

Gun Ownership in the Context of America's Social Problems

By: Ralph Groves*

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INTRODUCTION

[The increase of mass shootings in the USA during 2019 compared to 2018](#) has prompted Americans to examine causes for “gun violence” – as it is popularly called, including by presidential candidates. In addition, such violence prompts calls for more restrictions on gun ownership, such as the January 2020 measures in Virginia and a [rally in Richmond against restrictions](#). In turn, a manifestation of a severe cultural divide on this issue is found in [West Virginia's invitation to some Virginian counties to secede from Virginia](#) to join West Virginia. Discernment of facts and analyses based on facts concerning the issue of guns can help policymakers make decisions based on objective data rather than emotions, as the [Heritage Foundation](#) advises. This monograph attempts to explain gun issues in the context of the USA's social problems.

This monograph makes the following points for policymakers to consider:

1. America's social problems – caused by fractured communities as well as the decline of family cohesion and morals – are the underlying causes of “gun violence”, not widespread gun ownership.
2. The overall “gun violence” statistic is misleading, as only a small percentage of deaths caused by firearms are murders. Most are suicides. The USA's suicide rate, despite the availability of guns, is lower than the rate in some other countries (such as Japan).
3. Prescription medications and “gun-free zones” are contributory factors to mass shootings.
4. Expanded background checks will not keep guns out of the hands of criminals and gang members; in any case, such checks will be inexact as not all records about people are available to adjudicators. Meanwhile, criminals and gang members will continue to obtain guns by theft and in black markets – thereby circumventing background checks.
5. There is no correlation between armed civilians and crime, as the examples of Israel and Switzerland show.
6. Most armed civilians, including concealed-carry permit holders, are law-abiding citizens who exercise their natural right to self-defense. They deter crimes – including crimes against humanity; they assist police and could prevent mass shootings if “gun-free zones” were abolished.
7. The U.S. Constitution's 2nd Amendment codifies a pre-existing, natural right of self-defense, as upheld by the Supreme Court; a hypothetical repeal of the 2nd Amendment would be impossible to achieve.
8. Gun confiscation cannot be accomplished, as it will provoke civil disobedience and perhaps armed revolt; the police will refuse to carry out gun confiscation.

*Ralph Groves is the Chairman of the Libertarian Party of Orange County, Florida. He is a retired Army war veteran and a former candidate for Congress.

AMERICA'S SOCIAL PROBLEMS:

America's social problems in recent decades started from declining family cohesion and fracturing of communities. A commentator, Jonah Goldberg, mentioned these factors in his commentary in the *Orlando Sentinel*, 8 August 2019, "[Neither left nor right has proper remedy for America's illness](#)". Jackie Gingrich Cushman (Senator Newt Gingrich's daughter), author of *Our Broken America*, perceived the loss of the American soul and pointed out another aspect of our disunity (deteriorated sense of community): political polarization, which is making it difficult for our Federal Government to address our nation's salient issues. Concomitantly, the decline of religious ethics and the loss of society's moral center – historically provided by religion – have aggravated the situation, a point amplified by former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee in his column entitled "[Our values are collapsing – How can we be shocked by the decline of civility, spread of hate?](#)" Further, [the lack of a moral center](#) and the tragic decline of respect for life – most saliently evident in the judicial overreach that enabled widespread permissive abortion – cheapened the value of life and made society vulnerable to mass murder. More broadly, Alveda King, niece of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., believes the abrogation of the fundamental right to life negates our nation's creed, which commences with the right to life; she calls for the creation of a culture of life (source: *King Rules*, by Alveda King).

The decline of families, communities, religion, and respect for life coupled with aspects of counter-culture (use of mind-altering drugs, negation of traditional ethics, etc.) – all of which started in the 1960s – created the maelstrom we are suffering today. In many instances, small town industrial communities became fractured when their main industries were closed and relocated, sometimes abroad, for the sake of "efficiency" – meaning maximizing profits at the expense of workers' livelihoods. (Most people identify with geographic communities. For some people, substitutes for geographic communities could include "overarching communities", such as shared camaraderie among fellow employees in a company or among fellow service members in the military. In addition, people can retain a sense of community among fellow parishioners in their church, temple, or mosque.)

