

Episode 126-- The Rise of the American Mass Shooter

📅 Mon, 4/26 11:23AM ⌚ 41:28

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

book, people, mass shootings, shootings, killers, atrocities, myths, gun, brady, called, kelly, silence, story, absolutely, grievance, thoughts, mass shooter, fire, seamus, mccooy

SPEAKERS

Seamus McGraw, JJ Janflone, Music, Kelly Sampson



Music 00:00

Introductory music



JJ Janflone 00:08

This is the legal disclaimer, where I tell you that the views, thoughts, and opinions shared in this podcast belong solely to our guests and hosts and not necessarily Brady or Brady's affiliates. Please note, this podcast contains discussions of violence that some people may find disturbing. It's OK, we find it disturbing, too.



Music 00:25

Transition music



JJ Janflone 00:38

Hey, everybody, welcome back to another episode of Red, Blue, and Brady.

 Kelly Sampson 00:40
That was just JJ Janflone.

 JJ Janflone 00:42
And that was just Kelly Samson.

 Kelly Sampson 00:44
And together we host this podcast. Hi, everyone.

 JJ Janflone 00:47
Hey. Now this week, after quite a few very long weeks with a lot of very public violence, specifically mass shootings, we are chatting with author Seamus McGraw, although he said we were only allowed to call them Seamus.

 Kelly Sampson 01:00
And can I just say that he was absolutely amazing. And we may have even asked him to hire us. Sorry, Brady.

 JJ Janflone 01:07
We did, we did, and I don't apologize for it. He was very cool. But together, we talked about his new book "From a Taller Tower: The Rise of the American Mass Shooter," in which he details America's terrible history of mass murder by gunfire.

 Kelly Sampson 01:21
Books that we have been able to cover lately have just been so, so good and so, so timely, unfortunately, as we've been seeing more and more of these preventable tragedies.

 Music 01:30
Transition Music



JJ Janflone 01:33

Welcome, Seamus. Can you go ahead and introduce yourself?



Seamus McGraw 01:37

I'm Seamus McGraw. I'm a writer. I'm a gun owner. I've got a new book called "Fom a Taller Tower: The Rise of the American Mass Shooter." And I think that's what we're here to talk about.



JJ Janflone 01:48

It is. We didn't trick you in talking about anything else, I promise. But I want to go ahead and start off because I think, Kelly and I both, as much as one can love or enjoy books that deal with gun violence, really enjoyed the book. And I'm always so curious, what prompted you to begin to write a book on such a big topic of tracking sort of these mass shooters through U.S. history? Because that's a that's a heavy area to select into.



Seamus McGraw 02:16

I'm a cartoon, I'm an old newspaper man. And I came up mostly as a crime reporter, mostly writing from the street. And I had pretty much decided after my last book, which came out in 2016, that I was done. I was done. I wasn't going to write any more books, and then the massacre, and I'm very careful not to use words like 'tragedy' because there's a difference between tragedies and atrocities. Tragedies just happen. Atrocities are something we do. And the atrocity in Las Vegas happened. I want to add something to that if I might, JJ and Kelly. As I plowed into this, and let it take me in directions I had not anticipated, I had really no idea how the book was going to take shape. I really had no idea the form of the book. I had no idea what held it together. All I knew was that like most Americans, I was as frustrated by the silence in inaction, angered, not frustrated, angered by the final silence and inaction in the wake of this. And I went down to Hershey, Pennsylvania, and I sat down with a state policeman, who's now lieutenant, who had been the first officer for the door at the West Nickel Mines Massacre. That was the squatter of the Amish schoolgirls in 2007. And he told me a story, it figures rather prominently on a book, not a graphic story about violence but a story about heartbreak and devastation. I got emotional and told him, so did he. I ended the interview, and I came home and it was hunting season. And to clear my head, I went out to the ridge behind the house to go hunting with, as you know in the book I'm an avid hunter and a gun owner, I only hunt with a flintlock. I only carry the weapon that the Second Amendment explicitly gives me the right to carry. I went up the hill and I stopped and there was a deer up there, and I took a

