covers too much gun violence		
Agree/Neutral	68	63.6
Disagree	39	36.4

Table 3: Multiple Regression Results for Measuring Favorable Attitudes for Concealed Weapons

Variable	b	SE	β
Race	2.94	1.53	.188
Sex	-2.46	1.36	-.183
Political affiliation	1.31	1.39	.095
Feels unsafe on campus	.374	1.83	.02
Media reports too much gun violence	2.88	1.39	.23*
Constant	17.816	3.07	---
F-value**		2.26	
R ²		.06	

Note: * = $p \leq .05$, ** = $p \leq .01$,

only significant sex difference we uncovered was related to support for concealed weapons for faculty. In a chi-square test, male students were more likely to agree or feel neutral about faculty carrying concealed weapons (disagree, $n = 10$, neutral/agree, $n = 27$) in comparison to females who were more divided (disagree, $n = 34$, neutral/agree, $n = 36$); $\chi^2(1) = 4.64, p = .031$.

Based on previous literature we also hypothesized students who identify as Republican/conservative will be more likely to support concealed weapons on campus in comparison to students of other political affiliations. While we did not find a significant difference based on political affiliation and attitudes towards concealed weapons on campus, one’s political affiliation had an influence on their opinion about how often the media covers gun violence. More specifically, a chi-square test uncovered Republican/conservative students were more likely to be neutral or agree ($n = 28$) than disagree ($n = 8$) with this statement. Other students were more evenly divided with 31 students disagreeing that the media covers too much gun violence versus being neutral or agreeing with this statement ($n = 40$).

Our next hypothesis was students who support concealed weapons on campus will be exposed to a variety of news and social media,

which could support the contagion effect. Two Pearson correlation tests were conducted—first we compared social media hours to acceptance of weapons on campus followed by a second test exploring the relationship between hours per week a student spent watching the news and our acceptance of weapons scale. Both tests did not yield significant results for social media hours ($r = .014, M = 3.62, SD = 2.39, DF = 105, p = .883$) or for number of hours spent watching the news ($r = .129, M = 3.27, SD = 4.23, DF = 105, p = .185$). This could be because students overwhelmingly felt safe on our specific campus, which may be more important than how social media may relate to fear of mass shootings or the contagion effect.

Lastly, the researchers conducted a Multiple Regression Test in order to measure favorable attitudes for concealed carry. Even though some of the variables included in the regression were not significant during bivariate analysis we thought they may have a significant effect while controlling for other variables simultaneously. A significant regression equation was found, $F(4, 96) = 2.26, p = .039$. Table 4 displays the regression model results. The current regression model was only able to explain 6% of the variance. While controlling for a student’s race, sex, political affiliation, and perceptions of safety only a student’s beliefs that the media spends too much time on gun violence was significant. Students who felt the media spent too much time on gun violence were more likely to have positive attitudes towards guns and concealed weapons on campus ($\beta = .23$).

Discussion and Conclusions

Our sample showed mixed support for previous research on factors that influence attitudes towards concealed weapons on campus. We did find a majority of our students felt safe, however they did not significantly differ from students that did not feel safe and their acceptance of guns and weapons on campus. Perhaps because a majority of students reporting feeling safe on campus, a majority of our sample also reported that the media spends too much time covering gun violence (63.6%). These results could indicate students feel safe so they may

believe media focus on gun violence is disproportionate to the likelihood of a shooting occurring. Our student population is relatively small (~2,500 enrolled) with the largest courses capped at 40 students. It could be difficult for students to imagine someone they know or see on a regular basis committing an act of violence against them. This study was conducted after the Pulse Night Club shooting in which the victims did not personally know the shooter and before the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in Parkland when some students did know the offender.

Within our data we also found male students were more likely to support faculty having concealed weapons on campus. Female students were more mixed on their feelings towards faculty having concealed weapons on campus. Perhaps while other literature shows females to be more fearful of crime in general, our results support other research that indicates after a violent crime near campus women are more opposed to concealed guns on campus (Patten et al., 2013).

