Day 6

**Guiding questions: For today I would like to center the conversation on mental health and gun policy. Often after a mass shooting, discussions about mental health and gun policy are brought to the forefront. How do we keep guns out of the hands of individuals who are a danger to themselves and others?**

**One policy that you all have mentioned and that is often discussed is the enactment of Extreme risk Prevention Orders, colloquially known as “red flag law”. A poll out this week demonstrates vast support for these laws across the political spectrum (**[**https://www.npr.org/2019/08/20/752427922/poll-americans-including-republicans-and-gun-owners-broadly-support-red-flag-law**](https://www.npr.org/2019/08/20/752427922/poll-americans-including-republicans-and-gun-owners-broadly-support-red-flag-law)**).**

**However, arguments can be made about where is the line? Are these laws constitutional? Do these type of laws impede on our civil liberties? Does this unfairly stigmatize those with mental illnesses? This, among other concerns, is something that is brought up.**

**Feel free to start here or answer another related question to gun policy and mental health.**

**Here is an article discussing recent research on red flag laws:** [**https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/dc-politics/red-flag-laws-may-play-role-in-preventing-mass-shootings-study-finds/2019/08/19/4df16b4a-c294-11e9-b72f-b31dfaa77212\_story.html**](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.washingtonpost.com%2Flocal%2Fdc-politics%2Fred-flag-laws-may-play-role-in-preventing-mass-shootings-study-finds%2F2019%2F08%2F19%2F4df16b4a-c294-11e9-b72f-b31dfaa77212_story.html%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0zB6ze6A1Rayy7A7lt69s3rcPeEI6Now6Ur7N6ntygHVr-dFIHLzmTFck&h=AT2L33Y2Cvc2ONsJxaomGxzkscYx4-9WcH-Bx9nMq25ffh7vcFEoOhPM0vcAB4g8GtEmIW-iu9qbEePOiXLfX3S-NdW6wonrN7UKG_Y8R2bDDPtvgvwYHPxwhF3RYtKtg5TcT0Ba)

**And an article offering an opposing view:** [**https://mises.org/power-market/red-flag-laws-latest-anti-gun-scheme**](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fmises.org%2Fpower-market%2Fred-flag-laws-latest-anti-gun-scheme%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR1MTPlRcKAUekD-wSa6g34ajSJA1zSS-yxR5R6o7RVmLWrXnabT2VHPKwQ&h=AT2L33Y2Cvc2ONsJxaomGxzkscYx4-9WcH-Bx9nMq25ffh7vcFEoOhPM0vcAB4g8GtEmIW-iu9qbEePOiXLfX3S-NdW6wonrN7UKG_Y8R2bDDPtvgvwYHPxwhF3RYtKtg5TcT0Ba)

Yvonne

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*Danielle*

*Another question that can be added here on this theme is whether the focus on mental health is a good one for discussing gun policy? Do we risk stigmatizing individuals already stigmatized and struggling? How do we balance protecting their rights and shaping policy that keeps everyone safe?*

Yvonne

The “mental illness” excuse is simply a distraction. The entire world has mentally ill people, yet we are unique in terms of quantity of mass shootings.

Val

[https://www.medpagetoday.com/publichealthpolicy/publichealth/81495](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.medpagetoday.com%2Fpublichealthpolicy%2Fpublichealth%2F81495%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR16ObqJpEyKo41wM9OpwvGmwaYGG3-llcZPofm4ILPZ5R8cuoSHoRbD2j4&h=AT2L33Y2Cvc2ONsJxaomGxzkscYx4-9WcH-Bx9nMq25ffh7vcFEoOhPM0vcAB4g8GtEmIW-iu9qbEePOiXLfX3S-NdW6wonrN7UKG_Y8R2bDDPtvgvwYHPxwhF3RYtKtg5TcT0Ba)

Maim

Hey, I hope everyone is doing well. I know that I have been inactive in the chat but I just wanted I have been actively reading and that a lot of good points/ideas were brought up. I have been actively reading   
  
So I just wanted to point out some of my thoughts in regards to gun violence and mental illness. (Just a side note my opinions are probably a rehash of all the previous articles/links that were shared before.)  
  
One thing that I do want to point out is that SOLELY blaming gun violence on mental illness alone is intellectually lazy. It doesn’t take too long to figure out that even in countries that face high rates of mental illness, their GUN VIOLENCE rate is nowhere close to the United States.  
  
For example, check the link that I have provided from ourworldindata  
  
[https://ourworldindata.org/mental-health](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fourworldindata.org%2Fmental-health%3Ffbclid%3DIwAR0Ek1TPJv_As0P4eWlcIOy-noHSGy14U9NxRG6KB7uYjJxn0TK-X7qDmU0&h=AT2L33Y2Cvc2ONsJxaomGxzkscYx4-9WcH-Bx9nMq25ffh7vcFEoOhPM0vcAB4g8GtEmIW-iu9qbEePOiXLfX3S-NdW6wonrN7UKG_Y8R2bDDPtvgvwYHPxwhF3RYtKtg5TcT0Ba)  
  
Below there is a map of the globe that gives a percentage breakdown of people facing mental illness and substance abuse. Some countries (which are very similar in some aspects to the US) have a slightly higher rate, but still face SIGNIFICANTLY less gun violence than the US. Such countries include Greenland, Australia, and New Zealand.   
  
This again in part due to the fact that these countries have tighter gun restriction laws.   
  
[https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/08/05/743579605/how-the-u-s-compares-to-other-countries-in-deaths-from-gun-violence](https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2019/08/05/743579605/how-the-u-s-compares-to-other-countries-in-deaths-from-gun-violence?fbclid=IwAR0zB6ze6A1Rayy7A7lt69s3rcPeEI6Now6Ur7N6ntygHVr-dFIHLzmTFck)  
  
In another article provided by NPR gives a breakdown of gun violence faced throughout the world. Some countries do have much higher rates than the US but practically none of them are fully industrialized and well developed nations.   
  
Overall, I am trying to pinpoint out is that mental illness isn’t a sole factor for gun violence. Sure it could be a catalyst, but other countries comparable to the United States and have HIGHER rates of mental illness don’t face the same problem. In short I believe it has to do with their laws.

Danielle to your point about whether focusing on mental health is good for discussing gun policies, I strongly disagree because they are important issues but can be separated from each other. I am very passionate about raising awareness about mental health issues and it should be dealt accordingly on a state and national level. We shouldn’t shift the focus to mental illness only when a horrible atrocity like a mass shooting occurs. However, if we create a policy that limits individuals with a prior history of mental illness that bars them access to these weapons, then sure I would be for it.

PS if any of you rely to my messages I apologize if I reply late. I'm usually free during the evenings