



Crime & Punishment

James Alan Fox on criminal behavior and the justice system

GUNS AND GUN LAWS , MURDER AND MAYHEM

The Colorado shooting and gun control

Posted by James Alan Fox, Crime and Punishment July 20, 2012 11:30 AM

Author's note: I hope you'll take the time to read the entire piece. Unfortunately, it is easy for some to jump to quick conclusions without moving past the headlines. So let me be clear about this post. As my frequent readers know, I do support reasonable gun restrictions and regulations--certain steps designed to reduce our nation's overall rate of firearms violence. Still, murder in its most extreme form, as in the Colorado shooting, is particularly difficult to prevent through gun restrictions, or other strategies, for that matter. Of course, that doesn't mean we shouldn't try nonetheless. It would be the right thing to do, although not necessarily for the right reasons. Those reasons occur every day on the streets of America.

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There are few criminal events as stunning and frightening as a mass shooting. The suddenness, randomness and unpredictability(CNN) -- There are few criminal events as stunning and frightening as a mass shooting. The suddenness, randomness and unpredictability of episodes like Friday's early morning massacre at an Aurora, Colorado, movie theater cause us all to wonder whether any place is safe.

In our search for some pattern or commonality to these tragedies that might help us make sense of what appears so senseless, we invariably seek answers to such questions as: "What would inspire someone to commit such a dreadful act, one that was clearly planned in terms of time and place?" and "Are there measures that would reduce the likelihood of such events or at least reduce the carnage associated with them when they do occur?"

Read the full article at [CNN](#)