



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on August 13, 2022

## FBI and Texas State University Wrong on How Many Armed Citizens Stop Mass Shootings

Ed White, a journalist for the Associated Press covering the story of an armed citizen stopping a shooting in an Indiana mall in July, [said such an incident is very rare](#):

A bystander's decision to shoot a man who opened fire at an Indiana mall was a rare occurrence of someone stepping in to try to prevent multiple casualties before police could arrive....

It isn't common for mass shootings to be stopped in such fashion. From 2000 to 2021, fewer than 3% of 433 active attacks in the U.S. ended with a civilian firing back, according to the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center at Texas State University.



RichLegg/iStock/Getty Images Plus

In covering the same incident, *The Washington Post* [echoed the refrain](#), calling it “a rare instance of [an] armed civilian ending a mass shooting,” adding:

The Greenwood incident is unique, however, because it became one of the rare instances of an armed civilian successfully intervening to end a mass shooting, adding more fuel to a national debate about the role of bystanders during an active shooter attack.

The *Post*'s journalists referred to data captured by the FBI as the basis for their reporting:

In practice, this is an uncommon occurrence during mass shootings. In recent studies of more than 430 “active shooter incidents” dating back to 2000, the FBI found that civilians killed gunmen in just 10 cases.

John Lott, head of the Crime Prevention Research Center, exposed the error on Wednesday in his report [“How the FBI Undercounts Armed Citizen Responders to Mass Killers — and Media Play Along.”](#) He reported that the FBI showed that only 11 out of 252 active shooter incidents in its database were stopped by an armed citizen.

But the FBI undercounted the number of incidents they collected between 2014 and 2021. According to Lott's research, there were a total of 281 active shooter incidents, and 41 of them were stopped by armed citizens.

Lott called the discrepancy “overlooked cases” that the FBI failed to count. And of course, the



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mainstream media never bothered to look past the FBI's conclusion and reported the error as fact. Lott asked the FBI about those "overlooked" discrepancies: "The FBI declined to address them." He asked the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center at Texas State University to address the discrepancy that also showed up in their results, and received this from them:

We do appreciate you sending potential active shooter cases for the FBI team to review for inclusion in their active shooter dataset. As promised, I sent the email chain to the FBI team yesterday.

As I'm sure you know, the FBI Active Shooter reports are released on an annual basis.

My assumption is that any amendment retroactively adding cases would likely be included in a release with the [next] annual report.

Lott also contacted Ed White, the AP writer, within hours of his article being published, pointing out that the data he was using was not accurate. But White never corrected his reporting of the incident. Which means that the false underreporting of armed citizens foiling attempts at mass shootings will continue to be picked up by the compliant anti-gun media and reported as fact.

Meanwhile, Lott and his organization continue to collect reports of those armed citizens stopping mass shootings in their database, which at present lists in detail more than 60 such instances in the time period 2014 through 2021.

Lott treated what appears to be a coordinated effort to mislead the media, and the public, kindly:

Although collecting such data is fraught with challenges, some see a pattern of distortion in the FBI numbers because the errors almost exclusively go one way, minimizing the life-saving actions of armed citizens.

Armed citizens don't foil just mass shootings. Gun owners defend themselves against aggression between 500,000 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and 1,884,348 (Gary Kleck and Marc Gertz) times every year. [As this writer noted previously](#):

Also left unreported by any media is the number of times an individual with criminal intent is deterred not just by the presence of an armed citizen, but by the mere *suggestion* that the citizen might be armed.

As horrific as the recent mass shootings are, one needs to balance the mainstream media's 24/7 blood-red coverage of those events with the fact that, without armed citizens present, there would be many more such ghastly atrocities being committed.

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