

Gun Violence in America

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US civilian gun ownership is the highest worldwide. Yemen ranks second. America doubles the Yemeni level.

Gun related violence follows. In America it's endemic. In Chicago alone, gun-related deaths exceed one a day. More Chicagoans are shot and killed than US forces in Afghanistan by any means.

Gun ownership makes it simple as ready, aim, fire. It lowers the threshold between anger and homicide. Proliferation in society leaves everyone vulnerable.

On Friday, 28 Sandy Hook Elementary School Newtown, CT children and teachers were murdered. A heavily armed 20-year old man used semiautomatic pistols and a semiautomatic rifle.

It was the third deadliest gun-related massacre in US history.

The second worst occurred on Blacksburg, VA Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University's campus. On April 16, 2007, 33 students and teachers were shot and killed. Others were wounded.

In January 1923, shootings and other violence killed 150 Rosewood, FL Blacks. No convictions followed.

Governor lawton Chiles (1991 - 1998) later called what happened a "blind act of bigotry." In 2004, Florida declared Rosewood a state Heritage Landmark. Survivors of dead victims are unforgiving.

Numerous other gun-related lesser scale massacres pockmark US history. The right to own, conceal, and use assault and other deadly weapons is an ugly America tradition. It's long past time it ended.

On November 18, 2012, the [Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence](#) said "epidemic levels of gun violence (claim) over 30,000 lives annually." US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) data document it.

Every gun-related death leaves two others wounded. Every year, about 100,000 Americans are gun violence victims. Countless others are irreparably harmed. Nothing whatever is done to curb or prevent what's shocking and intolerable.

The 1968 Gun Control Act fell woefully short. Federal regulation enacted was weak and ineffective. Gun manufacturers supported the measure.

It prohibits interstate firearms transfers except among licensed manufacturers, dealers and importers. It did nothing to curb gun proliferation across America.

In 1982, a [Senate Judiciary Committee](#) report claimed “the second amendment to our Constitution was intended as an individual right of the American citizen to keep and carry arms in a peaceful manner, for the protection of himself, his family, and his freedoms.”

Ignored was that so called individual rights violate those of most others. Death or injury by gun violence in American exceeds vulnerability anywhere else and then some.

US communities are unsafe. Police on routine street or traffic patrol wear bulletproof vests for protection. At one time, it was unheard of. Today it’s standard practice.

Gun violence touches every segment of society. It happens on streets, in homes, at work, in schools, numerous other places, and by self-inflicted shootings.

Major incidents like Virginia Tech and Norwalk, CT make headlines. Thousands of other shootings go unnoticed.

CDC calls firearm deaths “an important public health concern.” Congress dismisses it. Vulnerability to domestic gun-related death or injury exceeds some US war theaters.

Instead of shocking politicians to act, they support the virtual unrestricted right to bear arms. Automatic ones are prohibited. They’re easily obtained, nonetheless. Powerful semi-automatic assault ones are freely bought and sold.

[Eastcoastfirearms.com](#) lists numerous ones for sale. They include AK-47 (Kalashnikov) assault rifles, AR-15/M16 type rifles, Uzi assault weapons, LWRC M6A2s (called the most modern carbine rifle in the world), and various others with considerable firepower.

Progressive jurists and others take issue with modern-day Second Amendment interpretation. It states:

“A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”

Journalist/historian [Garry Wills](#) calls supportive Second Amendment views muddled and tendentious. Their arguments replicate insurrectionist ones.

“Only madmen, one would think, can suppose that militias have a constitutional right to levy war against the United States, which is treason by constitutional definition.”

“Yet the body of writers who proclaim themselves at the scholarly center of the Second Amendment’s interpretation say that a well-regulated body authorized by the government is intended to train itself for action against the government.”

He added that “Perhaps it is the quality of their arguments that makes them hard to take seriously.”

In 2008, a District of Columbia v. Heller Supreme Court [amicus curiae](#) submitted by 15 prominent academics and writers concluded as follows:

“Historians are often asked what the Founders would think about various aspects of contemporary life. Such questions can be tricky to answer.”