Another aspect of the decline of social cohesion is the pervasive growth of loneliness. Researchers of medicine and psychiatry at UCLA and the University of Chicago have discerned that people suffer negative repercussions if social connections are lost. Repercussions of loneliness include changes in behavioral patterns: irritability, suspiciousness, and negative emotions, which contribute to antisocial behavior. (Source: *American Association of Retired Persons* journal, December 2019/January 2020 issue.)

Without social cohesion, "homeless minds" were created in our society and such afflicted people became lacking in human interactions and empathy, thereby making them insensitive to the effects of violence they may perpetrate. (The term "homeless minds" is from the title of a book by Peter Berger.)

PRESCRIPTION PSYCH DRUGS AND THEIR SIDE-EFFECTS

The factors described above have augured a cascading series of resultant anxieties, thereby prompting a demand for psych drugs (e.g. Ritalin, Prozac, etc.). Policymakers should address side-effects of prescription drugs in discussions about crime, including mass shootings, and their causes. [The Philadelphia Trumpet journal reported on the correlation of psych drug usage and crimes](#). Other journals have addressed repercussions of psych drugs, but often with differing conclusions concerning their correlations to crimes.

[Ritalin addresses Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Narcolepsy](#) (a chronic sleep disorder), but it can cause [psychosis](#) – an inability to know what is real and what is not. [Prozac is an antidepressant](#), but its side effects can include [Serotonin Syndrome](#), which can cause agitation. Besides these two well-known drugs, millions of people are on other drugs and various antidepressants. People with a pervasive sense of loneliness – due to lack of family life, alienation from communities, absent religious ethics – can display anti-social behavior and lack of empathy, especially when aggravated by side-effects of psych drugs. Psychosis and other side-effects of prescribed psych drugs have contributed to mass shootings. Holding “Big Pharma” partly responsible for mass shootings could find a precedent in this court judgment: In August 2019, Oklahoma Judge Thad Balkman declared [Johnson & Johnson and Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies liable for stoking the Opioid Crisis](#), and ordered they pay \$572 million in restitution, indicating Big Pharma can cause widespread harm to society.

GUN CONTROLS/BACKGROUND CHECKS:

Despite social ills and medicinal side-effects, which are America’s underlying problems, some Washington legislators blame guns for shootings and call for more gun controls and expanded background checks. Instead of blaming guns, we should blame the people who commit murder and hold them responsible, as [Geraldo Rivera](#) has said publicly. [Alan Korwin](#), a gun law expert, said on Fox News, 16 August 2019: “The presence of guns is not why we’re having murders. The fabric of society is unraveling...The idea that you can fix that with a statute is crazy.” (Mr. Korwin was invited twice to the U.S. Supreme Court to observe oral arguments in Second Amendment gun-rights cases. He witnessed [D.C. v. Heller](#), which affirmed gun rights. In addition, Mr. Korwin won the 2013 *Defender of Liberty Award*, conferred by the 600,000-member [Second Amendment Foundation](#).)

The people’s right to own guns has been repeatedly affirmed by court cases:

- In [United States v. Cruikshank](#) (1876), the Court ruled: “The right to bear arms is not granted by the Constitution; neither is it in any manner dependent upon that instrument for its existence. The Second Amendment means no more than that it shall not be infringed by Congress, and has no other effect than to restrict the powers of the National Government.”
- In [United States v. Miller](#) (1939), the Court ruled that the amendment “[protects arms that had a] reasonable relationship to the preservation or

efficiency of a well regulated militia”. (Groves interpretation: citizens have a right to bear military-type guns.)

- In [*District of Columbia v. Heller*](#) (2008), the Court ruled that the Second Amendment “codified a pre-existing right” and that it “protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home” but also stated that “the right is not unlimited. It is not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose”.
- In [*McDonald v. Chicago*](#) (2010), the Court ruled that the Second Amendment limits state and local governments to the same extent that it limits the federal government.

