

17081 Husbands Are Deadlier Than Terrorists

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With the President Trump Reality Show, it's easy to be distracted by ANGRY ALL-CAPITAL TWEETS or Oval Office tantrums. But resist, and stay focused on matters of life and death.

Consider two critical issues: refugees and guns. Trump is going berserk over the former, but wants to ease rules on the latter. So let's look at the relative risks.

In the four decades between 1975 and 2015, terrorists born in the seven nations in Trump's travel ban killed zero people in America, according to the Cato Institute. Zero.

In that same period, guns claimed 1.34 million lives in America, including murders, suicides and accidents. That's about as many people as live in Boston and Seattle combined.

It's true that Muslim Americans — both born in the United States and immigrants from countries other than those subject to Trump's restrictions — have carried out deadly terrorism in America. There have been 123 such murders since the 9/11 attacks — and 230,000 other murders.

The bottom line is that most years in the U.S., ladders kill far more Americans than Muslim terrorists do. Same with bathtubs. Ditto for stairs. And lightning.

Above all, fear spouses: Husbands are incomparably more deadly in America than jihadist terrorists.

And husbands are so deadly in part because in America they have ready access to firearms, even when they have a history of violence. In other countries, brutish husbands put wives in hospitals; in America, they put them in graves.

Yet Trump is raging about a risk from refugees that seems manageable, even as he talks about relaxing rules on another threat, guns, that is infinitely more lethal.

"I will get rid of gun-free zones on schools," Trump said last year. "My first day, it gets signed, O.K., my first day."

Actually, the evidence suggests that if we really want to make Americans safer, then we should require universal background checks before gun purchases (22 percent of guns are purchased without background checks). We should work hard to get guns out of the hands of people subject to domestic violence restraining orders, or people with recent histories of crime or alcohol or drug abuse.

So let's not be diverted by shiny things and furious tweets. With his travel ban, Trump is peddling an ineffective policy that is morally repugnant, even as he marches toward a looser policy on guns likely to result in more school shootings, more shattered families and more lives lost.