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“One violent crime” Response

In one violent crime by Ben Shapiro we are given the victims perspective of a violent crime that Ben Shapiro experienced himself. The incident occurred one evening in a New haven coffeehouse. There were about 15 people in there at the time, including Ben Shapiro, when Daniel Silva began to attack people with a six-inch hunting knife. It was a painful ordeal for those that were attacked but fortunately they all survived and Daniel Silva was apprehended. Shapiro then continues through the events that transpired after this incident of how he as a victim was affected, how it was portrayed in the media and how it was used in politics. His main thesis being that we spend too much time reacting to these incidents than we do trying to prevent them.

Being one of the victims of this crime left Shapiro with plenty of physical and mental scars. He was stabbed in both the back and chest but it was his mind and body that were damaged. Shapiro experience difficulty sleeping and trouble concentrating so he was unable to write. This does not make it to the news though instead they have e a video of his, injured and bloodied, body hauled off in the ambulance. We know how this affect Shapiro based on the first sentence of this article. These people experienced a heinous crime yet for the news they are just a story. Shapiro recalls how only hours after surgery he received “calls from television stations and papers” (Shapiro 328) and how fellow survivors Anna and Martin were “ambushed by a Hartford TV crew” (328) as they left the physician. They were all treated far too insensitively for what they have gone through. They needed time to heal before they were harassed by these journalists yet they were given none. They then had to relive that nightmare every time they saw footage showcased on the news. The victims should be helped and given the time and space that they need but what we see is they are given none of that because it is all a competition to break the story first.

Once the trial proceedings begin the story focus shifts from the victims over to the perpetrator of the crime. We are given every detail of who committed the crime and how. His face is placed on all the papers and all over TV and as Shapiro says “it became his case, not mine” (327). It shouldn’t have been about Daniel Silva and how he stabbed those people but that was what it became. Giving to much attention to these criminals takes away from what they did and in a way celebrates them which could possibly encourage others to do the same. The story should be on how the victims were affected while also respecting their privacy and space. It is far more important that we feel the ramifications of his actions and less important that we learn every detail of his life. That way we can sympathize with the victims and give more attention to the recuperation of the survivors than the punishment of the criminal. When the attention is placed on the criminal they are rewarded for their actions because they are receiving what they wanted.

Politics also became involved with this specific incident as a crime bill was passed on August 21. The contents of the bill were not forged to prevent crimes but instead to increase punishment of the criminals such as enhanced prison terms and new death penalty offenses. This is not enough to prevent crimes from being committed it just places a harsher punishment on the people who have already committed the crime. Shapiro speculates that by shredding the mental-health and social welfare safety net it creates openings for “more Daniel Silvas carrying their own traumatic scars into violent adulthood” (324). Without those provisions to help those that need it these people will end up on paths that lead to violent destinations. So this is a key factor in trying to prevent crime. Creating a stable environment with many options for help can treat people that need it so they do not feel the need to act out in any violent ways. Doing so creates a safer environment for our society to grow in without the fear or tension of being the victim of a crime.

In Shapiro’s article we find that the best solution is prevention. Waiting for them to happen and then suddenly reacting just isn’t enough and solves nothing. When these crimes occur papers and TV stations have the need to report on it, all of it, and right away. Even if that means harassing the very victims mere days after it occurred. While it is important to know how they were affected they must also be respected in order to gain sympathy for them instead of anger for the criminal. It is also important not to mention too much about who committed the crime in order to keep the focus on the act itself and not the person. By giving them the attention we are giving them power and what they wanted, which could easily encourage others to do the same. Which is why laws need to be passed that help prevent the crime from taking place instead of harshly punishing those that are behind it. Enough open avenues need to be in place so that those that need help can get it. We need to think ahead not wait for the moments and react to them.