The *DC v. Heller* case, above, reinstated the rights of Washington DC residents. [In 1976, the Washington DC City Council passed a law](#) generally prohibiting residents from possessing handguns and requiring that all firearms in private homes be kept unloaded and rendered temporally inoperable via disassembly or installation of trigger locks. Afterwards, the murder rate increased from under 30 per 100,000 people up to 80. The Supreme Court ruled the City Council’s law was unconstitutional. Florida’s experience indicates an armed citizenry results in fewer murders. [In 1987, Florida passed a right-to-carry law](#). During the ensuing two decades, the murder rate dropped from almost 12 per 100,000 to under 6.

Among potential future statutes, some legislators suggest more comprehensive background checks. Meagan Cahill, Rand Corp Sr. Policy Researcher, noted on Fox News, 16 August 2019, that background checks are currently conducted in a limited way. Background checks are conducted when guns are purchased from gun shops, but [checks are not done at gun shows, which is a loophole](#). She suggested checks should be expanded to include gun shows. Problem: gun shops will still be at their location a week after a purchaser is put “on hold” for a background check to go through. Gun shows typically occur for a day or two over week-ends and then disband. They won’t be at the same location a week later to complete the sale of a gun after a background check.

Despite the practical problem associated with background checks at gun shows, on [18 September 2019 President Trump sent a proposal to Senate Republicans to expand background checks to include gun-show transactions](#). The president’s proposal is along the lines of a 2013 proposal by Senators Pat Toomey (R-PA) and Joe Manchin (D-W. VA). Policymakers should consider that less than 1% of criminals obtain guns at gun shows. A 2004 study of prisoners who possessed guns during crimes for which they were jailed found that the prisoners obtained guns from the following sources:

- 40.0% illegal/street sources
- 37.4% family/friends
- 7.3% retail stores
- 2.6% pawnshops

0.8% gun shows (less than 1%!)

0.6% flea markets

As to the conducting of background checks, many facts about a person's life may not be transparent to a U.S. Government adjudicator. For example, people who have lived abroad for many years – both U.S. citizens and immigrants – may have gaps in their U.S. records. In addition, medical records (including prescribed psych drugs) are not openly available due to privacy regulations. Medical records brought into the public domain could be susceptible to hackers who could spill medical records on the internet. Repercussions could include lawsuits against the U.S. Government and widespread reluctance to seek psychologists' counseling if privacy is not guaranteed. Besides these potential repercussions, states have varying standards for local gun ownership. For example, misdemeanor offenses in some states may not disqualify persons from owning guns. ([Online court records show the shooter in Odessa, Texas, was arrested in 2001 for a misdemeanor offense that would not have prevented him from buying firearms legally in Texas.](#))

In the same Fox News report, cited above, Dr. Arthur Evans, CEO of the American Psychological Association acknowledged many people are in crisis, and he called for intervention prior to crises becoming overt with repercussions on society. He did not blame prescription drugs; however, the recent Dayton, Ohio, [shooter had unspecified antidepressants in his blood as well as cocaine and alcohol.](#)

BROAD REVIEW OF "GUN VIOLENCE":

Concerning "gun violence" broadly, in 2017 nearly 40,000 Americans lost their lives due to firearms (source: "Inside the Public Health Crisis of Gun Violence", *Discover*, Sept-Oct 2019). However, "Gun violence" is a deceptively broad term that needs to be nuanced lest people get the wrong impression that the number of nearly 40,000 represents murders. Actually, 24,000 of these gun deaths – 60% of the total – were suicides, including suicides among [military service members](#). As sad as it is for anyone to commit suicide, these acts of "gun violence" do not pose a danger for society at large. Suicide is a matter apart from the gun debate and should be addressed separately. (The average suicidal person is white, male, over 50, and with physical health issues – possibly being treated by medications with mind-altering side effects.)

Many other nations, without as many guns in the hands of civilians, have suicide rates higher than those of the USA, though mostly committed by means other than guns. As of 2015, among 28 high-income countries (including the USA) 7 had suicide rates higher than the USA. The USA had 6.9 suicides per 100,000 committed with firearms and another 6.9 by other means (13.8 total). By comparison, Japan had none by firearms, but 18.4 by other means – over 30% more than the USA's total suicide rate of 13.8. Belgium's statistics were 1.1 and 15.5, respectively – also higher than the USA's rate. Slovenia's were 1.7 and 18.7 – again higher than the USA's rate. (Source: UN World Health Organization cited in "Inside the Public Health Crisis of Gun Violence", *Discover*, Sept-Oct 2019.) Therefore, the availability of guns in the USA does not prompt more suicides overall; the USA has fewer suicides than some other countries despite the availability of guns.

