



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 4, 2014

## Using “Mental Health” to Take Away Guns

Following the second Fort Hood massacre in five years, the post’s commanding general, Lt. General Mark Milley, told reporters on Thursday that [the root cause](#) of the attack was attacker Ivan Lopez’s mental illness:

We have very strong evidence that [Lopez] had a medical history that indicates an unstable psychiatric or psychological condition. We’re going through all records to ensure that is, in fact, correct. But we believe that to be the fundamental underlying causal factor [in the massacre].



Lopez was undergoing a number of treatments for depression, anxiety, and sleeplessness, including being prescribed Ambien, a well-known sleep aid. What isn’t as well known is the long list of potential negative side effects of taking Ambien, including:

- Hallucinations, through all physical senses, of varying intensity
- Delusions
- Altered thought patterns
- Euphoria
- Impaired judgment and reasoning
- Uninhibited extroversion in social or interpersonal settings, and
- Increased impulsivity

A brief review of Lopez’s behavior just before he started shooting reveals a potential link between at least three of these negative side effects. This is how *The Telegraph* reported the last 15 minutes of Lopez’s earthly existence:

At 4pm on Wednesday Lopez, who was in uniform, reportedly argued with other soldiers at a Medical Brigade building, then got into a vehicle firing several shots out the window as he drove away.

He then entered another building belonging to the 49th Transportation Battalion and opened fire again with a .45 caliber Smith & Wesson.

Less than 15 minutes after the shooting began he was confronted in a car park by a female military police officer who pointed her gun at him from 20ft away before Lopez shot himself in the head.

This appears to be another tragic event that gun controllers, with the help of House Speaker John Boehner and the National Rifle Association (NRA), are using to infringe further on Americans’ Second Amendment rights. Rebecca Terrell reported in *The New American* that Aaron Alexis, the attacker in the Washington Navy Yard massacre last September that left 12 people dead, was taking a prescription medication called Trazodone for insomnia. Wrote Terrell:



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Trazodone is an antidepressant often used to treat insomnia but proven to cause suicidal thinking, panic attacks, mania, and aggressive behavior.

This psychotherapeutic is directly linked with several murder cases in the past six years, including a 2011 mass shooting at a salon in Seal Beach, California, and a 2009 incident in Maine that left a father dead and a mother injured.

She also noted that the report following the Sandy Hook attack in 2012 was deliberately delayed by Connecticut's State Attorney General Stephen Sedensky because it would reveal Adam Lanza's use of prescription drugs. When the toxicology tests were finally obtained through a Freedom of Information Act demand by a child advocacy group, it was learned that revealing the information could "cause a lot of people to stop taking their medications [and] stop cooperating with their treating physicians just because of the heinousness of what Adam Lanza did."

The group, AbleChild, scoffed at that disclaimer, noting that there have been 31 school shootings or acts of violence "committed by those taking or withdrawing from psychiatric drugs."

All of which is fodder for gun controllers who have been rebuffed at every turn in their determination to establish a national gun registry as a stepping stone to national firearms confiscation and disarmament. Following the Navy Yard shooting, Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) said, "My hope is this senseless killing will help us break through the gridlock that so obstructed us last time." He saw the opportunity to use "mental health" as the battering ram to overcome that obstruction:

Mental health has always been part of the comprehensive solution that I've advocated, and I hope we can regard this tragedy as a call to action....

Mental health is really the key to unlocking this issue. I've become more and more convinced that we should establish the mental health issue as our common ground.

This is in line with the 25 commandments from on high issued by the president back in January which included orders to find ways to include more "mental health" information in the federal background check system. His purpose was completely transparent. A White House statement made at the time said,

Too many Americans have been severely injured or lost their lives as a result of gun violence. While the vast majority of Americans who experience a mental illness are not violent, in some cases when persons with a mental illness do not receive the treatment they need the result can be tragedies such as homicide or suicide. The federal background check system is the most effective way to assure that such individuals are not able to purchase a firearm from a licensed gun dealer.

It's also the most effective way to know who owns guns coupled with some "expert" opinion on their mental health.

On this issue Obama is getting some help from unlikely places: Speaker of the House John Boehner and the National Rifle Association. On Thursday, in response to the second Fort Hood attack, Boehner said, "There's no question that those with mental health issues should be prevented from owning weapons or being able to purchase weapons. We need to continue to look to find a way to keep guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them."

This echoes a refrain that emanated from the NRA immediately following the Sandy Hook massacre. Said the group's chief executive Layne LaPierre, "How can we possibly even guess how many [Lanzas are out there] given our nation's refusal to create an active national database of the mentally ill?"



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In a surprisingly lucid summary of the strategy of the gun controllers to use “mental health” as the entering wedge first to create a national database of all gun owners, the *Washington Post* pointed out that, in the past, the states had primary responsibility and authority to devise their own systems of laws and regulations concerning the ownership of firearms by their citizens. Many, in fact, have stronger limitations than does the federal government under the Gun Control Act of 1968, which prohibits gun sales to individuals who have been committed to a mental institution or who have been “adjudicated as a mental defective.”

But this “hodgepodge” of state rules is unruly, according to the gun controllers, and a national standard (and enforcement thereof) would allegedly reduce all manner of violent crime. According to the *Post*,

[Those prohibitions in the 1968 law] stand today but are pretty difficult to enforce, partially due to the issue LaPierre mentioned: reporting on mental health status is incomplete, with a hodgepodge of state laws that specify what information does, or does not, go into the federal background check system.

Remarkably, the *Post* goes on to say that, under the Constitution, the states cannot be forced by the federal government to comply with requests to enter state-generated mental health data into that system. Instead, they must be bribed! Here’s the *Post*:

The federal government does not have the constitutional authority to require state agencies to report data. The most it can do is offer funding — or withhold dollars — in an attempt to entice states to participate, just as they did with the law after the Virginia Tech shooting.

None of this enhanced reporting, if enacted, will have any impact whatsoever on violence committed by the mentally ill, according to Richard Friedman, the director of psychopharmacology at the Payne Whitney Psychiatric Clinic. Wrote Dr. Friedman,

There is overwhelming epidemiological evidence that the vast majority of people with psychiatric disorders do not commit violent acts. Only about 4 percent of violence in the United States can be attributed to people with mental illness....

Perhaps more significant, we are not very good at predicting who is likely to be dangerous in the future.... Psychiatrists, using clinical judgment, are not much better than chance at predicting which individual patients will do something violent and which will not.

It would be even harder to predict a mass shooting. You can profile the perpetrators after the fact and you’ll get a description of troubled young men, which also matches the description of thousands of other troubled young men who would never do something like this....

The vast majority of homicides are carried out by outwardly normal people in the grip of all too ordinary human aggression.

Missing in all this discussion is any mention of these young men addicted to violent video games, or lack of positive male role models, or the moral decline from which the country has suffered for years. Also missing is any discussion of exactly who or what group of so-called experts would make the final determination as to who is sane and who isn’t.

What is evident, however, is that despite the failure of “psychiatrists using clinical judgment” to predict those inclined to massacre innocents, the gun controllers are escalating their attempts to use “mental health” as the back door to gun control and ultimately to gun confiscation. With the help of those such as Boehner and the NRA, their job is going to be much easier.



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