shot and I missed, probably I missed. But the hills absolutely echo with the thunder of that shot from my flintlock. And then the silence rolled in afterwards. And the thought occurred to me 'There's no silence on Earth deeper than the silence between gunshots.' And as soon as that hot spot hit me, I realized 'That's my book,' because that's really what the book is about. The book analyzes the kills and analyzes the lives, in some cases of those they've claimed. It analyzes the trauma of the immediate survivors but also the trauma that we as a people in our hyper-interconnected world experience collectively. There is no six degrees of separation anymore. It's one or two degrees. And that was the silence. It's the silence in those moments that we really need to explore, because that's where we are, I think, committing our most egregious sin. I do hope that's going to change. But that's what the book really explores.

K

Kelly Sampson 05:45

And I kind of want to continue down the track of the what you just said, which is there's no silence on Earth deeper than the silence between gunshots. And that silence is where we're committing our biggest sins as a society. And I'm wondering if you could share more about what we're doing with that silence and how we are maybe trying to fill it.

S

Seamus McGraw 06:08

First of all, we have been weaving myths out of these massacres, these atrocities, since they first began. We weave myths that tell us we know who these people are, that they are somehow different than us. That's the first myth. The one thing I found in exploring these, these these cases is that in a society that has come to embrace a sense of victimhood, almost a status that has come to commoditize grievance, that has made narcissism and self indulgence, rather than a sense of community, the coin of the realm, that the one thing I can say almost indisputably about all of these mass killing who we look at in this book, is that in this day and age, they are just like us - only more so. There's a chapter in a book called "Deliver Us from Evil," where I take on another one of the grand nits. Now, as you know, having read the book, I'm flawed, religious man, but I take great issue, I take great issue, with something that we do repeatedly to fill the silence. The first is we describe these atrocities in supernatural terms. We use the word 'evil.' Evil is transcendent. Evil is beyond the man. Evil is part of an eternal struggle. And if it really is evil, well then of course, it can be exorcised by thoughts and prayer. But it's something far more prosit. It's vinality it's, is rage, it's grievous, it's pride, it's a quest for fame. It's a tolerance on all of our part. It's the ability to distance ourselves from the most unimaginable horror We enforce our silence with words like evil, and we police it with phrases, like 'thoughts and prayers.'



JJ Janflone 08:31

Thoughts and prayers is a passive individual activity. It's not a collective activity. I think that's very intentional phrasing to be used, right? Because there's no way to measure that.



Seamus McGraw 08:43

And if your prayers don't work, it's your flaw, not a flaw in the system or god forbid a flaw in providence. It's your fail if the thoughts and prayers don't work, not ours - yours.



JJ Janflone 08:58

And I kind of wanted to address sort of another myth that I think you hit on more than once in the book. First, I think in your initial conversation about the shooting that happened at the university but then also elsewhere in the book, and we can maybe get into it deeper when you have an actual discussion with a shooter who's incarcerated. But this idea that's so often been used by the gun lobby that, you know, a good guy with a gun can stop a bad guy with a gun. And I would love if we can unpack that a little bit, because as you bring up and the book, 'Well, who's the good guy?' is often a very subjective feeling. Who gets to have that label? As well as the fact that, as Kelly and I have talked about on this podcast many times, it's just not a true statistic. But that's the power of myth.