While previous research found Republicans were more likely to support concealed weapons perhaps the unique environment (i.e. college campus) and age of those who may be permitted to carry them (e.g. students) influenced our results (Ghent & Grant, 2015; Patten et al., 2013). We did find that students overall were more likely to support armed campus safety as opposed to concealed weapons among faculty or students. Perhaps if we asked if faculty and students were trained prior to being permitted to have weapons on campus we might have found significant results. We do not know if students are aware that in the state of Florida training is required for a concealed guns license.

In reference to people's perceptions, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors, fear can be influential. While we did not see support for the contagion effect it could be because nearly 75% of our students reported feeling safe on campus even though our campus security does not currently carry guns or other weapons on campus. Society's perception of gun violence and opinions regarding concealed carry rights may be influenced by the amount of news

coverage dedicated to public safety concerns. It could be that we surveyed students between school shootings—the Parkland mass shooting even happened about a month after data collection began while we were analyzing our results. Perhaps if we resampled students after this tragedy we would have found more significant results to support the contagion effect. Some students that survived the Parkland shooting have called for stricter gun control, which shows perceptions held by students are noteworthy, due to the significant manner in which they are effected by the campus policies (Arrigo, & Acheson, 2016). Policies relating to campus-specific gun regulations have to be evaluated in conjunction with an idea of the relative impact it might have on students. Research on students' perceptions regarding concealed carry laws and campus safety issues will help provide elucidation for society on this critical matter (Arrigo, & Acheson, 2016).

Columbine, Virginia Tech, Sandy Hook, and Parkland are just a few out of the many examples of high-profile school shootings that are now infamous and synonymous with gun violence (Nedzel, 2014). After some high-profile shootings, recommendations regarding safety on campuses became more pertinent (Kyle, Schafer, Burruss, & Giblin, 2017). Incident response policies became instrumental when calculating the perceived risks. Campus community members make up a society and culture that have important opinions that should be considered by state legislatures and policymakers (Kyle et al., 2017). Deterrence of campus crime and violence is a high priority for suggested campus policies (Jang et al., 2014). This priority is maintained by the dedication of schools to protect their campus communities, which include students, administration, faculty, and visitors. The aforementioned research provides critical information when contemplating students' perceptions regarding concealed carry laws and campus safety issues (Cavanaugh et al., 2012). Despite intense media coverage, regular citizens' voting records, and the fear instigated by the event of a school shooting, most of the previous research studies have found that students are not in favor of the implementation of a concealed

carry policy on campus.

In the United States of America, there are college and university campuses almost everywhere. There have been frequently reported incidents of gun violence across the country, and at both universities and colleges (Nedzel, 2014). These numerous incidents of gun violence and shootings have caused a great deal of concern and awareness for public safety.

The purpose of this study was to gain more knowledge about student perceptions regarding concealed carry and campus safety issues. The participants of this research study represent a constituency that has valuable opinions that could influence future gun control policies; however, more research still needs to be done, in order to gain better knowledge. Increased social cognizance of the gun violence issue and its relationship to college and university perceptions has become a relevant research opportunity. Campus community members such as students and faculty make up a society and culture that have important opinions that should be considered by state legislatures and policymakers. Regular shootings will continue to prompt action from all parties involved. The gun violence issue is not going to be resolved, without more research.

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Contributor Bios

Jacob Russ is originally from Brandon, Florida. He is a member of the National Society of Leadership and Success. He holds an interest in the criminal justice system. Shelly Summer Jones graduated *summa cum laude*, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology, Criminology, and Pre-Law from Florida Southern College. She is originally from Chattanooga, Tennessee. Shelly was a recipient of the 2017 Psychology Department Service Award. Among other clubs, She is a member of the Phi Eta Sigma, and the Psi Chi honor societies. She holds interests in various areas of research related to forensic psychology, and the criminal justice system. In the near future, she intends to pursue a graduate degree. Moreover, She aspires to help contribute to the education of social issues and hopes to make a relevant difference for the better. Dr. Blankenship is an Assistant Professor of Social Science at Florida Southern College. Her research area interests include race, class and gender portrayals within educational media. She is also interested in and writes about a variety of issues within the criminal justice system.

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