Forensic Psychologists Praise Obama's, Boehner's Response To Shooting
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President Barack Obama and Speaker of the House John Boehner are receiving kudos for their response to the Arizona shooting rampage from forensic psychologists.

Dewey Cornell, a forensic clinical psychologist at the University of Virginia who has interviewed convicted murderers such as "D.C. Sniper" Lee Boyd Malvo, said Boehner's quick disavowal and condemnation of the attacks was "very praiseworthy."

Obama is traveling to Arizona on Wednesday to attend a memorial service for the six people killed and 14 injured during the weekend massacre outside a supermarket in Tucson, Ariz. The speech is a chance for the president to help a nation grieving from a rampage that also has nearly claimed the life of one of its leaders, Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D., Ariz.), who was shot point blank in the head.

Cornell also extolled Obama for encouraging the nation to focus on the people who took the gunman down, rather than the shooter. "We don't want to encourage copycat crimes," Cornell said, noting that too much attention on perpetrators could make their actions appealing to others. He added, "Invariably, there are folks who admire these actions."

In brief remarks Monday, the president said the nation was "still grieving and in shock from the tragedy." He said, "It's important for us to also focus, though, on the extraordinary courage that was shown during the course of these events."

Several people wrestled the accused gunman, Jared Lee Loughner, to the ground, and a woman helped secure ammunition the shooter could have used to kill more people. "Part of what I think that speaks to is the best of America, even in the face of such mindless violence," Obama said.

Cornell said because undue attention on criminals can encourage copycats "it's important to focus on the heroes rather than the villains."

Boehner, a Republican from Ohio, has condemned the attacks and called for a temporary political truce--a smart move, Cornell said, considering it appears the gunman was politically motivated. "What is critical is that we stand together at this dark time as one body. We need to rally around our wounded colleague, the families of the fallen, and the people of Arizona's 8th District," Boehner said over the weekend.

E.R. "Gene" Deisinger, a deputy chief of police and director of threat management at Virginia Tech, said he had "particularly respect" for Obama's call for people to reflect on the incident. Deisinger said the country shouldn't rush to judge the motives of shooters. Virginia Tech in 2007 was the site of one of the nation's most horrific shootings, when a student shot and killed 32 people and injured several others.

James Garbarino, a forensic clinical psychologist at Loyola University, Chicago, said the president should remind people about the pitfalls of heated rhetoric. He said the rhetoric "certainly egged" on the accused gunman.