Seamus McGraw 09:45

Let's unpack that a little bit. Let's first begin with - the most charitable thing I can say on the subject, the most charitable thing I can say on the subject, is that in terms of the effectiveness of the 'good guy with the gun,' it's not that the jury still out. We haven't even gotten through voir dire. I mean, we have turned around, and again talk about myths, OK? Slaped this myth on top of it. I just want to make sure I got my numbers right. Yeah, OK. Out of 220, 077 active shooter situations analyzed by the FBI in three separate studies from 2000 to 2018, unarmed civilians thought that 11.19% of the incidents, whereas only 3.9 were ended by good guys with the gun. But yet we cling to this, we cling to this idea. And people don't realize, I think, that there are two active word phrases in that 'glib' and flippin throwaway line coined by Wayne LaPierre while he was on his way out to a 100-foot yacht to hide in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook atrocity, 'good guy and gun.' One of the stories in the book is about an absolute hero, an indisputable absolute hero. This guy was asleep on his couch on a Sunday morning in Sutherland Springs, Texas, when a guy who should never have had access to firearms began a massacre at a church down the road from his house. This guy took out his one of his AR-15s, he has several of them,

ran barefoot, called the guy out just as he was about to deliver the coup de gras on his last day. From outside the church, he called him out, still to this day doesn't know why he called him. But the guy inside dropped his semiautomatic rifle and came out with a handgun, and they traded fire. Now stop and consider this for a second. That murderer inside the church had absolutely no idea that Steven Williford had an AR-15 in his hand. It wasn't a good guy with a gun that stopped him. And even when they exchanged fire, Steven Wilford, who would have killed him, and would have felt absolutely justified in doing so, did not fire a fatal round. This guy took his own life. He had no idea, that killer, whether Williford was armed. It wasn't a good guy with a gun that stopped him. It was a good guy. And I think, again, we talk about the myths we create. Williford, who I again I cannot stress this enough, this guy is an absolute hero in my mind and a good man. There's not a lot that Steven Wilford and I would see eye to eye on to be honest with you, except maybe a shared mutual love for a particular model of Italian motorcycle from the early 1980s, but, that's a whole separate story. But I have absolutely unbounded respect for him. And it has nothing to do with his proficiency with weapons. And I think that's one of the myths - by turning around and putting the emphasis on the gun and not the person behind it, I think we miss an important part of the story. There's another aspect to this. If you read the author's note at the beginning of the book, you know that there was a time when I was a young man when I was tested. And I did not rise, at least quickly enough, to the challenge. That's 45 years, and I'm still haunted by that wasted 35 or 40 seconds. Another myth that we weave is that we're all Gary Cooper getting ready to stretch out onto the street. And I knew we're not, we're not.



JJ Janflone 13:58

And to interject for our listeners who haven't read the book yet but should, you're talking specifically about the story that you open the whole text with, which is this true tale of you basically being confronted with this man experiencing homelessness that you know, just being savagely beaten by a stranger for seemingly no reason. And I think that story is so important because I think we have this idea in our heads that when people are in conflict, we either, you know, we do the fight or flight response, but, in fact, we have a third, which is we freeze. And I think that that's much more common in our little lizard brains to respond that way,



Seamus McGraw 14:42

Look, as I told you, I fancied myself a hardass. You can tell I did take a good look at me. I'm 63 years old, I'm still pretending to be, but I fancied myself a harness. And to some degree I sort of was, but this was such a horrific, brutal, unprovoked unexpected attack that my synapses simply didn't fire. I did not know how to process it. And it wasn't - was I

