

Gun Control Research-Wright and Rossi Department of Justice Study
(Deterrent effect of armed citizens upon criminal behavior)

Professors James D. Wright and Peter Rossi of the Social and Demographic Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts conducted a study in 1982 and 1983 paid for by the U.S. Department of Justice. (Professor Rossi was a former President of the American Sociological Association.) The researchers interviewed 1,874 imprisoned felons in ten states.

Professors Wright and Rossi initially believed that strict gun control deterred crime. The results of their research led them to the conclusion that armed citizens have a beneficial effect in reducing criminal behavior and that harsh laws, such as handgun bans could result in criminals using sawed off rifles and shotguns with more deadly results. 88% of the criminals surveyed by Wright and Rossi agreed with the statement that, "A criminal who wants a handgun is going to get one."

A 1986 review of the professors' work, *Armed and Considered Dangerous*, by Raymond G. Kessler of the Department of Criminal Justice of Memphis State University, concluded, "Although *Armed and Considered Dangerous* is not free of methodological problems, it is the best policy-oriented study of criminals and their guns available."

Wright and Rossi reported that:

81% of interviewees agreed that a "smart criminal" will try to determine if a potential victim is armed.

74% indicated that burglars avoided occupied dwellings, because of fear of being shot.

57% said that most criminals feared armed citizens more than the police.

40% of the felons said that they had been deterred from committing a particular crime, because they believed that the potential victim was armed.

57% of the felons who had used guns themselves said that they had encountered potential victims who were armed.

34% of the criminal respondents said that they had been scared off, shot at, wounded, or captured by an armed citizen.

Based on this government-funded research by Wright and Rossi, it would appear that armed citizens do have a deterrent effect on crime.

Wright, James D., Rossi, Peter H., Daly, Kathleen, *Under the Gun, Weapons, Crime, and Violence in America*, Aldine de Gruyter, New York, 1983.

Wright, James D., Rossi, Peter H., *The Armed Criminal in America*, U.S. Department of Justice, 1985.

Wright, James D., Rossi, Peter H., *Armed and Considered Dangerous, a Survey of Felons and their Firearms*, Aldine de Gruyter, New York, 1986.

Firearms Coalition of Colorado, PO Box 1454 Englewood, CO 80150-1454

Research- Mass Murders and Spree Killings not Unique to U.S.

02-03-2017

The Crime Prevention Research Center updated their list of mass murders and spree killings world-wide on 01-30-2017. (Some additional recent incidents are included here.)

After the 2015 Charleston Massacre, President Obama referred to such atrocities as a particularly American problem. This does not appear to be the case.

As the mosque attack in Quebec, Canada on 01-29-2017 should remind us, criminal and terrorist violence is not restricted to this country. Nor are these horrible crimes always committed with firearms. (Examples do not include African, or Asian cases.)

One salient fact is that the most dastardly US and foreign crimes are often committed in so-called "gun-free" zones or against soft targets in jurisdictions where the local population has been largely disarmed by the government that was supposed to protect them.

Some examples of foreign mass murders/spree killings:

04-26-2002, Erfurt, Germany. Recent graduate of Gutenberg Gymnasium killed 18 people.

03-11-2009, Winnenden, Germany. Winnenden School shooting left 15 dead.

07-22-2011, Utoya, Norway. Lone gunman killed 67 people and wounded 110 others. Many victims were trapped on an island, where no legal guns were allowed.

01-07-2015, 01-08-2015, Paris, France. Charlie Hebdo and related attacks killed 17, including 2 unarmed French police officers.

11-14-2015 Paris, France. Coordinated gun and suicide bombing attacks. 130 killed. 89 killed in the Bataclan Theatre. ISIS claimed responsibility.

07-14-2016, Nice, France. Tunisian resident of France killed 86 people by driving a hijacked cargo truck into a crowd.

07-22-2016, Munich, Germany. A gunman killed 9 in a shopping mall. A witness shouted at the gunman from a balcony, but could not do more, because he was unarmed.

12-19-2016, Berlin, Germany. A truck attack in a Christmas market killed 12 and injured 56.

01-01-2017, Istanbul, Turkey. Reina nightclub attack killed 39 and wounded 68. ISIS claimed responsibility.

01-29-2017, Quebec City, Canada. A Right-Wing extremist killed 6 and wounded 17 in an attack on a mosque during a prayer service.

<http://crimeresearch.org/2017/01/with-39-killed-in-tunisia-attack-the-top-three-mass-public-shootings-are-outside-the-united-states/>

Gun Control Research: The CDC Study

A comprehensive study done by one of the most prestigious scientific organizations in the country has found no statistically significant evidence that gun control has prevented a single violent crime.

If you believe that scientific research is the most logical way to understand the reality of the world, then you pay attention to studies done by groups and individuals. You also give weight to surveys that attempt to draw conclusions by reviewing numbers of studies.

The survey in question was done by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to determine if gun control has made a difference in the crime rate in the United States. There are some important things to remember about this study, which was published in 2003.

