

Who is your hero? I am of the opinion we *all* need to live our lives with someone in mind whom we admire, whose skill or courage or accomplishments we would like to emulate. When I was a kid I played little league baseball and since I was a pitcher, I admired Sandy Koufax and pictured myself pitching just like him—even though I didn't. But who are the *real* heroes? Are heroes those who have exceptional talent on stage or movies or ball fields? Are heroes those who have made mountains of money, or have risen to places of power? I would say NOT! Real heroes are those who put their lives at risk to assist or save the lives of others.

The past few weeks, campus shootings in our country have been coming so rapidly it almost seems like it would be safer to be in Afghanistan than on or near a school campus. The recent rash of shootings are more than alarming: they portray a trend that if not put in check will threaten the fabric of our fair Republic. It seems lately there is no shortage of angry people shooting at innocent people to vent their rage and express disappointment. The gun lobbies like the NRA say we need more guns to protect us from bad guys with guns; and the people on the left cry out that we need to disarm every last American in order to be safe. The whole debate would be comical if the subject at hand were not so deadly serious.

But out of the inky darkness of one recent tragedy--a beam of light shines forth. Last Thursday a violent, perhaps deranged man came to the Seattle Pacific University campus blasting away with a shotgun; he soon killed one and wounded two others. But, he paused in order to reload, Shotguns are lethal at close range, but they rarely hold more than 4-5 shells. So, when the murderer had used up his 4-5 shots, a student named John Meis sprang into action. Wielding pepper spray, he disabled and restrained the shooter before the gunman could reload and murder others.

John Meis is a hero and I'm glad some of his friends and colleagues realize it.

For examples: student Matt Garcia wrote on Twitter:

"I'm proud of the selfless action that my roommate John Meis, showed today taking down the shooter, fellow, "He is a hero."

~~Are professional athletes, players with exceptional ability; like the few still playing in the NBA finals--heroes? I think *not*: A hero is a person who risks their own life in order to protect the lives of others.~~

Jon Meis is a hero. The guys who jump into a helicopter to rescue people lost at sea are heroes. The men and women who go out in Coast Guard life-boats in dark of night and heavy seas to find a lost fisherman, they are heroes. Courageous, resourceful, willing to lay down their lives for others. These people are the true heroes; we would do well to encourage our young men and women to emulate John Meis and others like him.

This has been Dan Price for community Comment