

Thoughts on “Gun Violence™ ”

Edited from an old blog post, titled *A Rant: "You never come up with any proposals for 'Gun Violence'(tm)"*
(c)2020 Dexter Guptill, permission given to distribute freely, with attribution

In response to an Internet argument, where someone said,

The question actually had to do with gun safety. Not one of you addressed that. Do you not think there is a problem?

Okay, so for the moment, we’ll disregard the gun controller’s misuse of the term “Gun safety”. Condensing my proposals down to bullet points, with elaborations further down:

The largest part of the problem

- Two-thirds of “gun deaths” are suicides. Work to make people’s lives suck less.
- Of those suicides, a lot are veterans. Fix the VA, and other malfunctioning programs.

Most homicides are committed by violent career criminals.

- End the War on Drugs.
- Enforce the laws we have.
- End predatory policing practices.
- Develop programs to give disadvantaged youth a hand up, so they don’t join gangs.
- Encourage programs for Compassion Based Discipline in schools (capitalized because it’s an actual concept, being practiced).

Domestic Violence, the next most common issue

- Teach kids, growing up, the signs and symptoms of abuse and abusers. Teach them that this is NOT Ok.
- Develop programs, and fund existing ones, to help abuse victims get out.
- Facilitate training in self-defense, against abusers.

Hate Crimes, and violence against disadvantaged folks, and minorities

- Perpetrators base target choices on perceived weakness, and stigmatization of groups.

- Focus self-defense initiatives on helping targeted people learn effective means of defense.

Last AND least, mass shootings

- Don't give the perpetrators fame. Instead of referring to them by name, in all coverage or discussion, refer to them as "the [expletive of choice] in [incident under discussion]".
- Learn, and teach others, how to spot the outcasts, the loners, the angry ones who perpetrate these atrocities.
- Teach EFFECTIVE countermeasures. People talk about kids getting PTSD from "active shooter" drills at school. That's because the drills are taught by idiots, and might as well have been specifically designed to terrify children, to no purpose.
- Shoot back.

Going into More detail:

SUICIDE

Let's start with the 2/3 of "gun deaths", that are suicides. 22 of these a day, are veterans. That's not just people with PTSD from recent combat, either. It's older vets, who can't get needed treatment from the VA. Or, they're facing a downhill slide of declining health, with nowhere to go. Or, it's chronic pain sufferers, who can't get real painkillers because of the War On Opioids.

The way to stop this, is outreach, and easing their pain without ending life. Help people with depression. Reach out to people who are having a rough time. Help the chronic pain sufferers, to get real pain meds. And, if you want to stop "gun suicides", for those who are terminally ill and in perpetual agony, pass death-with-dignity laws.

Interestingly enough, the *actual* (not the NRA) Gun Industry Lobby(tm), the National Shooting Sports Foundation, has a real suicide-prevention initiative: <https://www.nssf.org/safety/suicide-prevention/>

CRIMINAL HOMICIDE

Ditch the War on Drugs. Legalize and tax marijuana at the Federal level. Decriminalize and legalize other drugs, based on harm versus benefit. Use the taxes for treatment programs. Decriminalize possession and use, and civilly mandate treatment for, the nasty things like crack, meth, heroin, etc. For the nasty ones, keep penalties for dealers, cartels, and such folk.

Free, and pardon (with full restoration of rights) non-violent drug-possession convicts.

Stop plea-bargaining, and fully prosecute, any repeat violent offender caught in possession of a firearm. Prosecute straw purchases. Yank the license of, and prosecute, rogue FFLs. Use the freed-up prison space from pardoning drug offenders, to accommodate violent criminals and gun traffickers. An example is Project Exile, in Richmond VA in the 1990s: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_Exile

In the anthropological literature, there are discussions of “Honor Culture”, versus “Dignity Culture”.