The CDC is a governmental organization that generally favors strict gun control laws. The panel doing the review of studies on these laws was largely made up of advocates for restricting or banning civilian ownership of firearms in the United States.

The purpose of the survey was to evaluate gun control laws with regard to effectiveness in controlling crime and violence. Given the institutional and individual bias in favor of restrictive gun laws, the conclusions of the CDC study are remarkable.

The CDC panel reviewed 51 studies regarding the effectiveness of gun control laws. Based on that review, they could not say that gun laws had prevented a single crime. The survey included, among other issues, studies of the effectiveness of gun and ammunition bans, licensing and registration laws, child access laws, and waiting periods. There was some slight evidence that waiting periods to purchase a firearm may reduce the gun suicide rate in older persons, while not affecting the overall suicide rate.

You would think that out of 51 scientific studies there would be more evidence of the effectiveness of gun control, if gun control were effective in preventing crime and violence. It is a tribute to the honesty of the CDC panel, given their preconceived ideas, that they were willing to issue this report at all. The survey did say in somewhat Orwellian fashion that "insufficient evidence to determine effectiveness should not be interpreted as evidence of ineffectiveness." (Just because a review of 51 studies failed to find a significant result, it doesn't mean that the result isn't there.)

The panel recommended additional research. This CDC survey is corroborated by the results of an even more exhaustive review done by the National Academy of Sciences.

Thacker, Steven, M.D., Dixon, Richard E., M.D., *First Reports evaluating the effectiveness of strategies for preventing violence: Firearms Laws*, Task Force on Community Preventive Services, Centers for Disease Control.
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5214a2.htm>

Firearms Coalition of Colorado PO Box 1454 Englewood, CO 80150-1454

Gun Control Research- Gius

"Shall-Issue" Concealed Carry Laws Seem to Reduce Gun Murder Rates. So-called: "Assault Weapons" Bans Have Minimal or Detrimental Impact on Gun Violence.

A 2014 study entitled, *An examination of the effects of concealed weapons laws and assault weapons bans on state-level murder rates*, by Mark Gius of Quinnipiac University came to the above conclusions after reviewing data on murder rates from 1980 to 2009. The time line for this study is one of the longest ever employed for this type of research. The data used by the researcher was taken from the US Department of Justice Supplementary Homicide Reports.

The results of this study corroborate the findings of the seminal research published by Lott and Mustard in 1997. The extensive 1997 study looked at the effects of "Shall-Issue" concealed carry (CCW) laws in every county in the US, except those counties that had no crime before or after the implementation of such laws during the study period. Lott and Mustard came to the well-known conclusion of *More Guns, Less Violent Crime*.

The 2014 study by Gius also reinforces the conclusions drawn by Koper and Roth in 2004 that the Federal ban on certain types of semi-automatic firearms, often mistakenly called "assault weapons," had "little to no effect on homicide rates associated with firearms."

The 2014 study indicated that states with more restrictive CCW laws had a 10% higher gun-related murder rate than those that did not. This finding also agrees with the results of a study done by Wright and Rossi for the US Department of Justice, which found that criminals tend to be risk averse and are deterred by the threat of armed resistance.

Overall murder rates, as measured by Gius, were 19% higher during the time period when the Federal "Assault Weapons" Ban was in effect than at other times during the study period.

While the author of this research does not assert that his conclusions are definitive evidence, the results of the 2014 Gius study support the position that armed citizens reduce crime and that gun bans have no positive, deterrent effect on criminal behavior.

Gius, Mark, (2014) An examination of the effects of concealed weapons laws and assault weapons bans on state-level murder rates, *Applied Economics Letters*, Volume 21, No. 4, Pages 265-267.

Lott, J. and Mustard, D. (1997) Crime, deterrence, and right-to-carry concealed handguns, *the Journal of Legal Studies*, 26, Pages 1-68.

Lott, John R., Jr., "More Guns, Less Violent Crime," "The Rule of Law Column," *The Wall Street Journal*, NY, NY, August 28th, 1996.

Wright, James D., Rossi, Peter H., *The Armed Criminal in America*, U.S. Department of Justice, 1985.

Gun Control Research- Results of the 1994 "Assault Weapons" Ban

"After the 1994 Ban, no discernible reduction in the lethality and injuriousness of gun violence was found."

In 1997, criminology professors Chris Koper and Jeff Roth published a study for the National Institute of Justice on the 1994 ban of "Assault Weapons" and the resulting effect on crime. ("Assault weapon" is an incorrect term to use for the firearms that were affected by the ban. A real assault weapon is capable of fully automatic fire. That is, a pull of the trigger results in the repeated discharge of the firearm until the trigger is released, or the gun runs out of ammunition. The firearms banned in 1994 were semi-automatic or self-loading firearms, requiring one pull of the trigger to fire each round.) One feature of many semi-automatic firearms is their ability to accept magazines holding numerous rounds of ammunition and to allow the firing of those rounds without reloading.