frightened? I probably was. But what I remember most was just being blank until I saw that guy move out of the corner of my eye and that jarred us all out, OK. But it wasn't that I was a hero. It wasn't. I'm still grappling with it, but it wasn't that I was a coward, it was that I just shut down. I just shut down. Thirty, 35, 40 seconds, 45 at most. And that's the thing, though. It's another thing we lose sight of when we talk about these. These don't play out over hours. They don't play out. These atrocities occur in seconds, particularly when the fetishized weapon of choice can fire as quickly as they do. You're talking about matters of minutes. I want to take that a step further if you don't mind, JJ, too, because I'm a civilian. I'm a civilian. I think one of the things that we lose sight of, and this is something I try to explore in the book, digress for just a moment, there is only one scene in the book, and with reason, where I depict the actual violence taking place. And that's because I think it gives an insight into how weak, cowardly, and false these killers are. For the most part, when I am trying to convey the impact of these atrocities, I use what they used to call the "Jimmy Breslin Grave Digger Gambit," where you tell the story from the small piece at the edge. And so to convey the horror of what happened, what was done, no passive construction, what was done at West Nickel Mines, I tell you the story of the cop giving the hardest story ever had to give it his life. Stay with it. When I want to convey the unimaginable harm, perhaps in a perverse way inspired by what happened at West Nickel Mines, that occurred at Sandy Hook, that was committed at Sandy Hook, the story I tell is of a veteran police officer, a trained member of a team that had worked together for years, that had trained for a moment similar to this but certainly never imagined to be as atrocious, as horrible as this. One of the first officers in the building, one of the first officers in one of the two classrooms, being debriefed later and insisting, absolutely truthfully, in his mind, that he never entered the classroom. He was right there. Every member of his team. 'I took the perimeter.' The horror of what happened in there, so powerful that it took a veteran officer and made him erase his memory and replace it with a false one. Santa Fe, the young police officer on the ground outside of the high school while inside the high school, his own mother, a substitute teacher, is either already dead or dying, and there's nothing he can do an outcome. 'I'm supposed to protect people,' he tells his lawyer. 'I couldn't even protect my own mother.' When we assess the cost of this of these atrocities, we very rarely assess the cost of asking our first responders to go into combat in their hometowns and the psychological impact of that and the impact on them as individuals and the impact on them as police officers and first responders. How are they going to respond to, given that kind of traumatic stress, how are they going to respond to a lesser provocation on the street next time? We are a traumatized people. I think one of the most moving passages to me in the book is something that Gary Lavergne shared with me. He sat down with Houston McCoy, one of three courageous men who climbed the tower in Dallas on August 1, 1966, to face the first modern American mass public shooter. On their way, they had to duck and dodge bullets coming from well-meaning civilians. Now it's unclear whether all that fire from the ground had any impact at all. It may have

suppressed fire from the murderous, narcissistic, ex-marine in the tower. It may have suppressed his fire, somehow. It may also have inhibited the progress, it certainly seems to have, of Crum Martinez and McCoy as they made their way to confront the man and ultimately shooting. Like I say, even 50 years later, 50 odd years later, the jury's not still out it, we haven't gotten to voir dire. But just before he passed a few years ago, McCoy, and again, for the record, it's not clear who actually fired the fatal round, that killed the killer, nor does it matter. But just before he died, Gary Lavergne went to talk to Houston McCoy one last time, and he said 'Is there anything you want people to know that they don't know already?' And there was a bitterness in McCoy's voice when he said to Lavergne 'That son of a bitch made me kill a man.' It is not easy. We are not all, Steven Williford. And even if we were, one of the things that Williford expressed to me was his relief that did not have to kill a man. He wasted no tears over the man's dead I'll tell you that, but he did not have to kill him. But he would have, I believe he would have, but he didn't have to. So the good guy with a gun is not only I think, does it distort our discourse over guns, but you know what, as you alluded to JJ, it also is a myth that is embraced by these killers themselves. Because, you know, I don't use the word 'victim' to describe those whose lives have been taken by these murderers or those who have survived. Because in my experience most of those people, those who can still speak for themselves, don't see themselves as victims either. But you know who do see themselves as victims? The killers. They nurse grudges, and they attach them to whatever they can. They're encouraged by a culture that prizes victimhood who scans grievance in the foreign, dark, darkest reaches of the Internet. I had the opportunity as you alluded to talk over several times with a killer who had committed an atrocity at Simon's Rock college in Western Massachusetts in the early '90s as our myths were still forming in the fog. He's in his 40s now. He has spoken on a number of occasions about mass shootings. He says all the things what happened in the book whether or not I believe you. I let you make your judgement on your own. I don't know. But at one point in the conversation, even nursing grievances, identifying as sort of an outcast among outcasts in this particular school, it was a school for kind of edgy, weird kids, but he had been nursing grudges and nursing grievances and embracing increasingly provocatively bizarre, in this case, ultra right wing world views. He had been amassing ammunition. But during our conversation, I asked him, I said, 'Would a good guy with a gun have stopped it?' He tells me, subsequent to this that he was not trying to deflect that what he was doing was making what he thought an honest comment about the condition of America at that time and today. 'Would a good guy with a gun have stopped you?' I asked. And his answer was 'I thought I was the good guy.' See, the danger of those nits that we create is that they become embraced by the very people that we hope we can explain away with. I would argue that at least some of the resistance that we see to some of the common-sense measures that could begin to reduce, if not eliminate, I'm not naive enough to believe that we can total this, but we can certainly reduce the frequency and we can certainly reduce the number of casualties. And