The rate of homicides committed with guns, usually with handguns, is higher in the USA than in other high-income countries. (Not all homicides are murders. Some homicides are justifiable, such as those committed by citizens in self-defense and those [committed by police](#) against criminals. In addition, some [policemen are killed by criminals](#).) In 2017, according to the FBI, of nearly 8,000 firearm-related homicides, 7,000 were committed with handguns. The types of weapons used in another 3,100 homicides were not specified. (Source: “Inside the Public Health Crisis of Gun Violence”, *Discover*, Sept-Oct 2019.) As to homicides committed with guns, the greatest number are among Black men. Women are 10% of homicide victims, often committed by intimate partners. The [National Institute of Justice](#) stated categorically: “Gun-related homicide is most prevalent among gangs and during the commission of felony crimes”, not among law-abiding citizens. [A staggering 80% of gun homicides are gang-related](#). Specifically, according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), gang murders accounted for some 8,900 of 11,100 gun murders in both 2010 and 2011. Therefore, there were only 2,200 non-gang-related firearm homicides in both years in a country of over 300 million people.

As most homicides (usually murders) are committed by criminals and gangs, policymakers should consider whether gun control legislation will constrain such nefarious people, who will not obey such legislation and who obtain firearms by thefts or on the black market – thus circumventing background checks.

Policymakers should consider the [lack of correlation](#) between gun ownership and “gun violence”. Some nations, such as Israel and Switzerland, have large numbers of armed citizens, yet they have low rates of “gun violence”. [Guns are commonplace in Israel](#). With mandatory conscription, most Israelis gain experience with firearms during military service. Israeli soldiers, including those off-duty, often openly carry firearms, including submachine guns (as seen by this author during a visit to Israel). In addition, thousands of Israeli civilians carry handguns. Indeed, [Israel is now allowing more civilians – hundreds of thousands – to own guns](#). Armed Israeli citizens have neutralized a high percentage of terrorists in the act of committing murder. During times of elevated terror, Israeli leaders have called on armed citizens to carry their guns. [Switzerland has millions of privately-owned guns and very little “gun violence”](#). Switzerland’s last mass shooting was in 2001, when a man stormed the local parliament in Zug, killing 14 people. In 2016, Switzerland had one of the lowest murder rates in the world – near zero – while having millions of privately-owned guns. The country has about 2 million privately-owned guns among its 8.6 million people. The examples of Israel and Switzerland negate the view that large numbers of armed citizens pose a danger to society. Armed citizens actually make society safer, as police cannot be counted on to respond as quickly or as well to protect citizens in danger – see Addenda 2 and 3, below.

While some legislators erroneously believe gun control will make us safer, they should consider that evil doers will commit atrocities by other means if they lack guns. For example, present day China is suffering an epidemic of mass knife attacks, killing more people than some instances of mass shootings in the USA. For example, in 2014 [knife-wielding murderers killed 33 people and injured 130](#) in southwest China. In 2018, a former pupil [stabbed nine pupils to death](#) outside a middle school in northwest China. In 2019, an attacker killed eight students and injured two others at an elementary school in central China. [China restricts private gun ownership](#), so knives and homemade explosives are the most common weapons in violent crimes. According to a Chinese police official and criminal profiler, Chinese

society has experienced enormous stress in recent decades, brought on by rapid urbanization, a growing wealth gap, and most of all, a deterioration of traditional family structures. [“Our cities are getting bigger, but families’ capabilities for dealing with problems are weakening.”](#) This Chinese experience mirrors the American experience cited in the initial paragraphs of this essay.

PROSPECTIVE GUN CONFISCATION:

The prospect of a heavy-handed effort by the Federal Government to outlaw and confiscate guns would be a misguided way of preventing mass shootings. (The unraveling of the fabric of our society necessitates gun ownership by civilians for self-defense against aberrant behavior by some deranged, sometimes medicated, individuals.)

