



Written by [James Heiser](#) on May 22, 2015

Waco Shooting About Crime — Not Racism, Sexism, and Gun Control

The stunning violence that erupted last weekend between rival biker gangs at a restaurant in Waco, Texas, has proven once again that almost any tragedy may be subject to politicization by various left-wing special interest groups.

Nine of the individuals involved in the shooting have died, and over 170 have been arrested on a variety of charges. According to [media accounts](#), most have been charged with felonies stemming from the classification of the shooting as organized criminal activity, raising the question of how many of those who have been so charged may face a charge of capital murder.



The scale of the incident seems horrific enough, but the May 17 shooting has become a left-wing Rorschach Test, with one writer after another seeing the events that took place at the Twin Peaks restaurant as “proof” to substantiate their particular hot button issue. Thus, for example, the *Houston Chronicle* saw the incident as one more opportunity to editorialize on a point that has been infuriating opponents of Second Amendment liberties for months: the looming passage of “open carry” legislation in the Texas legislature. In the words of the [“Biker Brawl”](#) editorial:

So, let’s say you’re a Waco cop pulling up in your patrol car to a Twin Peaks restaurant that looks and sounds on a Sunday afternoon like a wartime combat scene, with bullets flying, people dying and bystanders diving for cover. And let’s say that the burly guys in jeans and leather jackets aren’t the only ones wielding weapons.

In the open-carry Texas most lawmakers this legislative session so devoutly seem to wish for, imagine the difficulty that cop would face as he or she tries to make split-second decisions about good guys and bad. Does the cop hesitate, knowing that the guy with the gun may be, not a gang member, but some would-be hero?

Of course, the editorial ignores a host of actual details that are pertinent to the situation under consideration: First, police did not just “happen” upon the events in Waco — they were on the scene within two minutes: What would have happened to innocent bystanders left to fend for themselves as time dragged on with no means of defending themselves? Second, what about concealed carry permit holders? What the *Chronicle* is actually calling for is a ban on all legal carry — open or concealed — because precisely the same fictional scenario applies in the case of a concealed carry permit holder who defends himself. Presumably, innocent civilian deaths are to be preferred to police officers having to exercise their critical faculties to sort out who is shooting at whom. The violence was minimized to alleged members of the biker gangs in part because police were already on the scene.

In a fit of histrionics, the *Chronicle* then opined:



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A Wild-West Texas, though, seems to be the ideal for the legislative gunsters we've sent to Austin, whose actions will result in more guns in more places with fewer safeguards. They're besotted with the notion that the Second Amendment confers an absolute immunity against any attempt to protect the general welfare.

They are mistaken. There are sensible limits on every one of our constitutional rights, including the Second.

However, a majority of states do permit open carry, and one is not confronted with a so-called "Wild-West" scenario. Still, the level of vitriol dished out by the *Chronicle* does allow one salient point to come through: The editors of the *Chronicle* are calling for an infringement of Second Amendment liberties; that is, their problem is with the U.S. Constitution and those who are "besotted" with the defense of inalienable rights.

Meanwhile, Brittney Cooper explained in [an article for Salon.com](#) that the "lesson" of the Waco shooting was all about "white privilege": "The response to the Twin Peaks shootout says everything you need to know about how white privilege really works." In Cooper's words:

White people, even well-meaning and thoughtful ones, have the privilege of looking at deadly acts of mass violence of this sort as isolated local incidents, particular to one community. They do not look at such incidents as indicative of anything having to do with race or racism. But everything from the difference in law enforcement response to media response tells us what we need to know about how white privilege allows acts of violence by white people to be judged by entirely different standards than those of any other group.

The ability to find white racism in the arrest of 170 bikers on felony charges — without regard to their skin color or nation of origin — is astounding. In fact, with the state already invoking the possibility of capital murder charges against many of those bikers, it's pretty hard to rationally see this as a case of "white privilege." The unifying factor in the Twin Peaks shootout is not skin color; rather, it is alleged membership in biker gangs.

The location of the shootout has also aroused the ire of feminists, since the Twin Peaks chain is noted for the attire of its waitresses. As Lee Stranahan wrote in an article for [Breitbart.com](#) as he assessed the hostile coverage at The Daily Beast:

Why the hate for Twin Peaks? Simple, really.

You could fill an entire semester at any Ivy League grad school detailing everything the selectively prudish left would despise about Twin Peaks. It's a successful American business that combines pretty girls, beer, sports, meat, fun, friendly service, a nice atmosphere and more pretty girls.

While media outlets have been quick to identify the Twin Peaks location for the shooting, few have asked why nearly 200 bikers were gathered there. Perhaps the answer may be found in the fact that Twin Peaks is just south of the Harley-Davidson dealership in Waco.

One aspect of the story that has been almost completely neglected has been the way in which local law enforcement arrested 170 individuals without a disaster on a scale such as was witnessed at the Branch Davidian compound near Waco in 1993, when 76 individuals lost their lives in the fire that destroyed their compound. (An additional six were shot by ATF officers.)

Whenever citizens are shot by law-enforcement officials, a careful investigation of the circumstances is warranted. But if the initial details of the story endure scrutiny, the May 17 shooting may simply boil



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down to violence between law enforcement and criminals, without the intervention of any of the panoply of fashionable causes that those who seek to politicize the situation have attempted to link to it. In short, the violence in Waco was not caused by Harley-Davidson, nor by Twin Peaks. It was not the result of gun ownership. It was not the result of “white privilege” or “sexism.” It probably was not even linked to global warming or a lack of access to medical care.

The Waco story is a *crime* story, and it is a story that will weigh down the court system in that city long after the pundits have turned their attention elsewhere.

Photo of bikers: AP Images



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