I believe, I'm convinced, that some of the posing and rhetoric, some of the intransigence from certain quarters who oppose any moderate steps to begin to address this crisis, I wonder if that's not a response to trauma, too.

K

Kelly Sampson 26:04

I just have been reflecting so much on your point about making sure we call them 'atrocities,' because I think, especially as Americans, it's so easy for us sometimes to look at other countries, and say 'Oh, there's atrocities over there.' But if you think about the frequency of shootings, and the fact that they are atrocities, I think it really makes us have to actually look at the water that was coming in. And I'm just wondering if you could share a little bit about your thoughts and take on the fascination that the media, and sometimes members of the public ourselves, have with mass shooting, including getting fixated on warning signs or why they did it or sort of probing into these two people as individuals.

S

Seamus McGraw 26:47

I think we've got a couple of issues going there, Kelly. I told you I'm an old newspaper man, and we used to have a phrase 'If it bleeds, it leads.' It doesn't bleed, people do. And there's a danger that in our efforts to protect ourselves as journalists from the emotional risk, that we have a tendency to, I don't want to say sensationalize but deal with these things first as episodic. I do believe that many of the same factors that are present in the preparation and ultimate execution of these atrocities also play a role in larger issues of gun violence. I do believe that there is a benefit to recognizing that there are certain indicators, behavioral indicators, that give us the opportunity to intervene. And I will say that very often in the wake of a spate of these things, and they often happen that way where you have one and then you'll have 1, 2, 3 copycat cases. If you remember the summer of 2019, we had an accelerating spate of these, which I suspect and fear is going to repeat. Also in the wake of that, because you had so much attention paid to these stories, you also had a number of cases in Ohio and Wisconsin, a number of places, where some of the indicators were recognized because we were talking about them and these things, likely incidents, were prevented. There was intervention. So I think there is a benefit to that. I also fear, however, deeply that we risk becoming enured by telling the same stories over and over again. We have done, and I don't know if people have not noticed this, and I'm pleased by that. There are only two killers, mentioned by name in "From A Taller Tower" only to the first, who I believe, as I argue and as others have argued, is the first modern American mashup. And the murderer at Las Vegas, who I refer to as the first post-modern mass shooter because what he did was simply climb to a taller tower with a larger and more deadly cache of weapons and mercilessly murder more people and that, ultimately, is