“But as historians of the Revolutionary era we are confident at least of this: that the authors of the Second Amendment would be flabbergasted to learn that in endorsing the republican principle of a well-regulated militia, they were also precluding restrictions on such potentially dangerous property as firearms, which governments had always regulated when there was ‘real danger of public injury from individuals.’ “

Law Professor [David C. Williams](#) says Second Amendment interpretation reflects myths about America. The framers believed in unity, he said.

Modern interpreters endorse distrust and disunity, he believes. The Second Amendment guarantees individuals the right to bear arms only as part of a united and consensual people, he stresses.

Obtaining guns today is almost as easy as buying toothpaste. America’s framers had no such intention in mind. Constitutional reinventionists decided they knew best.

Modern US culture is violent. Gun ownership bears much responsibility. Violent films are some of the most popular. So are similar video games and music. Lyrics glorify guns, rape and murder.

US society is called a “rape culture” for good reason. Sometime during their lives, one-fourth of adult women are victimized by forcible rape. Often it’s by someone they know. Family members share guilt.

One in four women report being sexually molested in childhood. Repeat violations over extended periods are commonplace. Three-fourth of US women experience some form of extreme violence in their lifetimes.

Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury. It’s the second leading cause of death. Guns play a leading role. Children, like adults, are harmed.

What kind of country facilitates endemic violence instead of acting responsibly to curb it? What kind of government endorses easy access to dangerous assault and other deadly weapons instead of prohibiting it?

Against this backdrop, no wonder massacres like Norwalk, CT, Virginia Tech, Columbine High School, Atlanta, GA stock trader killings, six by a lone Fort Worth gunman, 10 Washington, DC sniper shootings, a Carnation, WA Christmas eve massacre, Northern IL University killings, 13 more at Ft. Hood, the Tuscon, AR incident killing six and leaving Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords seriously wounded, as well as dozens more incidents too numerous to mention.

No wonder domestic violence is out-of-control. Lone gunmen incidents reflect ingrained values. So does America’s history. It’s notably harsh against dissidents, labor, minorities, street protesters, ethnic and religious groups, as well as others targeted.

Most one-on-one incidents pass without notice. US history is sanitized to forget what’s too monstrous to remember. Native Americans were nearly slaughtered to extinction.

Black slaves endured whippings, other beatings, rapes, mutilations, forced family separations, and even amputations as punishment for runaways.

Jim Crow America endorsed white supremacy. Forced segregation still exists. Latinos, Muslims, and other disadvantaged people face state-sponsored repression.

America is the only industrialized country negligent for having failed to address gun violence responsibly.

On average, eight times more fatalities result than in other developed countries. For children under 15, it's 12 times higher.

Few federal gun laws exist. Ones enacted are pockmarked with loopholes. Some states make guns as simple to buy as blueberry pie. Many others aren't far behind.

Anyone get obtain dangerous semi-automatic weapons able to claim multiple victims in seconds. Some US communities are near-war zones.

Economic duress makes violent crime more likely. Many people fear going out at night. Some do in daylight.

In the 1990s, murders happened every 22 minutes, rapes every five minutes, robberies every 49 seconds, and burglaries every 10 seconds. Given today's hard times, it's likely these numbers are much higher.

In 2010, the FBI reported 1,246,248 violent crimes and another 9,082,887 nonviolent ones. In 2011, violent crime jumped 18%.

Numbers vary year by year, but grand totals compared to other industrialized nations explain best. Violence in America is endemic.

Death or injury from guns is out-of-control. Government officials able to act responsibly abstain. In September 2008, Obama said "I'm not going to take away your guns."

Last July, White House spokesman Jay Carney said:

"The president believes we need to take common sense measures that protect the Second Amendment rights of Americans while ensuring that those who should not have guns under existing laws do not get them."

He kept his promise on ownership. He spurned gun control advocates. He signed measures permitting guns in national parks and on Amtrak.

He did nothing to ban assault weapons. He allows gun show loopholes. Convicted violent felons can easily buy weapons there with no ID. So can anyone able to afford them.

Political Washington facilitates gun ownership. Neither party supports curbing gun-related homicides and injuries. They prefer gun lobby cash to safe streets and communities.

Don't expect either party to change gun policy. They support wrong over right across the board. They do it with impunity. No wonder America threatens humanity at home and abroad. Rogue leaders made planet earth unsafe to live on.

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