

let's talk

America reaches its 308th mass shooting this year



Search Desensitization

I'm Feeling Scared

11 Killed in Synagogue Massacre; Suspect Charged with 29 Counts ...

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/27/us/active-shooter-pittsburgh-syna->

A gunman opened fire in a Pittsburgh synagogue on Saturday, leaving 11 people dead and six others injured.

Brianna Cobb, Reporter

There have been almost as many mass shootings as days in the year.

As of Nov. 2018, there have been 308 mass shootings in the United States since the beginning of the year, *Gun Violence Archive*, a statistics website used by CNN and *The New York Times*, said.

On a Nov. morning when I woke up, I did the same thing I always do: I turned the news on.

Within a single moment, I was confronted with flashing images and the phrase “breaking news” sprawled across the screen of every television station and instantly, my mind went to another shooting. “It’s a horrific scene, there’s blood everywhere,” a Los Angeles sheriff on CNN said, confirming my thoughts as he recounts the tragic details his officers were faced with after a shooting at a bar in the Los Angeles suburb of Thousand Oaks.

Then, I did something that in retrospect, surprised me. I thought to myself, “Wow, that’s terrible, but thankfully it was only 12 people.” Then I moved on with my day. This mindset is precisely the problem we’re facing as a country, and I’ll admit I’m part of it.

A study was done by Jason R. Silva, a Doctoral Candidate in Criminal Justice at John Jay College of Criminal Justice Graduate Center. The study shows the media

tends to cover mass shootings that occur at schools or have a high death toll.

If our brains react differently to violence then realistically, continuously having school shootings or mass shootings with high death tolls being reported can cause our brains to have a lesser reaction to similarly tragic incidents in which fewer people were killed, as stated above.

Instead of seeing the casualties as people, we begin to see them as just a number. We subconsciously compare it to what has happened in the past and add the phrase “It could’ve been worse” to the end of our sentence before continuing with our day.

The truth is, if there’s this continuous cycle of violence in the media our brains will start to react differently to violent stories and images. We will also become desensitized to the other tragic events that continue to plague our country because it does not supersede the “breaking news” stories depicted in the news.

In other words, we become desensitized to violence.

But what is desensitization other than a big word that’s hard to say?

Think of it this way: if one day, everyone started to wear their clothes backward, it

would be weird at first. But if everyone continued to wear their clothes backward, after awhile you would probably get used to it and it wouldn’t seem like that a big of a deal.

Now, replace ‘clothes’ with ‘acts of mass violence’ and you’re left with a giant portion of the population who do not see the rising number of casualties and breaking news stories as anything other than another Tuesday.

No matter where you stand on gun control or public safety, it is hard to ignore that a large percentage of our population is used to seeing mass shootings in the news.

If we don’t do anything, then the population will continue to become used to violence until it is incorporated into our daily lives, even more than it has already.

And just like the world getting a little bit warmer each year has become the norm, mass shootings soon will be too.

If that doesn’t scare you, I don’t know what will.

So, be aware of what is going on in the world and especially be aware of the laws and bills that can affect how public safety is instilled in our country.

Don’t let yourself become desensitized.