Confiscation of guns won’t happen in the USA for many reasons. Confiscation would be illegal. The Constitution’s 2nd Amendment – in the Bill of Rights – enshrines into law the right of each person to self-defense, a natural right and a human right. This right is also implied in the 9th Amendment. (Julianne Versnel, director of operations for Second Amendment Foundation, publishes *Women & Guns* and *The Journal on Firearms and Public Policy*. She is active in the international arena reminding disparate governmental representatives that there is a civil and natural right to self-defense. She is a founding officer of the International Association for the Protection of Civilian Arms Rights (IAPCAR).)

The natural right of self-defense is beneficial for society. The U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) report, ordered by President Obama in 2012 following the Sandy Hook Massacre, stated that the [number of crimes prevented by guns is approximately 3 million annually, or 8,200 every day](#). Policymakers should consider the CDC’s contribution to the gun debate: law-abiding citizens’ lawful use of guns is beneficial to society and useful to police, who would otherwise be overwhelmed to deter over 8,000 crimes per day in addition to the many crimes they already contend with! Other research confirms the [positive effect of law-abiding citizens being armed](#) and curtailing criminals. [Criminologists point out that criminals make quick “risk-versus-benefit” assessments about the potential challenge of armed citizens before committing a crime](#). Criminological studies consistently reveal that the possibility of armed citizens in public places deters crimes and could avert mass shootings. Indeed, even the gay community has been arming itself to deter hate crimes against them. They have formed target-shooting groups called [“Pink Pistols”](#).

Globally, if there had been observance of the natural right of self-defense, terrible crimes against humanity, including genocide, could have been averted. There are historical examples of disarmed people being slaughtered by totalitarian governments or dominant ethnic groups or deranged gunmen.

- For example, prior to the 1915 genocide of Armenians in eastern Anatolia, the Ottoman Government disarmed the Armenian population. [Armenians who survived the genocide were those who had retained guns](#). The historical novel, [The Forty Days of Musa Dagh, by Franz Werfel](#), focused on the self-defense of a small community of Armenians in southern Turkey’s Hatay Province – made possible because these Armenians were armed.

- This genocide inspired another. Prior to the 1939 German invasion of Poland, [Adolf Hitler's order to Wehrmacht commanders](#) stated: "I have placed my death-head formation in readiness ... to send to death mercilessly and without compassion, men, women, and children of Polish derivation and language. Only thus shall we gain the living space which we need. [Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?](#)" The [Nazi regime's gun control laws](#) enabled the disarming and repression of its enemies and consolidation of power. The Nazi extermination of the Jews followed strict gun control laws, which prevented the Jews from being able to defend themselves.
- [The 1975-1979 genocide in Cambodia perpetuated by the Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot resulted in the deaths of two million Cambodians.](#) Prior to the genocide, when the Khmer Rouge took power they [disarmed the Cambodian population](#), thus denying the people of the means to resist deportation from .
- The 1994 genocide of Rwandan Tutsis by Hutu *Interahamwe* militiamen, supported by the Hutu-dominated Rwandan government, was possible because the [Tutsis were unarmed people](#). By contrast, no one would dare attempt genocide against the martial Zulus of South Africa! (In 2019, Zulus celebrated the 140th anniversary of their victory over a British regiment at the [Battle of Isandlwana](#) during the 1879 Anglo-Zulu War.)
- [In 2011 in Norway, a killer massacred 69 people in a youth camp, mostly teenagers who could not defend themselves.](#) If there had been one adult with a gun at the youth camp, he could have stopped the carnage and saved the teenagers' lives. Before another mass shooting occurs, European countries should rethink their draconian gun-control laws and enable law-abiding citizens to own guns. We Americans should not follow the Europeans' example of strict gun-control. Europeans should follow the American example of an armed citizenry. They should also recall a historical example: During the early days of World War II, when Great Britain stood alone against Nazi Germany, the British people feared a German invasion, but they were an unarmed citizenry To remedy the British situation, the [American Committee for the Defense of British Homes](#) collected tens of thousands of rifles, shotguns, and handguns from American citizens and donated them to British citizens for self-defense if an invasion occurred.

