

Killer Inlaudibilis

February 16, 2018

On the day that Alexander the Great was born, or so the ancients tell us, a man named Herostratus burned down one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus.



Why? Just for the infamy.

Which is why the Ephesians proscribed mention of the man's name. That is called a *damnatio*.^{*} Obviously, that *damnatio* didn't stick, for we know his name now. How? Historian Theopompus recorded it for our . . . edification? Vilification?

*Let's not to give him his infamy,
and not encourage copycats —
nor in any way normalize his
horrible act.*

I say we should follow Ephesian example and not mention by name the recent Florida school shooter/murderer of students. There should be a widespread *damnatio* in the press and blogosphere against the young man. Let's not to give him his infamy, and not encourage copycats — nor in any way normalize his horrible act.

Is this a "solution" to the problem of school shootings? Probably not. But there may be none — at least nothing sure-fire.

Yes, a non-blundering FBI might've helped.** But virtue-signaling/grandstanding calls for unnamed gun control measures won't. And treating "mental health" issues more "professionally," particularly by easing up involuntary commitment law, is probably a recipe for putting away innocent and unpopular people.

"Pre-crime" is itself criminal.

So, what to do? Maybe it is this: "Notice those around you who seem isolated, and engage them," as Robert Myers advises. It is loneliness, he argues, that "causes these shooters to lash out. People with solid connections to other people don't indiscriminately fire guns at strangers."

But that's not an after-the-fact solution.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

^{*} FYI, the arsonist's status as an unspeakable person was called *inlaudabilis*.

^{**} As if to fit an established pattern, the FBI failed to take seriously enough an early citizen-initiated alert regarding the young man who went on to commit the mass shooting. Prophecy is a tough biz; it is no doubt easier to connect the dots looking back after the fact.