

Title: How the Rise in Mass Shootings Affects College Students' Feelings of Security

Author: John R. Slocum

Mentor: Dr. Satarupa Dasgupta

School: Ramapo College of New Jersey

This study reflects on how the recent spike in mass shootings affects American college students' feelings of security, specifically at Ramapo College of New Jersey. A thorough literature review was conducted, using studies and academic journals relating to mass shootings, student psychology, guns on campuses, and how they compare to each other. Mixed-method research was conducted, using both qualitative and quantitative research. An eight question survey was administered to fifty Ramapo College students. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with five Ramapo College students as well. All participants involved in the study were between 18-22 years of age, and gave the researcher informed consent. An analysis of the results will show that a majority of Ramapo College students' feelings of security are somewhat-significantly affected by the recent spike of mass shootings. Also, a majority of Ramapo students lack confidence in the campus' public safety officers in the event of a mass shooting. Students have given insight into what would make them feel more comfortable on campus, including proper training for public safety officers, active shooter drills, and the installation of shooter proof technology in classrooms and dormitories. Students have also shared their opinion on arming public safety officers with firearms, which concluded with somewhat evenly divided survey results. In this uneasy climate concerning gun violence across America, our college students are not only at risk of physical harm, but psychological harm as well.

Keywords: Mass shootings, school shootings, college students, student psychology, gun violence, college campuses