



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on December 17, 2012

China School Knife Attack, Portland Mall Attack Receive Little Coverage

The same day as the tragic Newtown, Connecticut, school shooting, a Chinese man [stabbed 22 children](#) in China's central province of Henan. The attack yielded almost no news coverage in the United States.

Although no fatalities have been reported in this particular Chinese stabbing incident, China — which has strict gun control laws — has had a spate of school stabbing massacres in recent years with many fatalities. In September, an [ax-wielding](#) Chinese man killed three school children and wounded another 13. And NBC News [reported](#) December 15 that “there was a particular string of knife attacks against schoolchildren across the country in early 2010 that killed nearly 20 and wounded more than 50.”



Also largely unreported by the national press was a would-be massacre stopped in a Portland-area mall by an armed citizen with a concealed-carry permit. 22-year-old Nick Meli was carrying his Glock 22 at the Clackamas Town Center, a mall in a town outside of Portland, Oregon, on December 11, three days before the Newtown massacre. The contrast between the unarmed victims in Newtown and the Clackamas shooting was stark. Meli, seeing suspect 22-year-old Jacob Tyler Roberts shooting random shoppers with his AR-15, pulled his gun as Roberts' gun jammed. Meli never even had to fire his gun to stop the shooting spree, which ended in the death of two innocents and the shooter himself. Meli held his fire because of the risk of shooting an innocent person. “As I was going down to pull, I saw someone in the back of the Charlotte move, and I knew if I fired and missed, I could hit them,” Meli [told](#) the local television station. “I know that after he saw me, I think that the last shot he fired was the one he used on himself.”

While the message of gun control proponents is that massive deaths in lone shooter incidents would end if strict gun control laws are passed, Meli's example is that deaths would be minimized by instead ending “no gun zones.” Meli's anecdote is backed up by data from the U.S. Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics, which reports that some [82,500 crimes across the nation are stopped by law-abiding gun owners annually](#), while only about [270 incidents involve the law-abiding citizen killing the criminal perpetrator](#) ([police also kill](#) an average of 400 violent criminal suspects annually). The BJS also noted that law-abiding citizens were also far less likely to be injured in crimes while using firearms defending themselves. “A fifth of the victims defending themselves with a firearm suffered an injury, compared to almost half of those who defended themselves with weapons other than a firearm or who had no weapon.”



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Professor John R. Lott, [interviewed](#) on CNN after the Newtown massacre, noted,

Every place in the world that we have crime data, both before and after a gun ban has gone into effect, every single place has seen an increase in murders after the ban has been put in place. And many times it's been a several-fold or more increase. And there's a simple reason for that, and that is, when you ban guns, it's basically the most-law-abiding citizens who turn in their guns, not the criminals. And rather than making it more difficult for criminals to commit crime, you actually make it easier.

Meanwhile, gun control advocates claim that U.S. crime rates are higher because of access to guns, citing [deceptively selective statistics](#). Gun control advocates typically cite only murders where a firearm is used, not overall murder rates, and claim that the U.S. death rate is several multiples of other developed nations. But the reality is that availability of guns in the United States has led to an overall murder rate no higher than other developed nations, if one accounts for age and race. While the overall U.S. homicide rate is [higher than most European nations](#), if one measures European-Americans to Europeans of the same age group, the rates are virtually identical. The U.S. [murder rate among whites is 3.3 per 100,000](#), just a bit higher than most developed European nations. But European nations such as Germany are highly gentrified, comprised largely of [older people who are far less likely to commit crimes](#), whereas the United States has a [far younger average age](#) for its population and far more youth. Likewise, [Asian-American murder rates](#) are lower than Caucasian-American murder rates, though higher than murder rates in most developed Asian nations such as Japan. But Japan also has a highly gentrified society, and like most of Europe is not producing enough children to replace the existing population. Once gentrification is factored in, the murder rates are virtually identical. Likewise, [African-American murder rates](#) — which are very high at 22 per 100,000 — are [somewhat lower than murder rates in South Africa](#), the most developed nation on that continent.

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