what this is about. And in between, we have done, I think, in the press at least over the last last few years, I think we have done an admirable job. Frankly, I will pat my industry on the back. And I rarely do that, because I don't know if you've noticed this, but I don't really like most reporters. I will pat myself on my industry on the back, not myself. I'll pat my industry on the back and will say I think a very good job of undercutting these murderers' quest for fame, for individual fame. I do feel that in our drive to make sense of these, we are far too willing to, and I'm going to get crude here, far too willing to buy their cheap manifestos and their bullshit excuses for simply indulging their murderous impulses. I think we are far too willing to ascribe reason to what is, first and foremost, a supremely narcissistic act. Are these killers who kill Jews anti-Semites? They absolutely are. Are the killers who murder Black worshippers at a church or Mexican American shoppers at a Walmart racists? They absolutely are. Is there a greater testament to raging narcissism to raging, raging narcissism than to turn around and say 'I could not control my impulses, therefore, I am going to slaughter women I have sexualized? Misogyny, yes. Racism, yes. But what is it first and foremost? Murderous narcissism in a culture that has made narcissism the coin of the realm. So that's the danger, Kelly, I think, when you talk about the warning signs. One of the problems is that this, as I said earlier, these killers are just like us only more so. In the fog, of narcissism, in the fog of grievance, it becomes that much more difficult to peer into it. We'll see which one of those figures in the fog is most likely to pick up an AR-15. Santa Fe High School in Texas. Now as you know, being fairly expert in the subject, the trench coats at Columbine were a blow away. They were just a way of consuming weapons and they were dropped the instance the attack began, which by the way was never intended initially as a gun attack. It was intended to be a bomb. They were discarded, but they had become so firmly ensconced in our public mythology that when I began this book, just as an exercise, I would ask people to describe a mass shooter form. And it was always the same. It always a young White man with strangly hair. It was a romanticized version or a mocking version but the trench coat always played a part. In the dress code at Santa Fe High School girls are prohibited from wearing anything that bear their midriff, and boys are prohibited from sharing trench trips. So what do you think the killer at Santa Fe High School wore? We embrace these myths, and they obstruct us.



JJ Janflone 33:41

Well, and Seamus, this has been absolutely phenomenal. I am so upset that our time together starting to draw to a close. I really encourage everyone to go check out your book "Fom a Taller Tower." But I wonder if we could dial in on something you actually mentioned at the very beginning both of the book and of our chat, which is your stance as a gun owner in the space. And I wonder, is there anything that you would want to say to gun owners who you know might be reading your book or might be listening right now?



Seamus McGraw 34:10

I think the one thing I would like to add is that, as I mentioned earlier and as you know having read the book, I am a gunam, I'm a hunter. There is hardly a day that goes by from the middle of October until the middle of January that I don't have a gun in my hand. We, all White guys like me with guns in our hand, we have an obligation, we have an obligation. And I have a warning for my friends who don't share my belief that reasonable restrictions on access to specific weapons, the limitation on extending round magazines, universal background checks, closing the boyfriend loophole, my friends who think that that's a slippery slope argument, I think I need to warn you about something. I honestly believe, I honestly believe that the greatest threat to the Second Amendment right now is not going to come from a Democratic administration or moderate Republican administration, it's going to come from your intransigence. I believe Lauren Boeber is a bigger threat to the Second Amendment in the long run than Joe Biden ever could be.



Kelly Sampson 35:38

And I think I can speak for JJ when I say that we could sit and just listen to you all day, because you're really dropping some wisdom.



JJ Janflone 35:46

Seamus, if you ever need an assistant, Kelly and I are available. If you want to adopt anyone, if you need a work study from ladies in their 30s.



Seamus McGraw 35:56

I have had a delightful time.



Music 35:58

Transition music



JJ Janflone 36:02

So this moment of unbelievable, but hey it's America, is one that really scared me.



Kelly Sampson 36:07

Oh, that's not a good sign at all.



JJ Janflone 36:08

Well, unfortunately, as things open up and people around one another again, we're gonna see, I think, more reports of folks using guns to harass people.



Kelly Sampson 36:17

I mean, what does that mean because I feel like we've already seen people harassing people with guns in lockdown. So I'm very curious.



JJ Janflone 36:26

Yes, but now we're in groups of people that don't know each other. And that's what takes us to this story. So in Malibu, a 34-year-old man was at Zuma Beach, I'm jealous, where he was reportedly making lewd comments toward a woman and telling her to get in his van.



Kelly Sampson 36:41

That's like, you know, one of your worst nightmares and sounds like something straight out of a movie. But I know we're talking about unbelievable by Brady, so how does the gun play into this?



JJ Janflone 36:52

Yep, yep. So he was wearing a trench coat.



