

Column: After tragedies like Sandy Hook, why are guns being allowed on campus?

by Meaghan O'Donoghue

Guns and schools are two things that you would never think would go together. Yet school shootings are unfortunately becoming more common in America. You never think it could happen somewhere near you. That's what I thought too, until it happened at a school 10 minutes from my home.

On the morning of Friday December 14, 2012, I went to school just like any normal. In the middle of my first period class, rumors started about a school in Newtown going into lockdown. At first, I thought nothing of it. Schools go into lockdown all the time and everything ends up fine. When word of a shooter came about, that's when I became worried.

Throughout the day we started getting more and more news and it seemed the news got worse each time. By the end of the day it was confirmed that twenty children and six adults were killed. Twenty first graders lost their lives because a man walked into a school with a gun.

The Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting was one of the worst days in the history of my state. Many of the little girls in my dance company were in that school that day. I can't begin to describe the fear of not knowing if I was going to see them at dance the next day.

I have seen the suffering of families that have lost a child or a parent. I have seen how a child's innocence was ripped away by what happened that day. That's something that sticks with you.

With the more and more school shootings happening you would think schools would be doing more to prevent guns in schools. Instead there are some states that are passing laws that allow students with permits to carry guns on campus.

On August 1, 2016, a [new law](#) in Texas will allow students with permits to carry concealed guns on campus.

This law will affect University of Texas-Austin student Giovanna McMahon. McMahon said there have been riots on campus prior to this ruling and a pro-gun rally, which included a disturbing mock shooting to advocate for campus carry.

“It is something that doesn’t quite align with my beliefs, because although I applaud the right to bear arms I also feel like increased security measures should be taken before gun licenses are handed out”, McMahon said.

Texas is not the only state to allow a rule like this. Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Mississippi, Oregon, Utah, and Wisconsin all have laws that allow students to carry concealed guns.

The idea behind allowing guns on campus is that it could help to prevent tragedies such as a school shooting.

A FBI report showed that between 2000 and 2013 only 1 shooting out of 160 was stopped by a concealed gun. From 2007 to 2011, out of 300 [National Crime Victimization Survey](#) sexual assault cases, none were stopped by a victim with a gun.

In Colorado and Utah, states that allow concealed guns on campus, the [rate of sexual assault](#) has actually increased 25-50 percent while the national average has decreased by 3 percent.

At FPU, possession of any type of firearm is prohibited. Out of twenty students that I surveyed, not one said they would feel safe if students were allowed to carry guns on campus.

Carrying guns on campus creates many safety concerns. Although students are told to lock their dorms, many leave their rooms unlocked. Imagine what could happen if a student with a gun left their room unlocked. It would be very easy for a gun to get in the wrong hands.

Someone carrying a gun could be permitted to own a gun, but that doesn't mean they know how to use one. [A study](#) done by the [National Gun Victims Action Council](#) had 77 permitted gun owners go through a series of three self-defense scenarios. In two of the three scenarios most the participants would have been killed and one out of seven shot innocent bystanders.

Allowing students to carry a gun could prevent some tragedies, the risk are far too significant. The [Sandy Hook Promise](#) was created in effort to prevent anything like the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting from ever happening again. Until it happens in your community, you never realize how important gun laws are. No community should ever have to go through what Newtown went through.