A summary of disarmament of populations and genocide may be found in a historical analysis by [Fr. John Peck](#).

HYPOTHETICAL REPEAL OF THE 2nd AMENDMENT OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS:

The hypothetical repeal of the Constitution's 2nd Amendment would require two-thirds of Congress to initiate and three-quarters of the States to approve. It will be impossible to get this much approval outside of a few States with large cities and left-leaning, liberal populations. Even during the hypothetical repeal process, law-abiding, armed citizens would protest the process. There have been many marches on Washington DC by various interest groups, but a march on Washington by citizens who want to preserve gun rights would dwarf all previous marches. Record-breaking marches would occur in the capitals of various states as well – such as the January 2020 demonstration in Richmond, Virginia. This would be very sobering on State Legislatures that would consider repealing the 2nd

Amendment. Prior to an initiation of a repeal, policymakers should remind legislators that the right to bear arms is not “given” to the people by the 2nd Amendment; the amendment codifies a pre-existing right for self-defense, as upheld in the case [District of Columbia v. Heller](#) (2008), mentioned above. This concept was upheld by [President John F. Kennedy](#), who asserted that the peoples’ rights come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God.

Even if the 2nd Amendment were repealed, the 9th Amendment would still uphold the people’s right to self-defense and gun ownership. The 9th Amendment says: “The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.” In other words, even without the 2nd Amendment, if the people believe they have a right to own guns, they can own guns. The hypothetical confiscation of guns would be impossible to enforce. Are courts going to issue search warrants to the households of approximately 100 million gun-owning Americans without probable cause?! That would be a violation of the 4th Amendment! Besides, many policemen own secondary guns privately (in addition to those issued to them) and sympathize with law-abiding citizens who own guns – especially as armed citizens have helped the police – see Addendum 1, below.

It would be extremely difficult for policemen to confiscate guns from citizens who would not consent to being disarmed. Civilians own approximately 393 million guns – probably millions more. They own 100 times as many guns as the U.S. military and 400 times as many as law enforcement. (Gutowski, Stephen (21 June 2018), ["Report: Nearly 400 Million Civilian-Owned Guns in America"](#), www.freebeacon.com, retrieved 17 January 2019) Another factor: no government agency knows who owns all the guns and where they are located. Guns bought from official gun shops are registered with the Government, but guns bought at gun shows or from private owners or passed down from father to son or given from one spouse to another are not registered. If the Government presses this matter, it could provoke civil disobedience by gun-owners and policemen who sympathize with them. Worst case, it could prompt violent disobedience and maybe even a revolt. There are already indications of such forthcoming disobedience, as popular resistance against gun regulations is growing. For example, on 25 September 2019 former [Tulsa police officer Ms. Dianna Muller](#) spoke to members of the House Judiciary Committee during a hearing on “Protecting America from Assault Weapons” and declared that she would not comply with a ban on “assault weapons”. Another example: on 19 September a single mother in Colorado, Lauren Boebert, confronted Democrat presidential candidate Beto O’Rourke – who advocates confiscation AR-15s and AK-47s via [mandatory buy-backs](#) – and she said: [“Hell no, you’re not”](#) [going to confiscate guns].

Having said all the foregoing, better gun-safety measures (mandatory safety courses) are advisable, at least to prevent accidents (e.g. accidental discharges) – analogous to drivers’ ed for car safety.

GUN-FREE ZONES ATTRACT MASS SHOOTERS:

One factor that has not be discussed in the mainstream media is the corrosive effect of gun-free zones. Some restaurants, cinemas, and other public places post signs with inscriptions:

“no guns allowed on these premises.” Instead of making such areas safer – as if criminals would obey such prohibitions! – such signs attract criminals. According to the Crime Prevention Research Center, [97.8 percent of all mass public shootings have occurred in gun-free zones](#). On 3 September 2019, [Rep. Jodey Arrington](#) (R, Texas) reiterated this point and called for meaningful anti-crime legislation instead of gun-free zones.

