The Phyllis Schlafly Report

“Soulless” Gamer Shot Up El Paso

By John and Andy Schlafly

August 6, 2019

The 21-year-old who shot up the El Paso Walmart was a “soulless” video game player. He cooperated with authorities during his interrogation afterward, and officials should release to the public his answers to many important questions.

It is unlikely that the killer’s motives fit the narrative of “white nationalism” that is being pushed by the national media. For starters, the accused shooter, Patrick Crusius, is a registered Democrat who was critical of Republicans.

The British press is often the best source of information when these tragedies occur, because the American media try to spin and suppress the news to fit their political narrative. The shooting was not domestic terrorism, but was the product of a loner who grew up on video games rather than healthy relationships.

In a manifesto he apparently posted shortly before opening fire on a crowd of back-to-school shoppers, Crusius refers to “Call of Duty,” which trains boys to kill and kill again. People who knew him in high school described him as a “gamer” for his devotion to playing video games.

One of his few friends was of Egyptian descent, and it is implausible that the killer was a “white nationalist.” Another student who knew him in school said “he never spoke of anything political or talked about guns or had any hatred toward minorities,” as reported by the Daily Mail.

Instead, the real problem is that he is “soulless,” as another high-school acquaintance characterized him. His crime might be described as one of nihilism, which is an ideology of despair that has motivated rootless young men toward violent crimes throughout human history.

He had no girlfriends and participated in no extracurricular activities in high school, recalled one classmate who knew him there. He apparently did not have any genetic psychiatric disorder, as his twin sister was considered to be well-adjusted.

Nearly four times as many young men are avid video game players compared with young women, according to a 2015 Pew Research Center study. The average

gamer spends more than 7 hours each week playing video games, and many boys spend more than 40 per week consumed by the impersonal games which impede their social development.

Crusius became unemployed and it is not yet known how he passed his time each day. Politically, he was not “right wing” or pro-Trump by any stretch of the imagination.

On the same weekend as the El Paso and Dayton shootings, 55 people were shot in Chicago, of whom 7 died. The grim total included two mass shootings: one in which 8 people were shot by the same gunman, and another in which 7 were shot by the same gunman.

Liberals do not want to talk about the massacre in Dayton because it was by a supporter of Elizabeth Warren. Connor Betts, who was killed by police near the outset of his rampage, had posted that he did not think socialism was being adopted quickly enough.

Betts does not fit the “white supremacist” narrative either. Betts described himself as a “leftist,” and is seen in a photograph wearing the patch “Against all Gods.”

He killed 9 people and injured 27 in a mere 30 seconds, which suggests that he got his training on violent video games, too. It is unfathomable that someone could inflict such rapid, deadly harm so quickly without practicing to kill.

Liberals predictably call for gun control after every mass shooting, but they are silent about how these young killers became desensitized to murdering people. It is dangerous to addict unemployed young men on games similar to what the Army uses to desensitize soldiers to killing.

Democrat frontrunner Joe Biden acknowledged the video game problem, to the dismay of Anderson Cooper during a CNN interview on Monday. “It is not healthy to have these games teaching kids this dispassionate notion that you can shoot somebody and just sort of blow their brains out,” Biden observed.

Studies show that playing violent video games increases aggressive behavior. This is found to be true across ages and cultures, which is hardly surprising.

The Supreme Court would not likely strike down new bipartisan legislation to protect minors against addiction to violent video games, as it did in 2011 when five

Justices said the “publishers” of such games have a First Amendment right to sell their products to children. Since then one Justice in the majority (Kagan) has expressed regret for her decision, and two others have been replaced.

Just 10 days before the weekend shootings, a U.S. House committee conducted a hearing into what was called the “youth vaping epidemic” in which the founder of Juul was harshly condemned for making his products so attractive to teens. It is time for a similar spotlight to be cast on the dangerous video game industry.

John and Andy Schlafly are sons of Phyllis Schlafly (1924-2016) and lead the continuing Phyllis Schlafly Eagles organizations with writing and policy work.