In their 1997 study on the effectiveness of the 1994 ban, Koper and Roth concluded that, "the evidence is not strong enough for us to conclude that there was any meaningful effect i.e., that the effect was different from zero)." Seven years later the two researchers published a follow-up study with criminologist Dan Woods.

The 2004 study found that, "We cannot clearly credit the ban with any of the nation's recent drop in gun violence. And, indeed, there has been no discernible reduction in the lethality and injuriousness of gun violence."

Dr. John Lott points out, that in 2003, the last full year before the end of the 1994 ban, the US murder rate was 5.7 per 100,000 people, according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report. By 2011, that rate had fallen to 4.7 per 100,000, in spite of the earlier expiration of the 1994 semi-automatic firearms ban. According to Dr. Lott, only 2.6% of all murders are committed with any type of rifle. This 2.6% figure would include single shot, lever action, pump action, and bolt action rifles, as well as semi-automatic, or self-loading long guns.

Proponents of more gun control also often advocate the registration of firearms currently legally possessed by American Citizens. Canada dropped its long gun registry, because it was extremely expensive to set up and maintain, and because Canadian law enforcement officers "could not provide a single example in which tracing was of more than peripheral importance in solving a gun murder."

Dr. John Lott Jr. is a former chief economist of the United States Sentencing Commission and the author of the book, *More Guns, Less Crime*, University of Chicago Press, third edition, 2010.

Lott, John R. Jr, "Facts about Assault Weapons and Crime," *The Wall Street Journal*, NYC, NY, 01-18-2013, page A-14.

Firearms Coalition of Colorado, PO Box 1454, Englewood, CO 80150-1454

Gun Control Research- Dr. Gary Kleck- Gun most effective way to resist robbery and assault- up to 2.5 million defensive gun uses per year by U.S. adults

Dr. Kleck, a professor of criminology at Florida State University is a registered Democrat, a member of the ACLU, does not own guns, and takes no money from anyone on either side in the debate. In 1988, Kleck published an article in the journal, *Social Relations*. This article, the first major research effort that measured defensive gun use, was based on state and national studies.

Dr. Kleck estimated that about 1 million adults per year use a gun for self-defense in the U.S. Kleck's research included studies done for the anti-gun National Alliance Against Violence, and the National Crime Victimization Surveys. Kleck concluded that gun use was the most effective and safest way of resisting a robbery or assault, safer than not resisting, running away, or using another method of resistance.

In 1991, Dr. Kleck published *Point Blank: guns and violence in America*. The book won an award in 1993 from the American Society of Criminology for an "outstanding contribution" to the field.

Not satisfied with the sources for his previous work, Dr. Kleck and his colleague Marc Gertz created a new survey with a sample size of about 5,000 individuals to better measure defensive gun use. With the new survey, Kleck and Gertz estimated between 2.2 to 2.5 million defensive gun uses per year in the U.S. Women were the defenders in about 46% of the cases reported. Less than 25% of the reporting defensive users indicated that they fired a shot during the incident under consideration. There is a less than 1% chance that a defender's gun will be taken from him or her by an assailant, according to Dr. Kleck.

Dr. Marvin Wolfgang was asked to critique the Kleck/Gertz Study. Dr. Wolfgang's review included the following: "I am as strong a gun-control advocate as can be found among... criminologists... they (Kleck and Gertz) have provided an almost clear-cut case of methodologically sound research in support of something I have theoretically opposed for years... the use of a gun in defense against a criminal perpetrator... I do not like their conclusions that having a gun can be useful, but I cannot fault their methodology."

The absolute lowest estimates of about 100,000 defensive gun uses per year in this country come from the Department of Justice, using U.S. Census information. There is no question in the survey that asks about defensive firearms' use. This estimate is probably a serious undercount.

The Clinton Justice Department funded what was supposed to be a counter study debunking the Kleck/Gertz research. In 1996, anti-gun researchers Ludwig and Cook came up with about 3 million defensive gun uses per year. They then decided that it is impossible to measure the true number of persons who use guns in America for self-defense.

The research done by Kleck and Gertz indicates that defensive use of firearms by private citizens is a significant factor in stopping criminal violence. The research also lends itself to the conclusion that in the vast majority of cases where a gun is used to resist robbery or assault, no shots are fired.

Sources:

- Blackman, Paul H., Ph.D., "Armed Citizens and Crime Control," <http://www.nraila.org/issues/articles/read.aspx?id=125>.
- Kopel, David, Independence Institute, panel discussion on guns and self-defense, Warwick Hotel, Denver, Colorado, July, 2009. <http://vids.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=vids.individual&VideoID=60107462>
- "How Often Are Firearms Used in Self-Defense?" http://www.guncite.com/gun_control_gcdguse.html
- Stevens, Richard W., "Statistics and 'Gun Control,'" Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, Inc, <http://www.jpfo.org/filegen-a-m/data-docs.htm>.

Firearms Coalition of Colorado, PO Box 1454, Englewood, CO 80150-1454