Kelly Sampson 36:55

Oh, no. That's so creepy. Because remember people, this is the beach.



JJ Janflone 37:01

Yes, so trench coat at the beach, bizarre choice, but actually the least bizarre part of the story. So bystanders called the police, a bunch of different people did just because they sort of, you know, man in trench coat at beach, seems awkward. And when the cops arrived, they searched the man, and they found not only that he was concealing a rifle

beneath a trench coat but he also had three pistols attached to his waist and he had a large supply of ammo. And before you ask, Kelly, because I know what's coming, all of the weapons were indeed loaded.

 Kelly Sampson 37:30
And what kind of ammo are we talking?

 JJ Janflone 37:33
The police said 1, 200 to 1, 500 rounds of ammunition.

 Kelly Sampson 37:37
That's seriously so scary and unnecessary, and you're not hunting at the beach, you know? So I'm so glad that people intervened and called it in, but it's just so sinister to think about what could have happened. Because, like I said, when you're at the beach, what other purpose do you have to have a loaded arsenal at the beach other than to hurt people?

 JJ Janflone 38:00
Yeah. And it's arsenal, van, trench coat. None of these things are good things at the beach. So I'm really happy that people called it in but not really happy I had to share the story.

 Music 38:10
Transition Music

 JJ Janflone 38:12
We are starting this week's news wrap up with some sad news. In three days since our nation awoke to news of a mass shooting at an Indianapolis FedEx facility, which I can't believe it would have only been three days, so much has happened., there have been back to back mass shootings in Columbus, Ohio, and Austin, Texas, and Kenosha, Wisconsin, and in Shreveport, Louisiana. And these are just the ones that dominated headlines. There were also a number of other shootings, like in an Omaha mall, in Chicago across the city, at a bar in Los Angeles, all of which claim lives and shattered communities. By some

counts, there have been over 50 mass shootings since the March shootings in Atlanta that I think put conversations about gun violence and anti-Asian hate back in the news. Unfortunately, we need to remember that mass shootings only make up a small percent of the gun violence experienced in the United States. Nearly 13,000 people have already died from gun violence this year in America.



Kelly Sampson 39:06

Yeah, and I mean, to make matters worse, this recent spate of high-profile shootings has occurred against the backdrop of high-profile incidents of police violence. The police shootings of Dante Wright and the release of the video of the shooting of Adam Toledo have re-traumatized Black and Brown Americans, who are more likely to be shot or harassed by police anywhere and everywhere in this country. Police violence is gun violence, and we cannot be silent as these communities are continuously traumatized.



JJ Janflone 39:34

This week, we also heard the decision in the trial of Derek Chauvin, but I do want to point out, as a lot of others have in ways that are much better than how I'm gonna say this, we should not have had to have this trial at all. George Floyd should still be alive. This verdict cannot undo the murder of George Floyd or the pain that his family and Black communities across the country have and continue to feel. We do need systematic change to our policing systems to prevent such tragedies.



Kelly Sampson 39:59

Yeah, 100%, and I think that's where people have been clearly pointing out the difference between accountability and justice and, you know, George Floyd being alive. That would be true justice. But we are glad that, at least, there's some accountability, and there needs to be a lot more.



Music 40:18
Transition Music



JJ Janflone 40:19

Hey, want to share with the podcast? Listeners can get in touch with us here at Red, Blue, and Brady via phone or text message. Simply call or text us at 480-744-3452 with your

thoughts, questions, concerns, ideas, whatever, Kelly and I are standing by.



Music 40:31
Transition Music



Kelly Sampson 40:34

Thanks for listening. As always, Brady's life-saving work in Congress, the courts, and communities across the country is made possible thanks to you. For more information on Brady or how to get involved in the fight against gun violence, please like and subscribe to the podcast. Get in touch with us at bradyunited.org or on social at [@bradybuzz](https://twitter.com/bradybuzz). Be brave, and remember, take action - not sides.



Music 40:56
Exit music