



Student Perspectives on the New Zealand Massacre

Sophia Piper, Sophomore
Reporter

On Friday, March 15, a gunman live-streamed himself slaughtering 50 people at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. After fatally shooting three people at the entrance of the first mosque, he fired ruthlessly towards the crowd inside. After retrieving another weapon from his car, he returned to the mosque and shot those he had already wounded, as well as a woman begging for mercy. He then ended his Facebook Live and drove to another mosque, where he massacred seven more people. The youngest known victim was three years old.

New Zealand's annual homicide rate last year was 35 people, and most of these incidents were singular. This one tragedy has already pushed the death toll far past the yearly average; it is the deadliest mass shooting in modern New Zealand's history. Minutes before the shooting, Brenton Tarrant, the 28-year-old shooter, shared his anti-Muslim beliefs in a 73-page manifesto. He named it "The Great Replacement," referencing the idea that the white Christian population is in "danger" of being replaced by non-whites. Tarrant emailed this manifesto to members of the New Zealand Government and also posted it on Twitter and 8chan. The document revealed Tarrant to be a self-described "eco-fascist" and "ethno-nationalist".



He also expressed support for Candace Owens (a black conservative commentator) and Donald Trump, while calling for figures like Angela Merkel and London mayor Sadiq Khan to be killed.

Already, the New Zealand government has announced that it is changing gun laws to protect against future incidents. Sound familiar? Probably not, considering there haven't been any substantial changes in United States gun restriction or license laws even after the 2018 tragedies of Parkland, Thousand Oaks, and Pittsburgh. In total, there were 387 deaths from mass shootings in the United States last year, all of which were met with little meaningful change. When 50 people were killed in New Zealand, though, it took four days for the government to announce changes in gun laws. Clearly, the United States is far behind, to the detriment of its own citizens. What will it take for our country to change its ways? New Zealand knows the answer, but for now, we'll have to keep on waiting.

Miranda Connolly, Freshman
Reporter

On Friday, March 15, in New Zealand, there was a shooting at two mosques in the city of Christchurch. The death toll has risen to over 50 people. A 28-year-old Australian man was charged with the murder. New Zealand's Prime Minister promises that the laws surrounding semi-automatic guns will change. The loss of the 50 people will be mourned in New Zealand and around the world.

As the world seems to become darker and darker everyday, it is important to remember to stay positive. We are too young to be crippled by fear. It seems more and more that news and other media outlets are trying to latch onto our fear and use it against us. Whenever the news or radio is turned on, it is almost as if the media is screaming, "Stay inside, the outside is a dangerous place." It is as though they want us to stay confined in our homes. Have the news media CEOs just started watching *Game of Thrones* and decided that "winter is coming" for us?



Look up from your screens and see the sky: winter has just ended; Earth is ready for the first buds to break through the soil's surface. It is spring again. We can't ignore the bad things that happen completely, but we must not surrender to constant media panic attacks. Yes, we must recognize the real threats to our security, but we need not allow this to harm our well-being. Turning off the "buzz" of the twenty-four hour news cycle and concentrating on what really matters to you and your family and friends will do more for the world than joining the news-mad noisemakers.

You don't have to be afraid. You don't have to think about doom. Turning off the news channel doesn't mean you have to stop thinking and learning. Don't dwell on what you have no control over, and recognize that you aren't part of the problem if you are being positive. This doesn't mean being so cheerful that the corners of your mouth ache from smiling. It just means taking a step back, a deep breath, and then going ahead with your day. You'll get through it. The sky isn't falling!

Healthy: The New Size 2

Victoria Veksler, Junior
Reporter

You're standing in line at the supermarket, waiting for the person in front of you to finish unloading his cart. The multitude of women's magazines catch your eye, so you take one off the shelf and flip through it. In between pages of models sporting bikinis and gazing seductively alongside Giorgio Armani's newest fragrance are articles advertising pills and exotic herbs to help you lose "30 pounds in 30 days!"

There's a common theme on every page. For some reason, the magazine clearly thinks you're fat, and for your own good, you need to lose weight right now. It's widely known that certain body shapes are favored by the media. The supermodels filling the pages all have the same body type: size 2, lanky, tall. This is the only representation the majority of the female population gets, even though 67% of the female population in the US is a size 14 or higher. Such unachievable standards have drilled into young girls the need to be as small and thin as possible, and the irrational fear of bulking up. The skewed perception of women in society has not only influenced how girls think about their own bodies, but how others view them as well. For as long as anyone can remember, normal, healthy, strong women have lacked accurate representation in society, cementing in so many young girls the idea that they will only be pretty if they can fit into sample sizes. Healthy was out, and skinny was in.

In the last several years, however, a new movement has surfaced. The recent rise in popularity of the feminist movement has led to increased body positivity: girls supporting girls and empowering each other to change only for themselves, or not at all. Being skinny is great, being plus-size is great, but being healthy and happy is best.



In accordance with this movement, we've enjoyed a rise in the popularity and acceptance of plus-size models. Models such as the likes of Ashley Graham and Iskra Lawrence have secured positions with influential fashion brands from Macy's to Michael Kors, and they have worked with big-name magazines like Vogue and Sports Illustrated. Campaigns by companies such as the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty and Aerie's #AerieREAL have worked to promote the acceptance of a variety of body types, representing real women rather than just a single, idealized body

type. Women are strong, thin, curvy, slim, tall, petite, and human. With the help of these progressive campaigns, the fashion industry and the rest of society are just starting to accept this. Moreover, strong women are finally being accepted by society as valid and beautiful. Professional tennis player Serena Williams has won 23 Grand Slam singles titles and 4 Olympic gold medals in over 20 years of pro tennis. Rather than praise for her achievements, however, she faces a constant stream of criticism from people that call her "manly" and even accuse her of being born male. A champion of the self-empowerment movement, she fights back against these comments and encourages girls to accept their bodies as they are. She and many others are encouraging women and young girls to accept themselves, and while we're nowhere near full acceptance, any step forward is still a step forward.

Encouraging body positivity and health rather than losing weight to get thin is a good thing. This movement encourages balance: you don't have to go to the gym every day to be healthy, nor restrict your caloric intake to appease societal standards. Unfortunately, however, this idea is often mistaken by some for encouraging obesity and unhealthy habits. This movement does not promote unhealthy habits, rather quite the opposite. Hiding plus-size women from society instills in girls the idea that being skinny correlates with being beautiful and healthy, while in reality, one can be healthy and beautiful at any size. Finally, this problem is being addressed, promoting self-acceptance instead of putting girls down.

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