Examples of the failure of gun-free zones:

- In 2015, a murderer shot six people in a Santa Barbara, California, gun-free zone. In his 141-page “manifesto,” he explained that when planning his attack he had decided against launching it in locations where someone with a gun might be present to cut short his killing spree.
- In the 2012 Aurora, Colorado, theater massacre, the killer’s diary showed he had decided against attacking an airport because of its “substantial security.” In addition, out of seven movie theaters within 20 minutes of the shooter’s home, he chose the only one that had posted signs declaring it to be a gun-free zone.

If gun-free zones were abolished, criminals would worry that armed citizens could be anywhere. With ubiquitous popular defense, some criminals would likely be deterred from killing innocent civilians. Similarly, in the states that allow teachers to be armed, there have been no school shootings (and no accidents or injuries caused by firearms possessed by teachers) – again proving that law-abiding citizens are not a problem. [Bernard Zapor](#), a former ATF Special Agent, reported on Fox News, 8 September 2019, that more states should issue concealed-carry permits. [Congressman Doug Collins](#) (R, GA) concurred that criminals will make matters worse unless more citizens have concealed-carry permits.

SUMMARY:

The broad “gun violence” statistic is misleading; it needs to be broken down into its various categories to promote understanding of the gun situation. America has severe social problems that need to be addressed instead of more gun control legislation. Politics is often a public relations exercise rather than a results-oriented exercise, where “doing something” often gains votes but does not actually accomplish anything. Communities and families need to have their cohesiveness restored and religion needs to be revived. Concomitantly, “Big Pharma” should be called to task to compel its medical researchers to invent medications that do not have deleterious side-effects. Background checks could be useful to discern that some people – e.g. those with criminal records – should not be allowed to obtain guns via legal channels, but we should be aware that such people could obtain guns illegally – as most criminals do. Background checks will never be comprehensive, however, as medical records are confidential. Prospective gun confiscation and repeal of the 2nd Amendment will provoke either civil disobedience, violent disobedience, or a revolt.

A concluding quotation from [Surgical Neurology International](#):

In his celebrated book, *The Samurai, the Mountie, and the Cowboy*, author and gun rights attorney, David Kopel, makes the point that disparate countries such as Japan and Switzerland have low crime rates, regardless of gun control laws, because of close ties engendered in the

traditional family. In those countries, parents spend time with their properly reared children, who are then imbued with a sense of civility as well as civic duty. In this milieu, children can be brought up with firearms, instructed in their use and safety, and when they grow up, they should be allowed not only to own guns, but to carry concealed weapons for self and family protection.

Addenda:

1. [During the 1966 incident of a deranged sniper shooting people at the University of Texas, civilians came to the aid of the police.](#) The police were poorly equipped to take down the sniper, so armed civilians brought their rifles to the scene. They put suppressive fire on the sniper, inhibiting him from killing more people and enabling the police – armed only with handguns – to enter the building and take down the sniper. [Officer Ray Martinez later expressed gratitude regarding the civilians](#) who, armed with their own hunting rifles, had returned fire and forced the sniper hunker down, thereby limiting his ability to target people. There were [many possible causes for the sniper's rampage](#), which included: a small brain tumor discovered during his autopsy; [chemical and drug abuse that may have produced an amphetamine-induced psychosis](#); as well as suffering child abuse at the hands of his father and witnessing domestic violence against his mother – family issues.
2. During the 1992 riots in Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Police Dept (LAPD) retreated from rioters, leaving citizens exposed to danger. (The LAPD motto is “To Protect and Serve”, but they did not protect civilians.) According to The Washington Post: [“...violence might have been contained quickly had LAPD been able to muster massive force](#) at Florence and Normandie [the intersection in south-central LA where the riot began], where motorists were being dragged from vehicles and beaten. One motorist’s life was saved not by police but by four good Samaritans from the crowd who helped him to a nearby hospital. The Police Chief Daryl Gates said: “There are going to be situations where people are going to go without assistance. That’s just the facts of life.” Voicing anger, conservative state Supreme Court Justice Armand Arabian, who usually avoids public controversy, warned Thursday that the LAPD is losing public support. “Where was the protection and service?”
3. Another example of police who fail to protect us is the Parkland, Florida, shooting case. [The security guard on the scene failed to confront the shooter](#), allowing 17 students to be killed. President Trump called him a coward.