Honor cultures evolve where there is no rule of law, or where the law is incompetent, unreliable, or untrustworthy. Basically, disputes are handled by the disputants, via force. In a Dignity culture, disputants go to the Law to mediate. Consider Conan the Barbarian, versus Perry Mason.

Examples: In some cities, the Law is not your friend. It's the enemy. Stop-and-frisk, prison pipeline, predatory policing. Those people who view cops as being the enemy, won't call the cops. Not to mention, nobody's going to call 911 and say, "That dude just robbed me for a pound of weed." He's going to shoot the robber and take his weed back. In an Honor culture, in addition, to show weakness is to be prey.

I've seen a bunch of articles, and there's lots of literature online, about compassion-based school discipline. Basically, a kid blows up in class. Gets sent to the office. Instead of punishing him and forgetting him, the principal, or a counselor, asks, "What's wrong?" After a few rounds of this, when the kid is about to go off, he raises his hand and says, "I need to get to the office, and talk to Mr ____, like NOW." Reduces suspensions and detentions like 70%. Used in a couple of juvenile-detention facilities in New England, reduced recidivism 60%.

See below for my rather lengthy diatribe about predatory policing.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

I'm not an expert-in-the-field, but have some experience. I was emotionally, psychologically, verbally, and sometimes physically abused, growing up. It was not until I was forced into recovery for my own drug and alcohol issues, that I learned something: What I went through, growing up, was not "normal".

Women are killed every day by abusive partners. This isn't always, or even mostly, with guns. It's typically the culmination of a descending spiral of abuse. The most dangerous time in an abusive relationship, is when it ends. When the victim leaves, they're most likely to be attacked and possibly killed.

Both victims, and abusers themselves, are likely to have suffered abuse while growing up. They don't see the behavior as abnormal, or wrong. Education is key, here. Start with teaching children the signs and symptoms, and point out that it's not normal, or acceptable.

When victims do leave, they need safe shelters and refuges, where they can rebuild their lives. In addition, teach them self-defense techniques, and personal-security practices. If someone is under threat from an abuser, and wants to get a carry permit, that permitting process should be expedited for them.

HATE CRIMES / ATTACKS ON MINORITIES OR DISADVANTAGED

People who attack racial, religious, sexual, or cultural minorities are, in essence, bullies. They're operating on a couple of obnoxiously wrong, and evil, premises. The first is that those groups are seen as weak, socially or physically or both. Ergo, the bully or attacker is less likely to meet effective resistance. The second is that it's "ok" to attack marginalized groups. You call them out on it, or come to the defense of their victims, and their response is, "What? Why are you calling me out? These are just [expletive / slur]s, they deserve it!" In other words, they don't see where Society would, or should, have a problem with their persecution of such people.

Social remedies are nice, but not effective in dealing with attacks in the moment. Effective defense is the key, best if the attackers know they're running a risk. The Pink Pistols (<http://pinkpistols.org>) has been around since around 2000. Operation Blazing Sword (<http://blazingsword.org>) was the "Gun Culture"'s response to the Pulse nightclub shooting. It's a network of gun people who have volunteered – if you're LGBT / disadvantaged, and want to protect yourself, we will teach you for free. Jews for

the Preservation of Firearms Ownership (<http://jpfo.org>) and the Zelman Partisans (<http://zelmanpartisans.com>) take the Israeli motto, “Never Again”, seriously. During the Civil Rights movement, the Deacons for Defense provided some armed security against KKK drive-bys and similar attacks. The National African American Gun Association (<https://naaga.co/>) is beginning to fill that need, and spread the message.

MASS SHOOTINGS

I said, above, “Last AND least”. Mass shootings are a minuscule portion of the overall violent crime and homicide rate. When designing remedies for problems, use cost / benefit analysis. When designing systems to solve a problem, you go for the middle of the bell curve, and don’t design your fix around edge-cases. Mass shootings are edge-cases. That said, there are some potential remedies.

Look for the outcasts. Find the loners. Reach out. This is not going to be easy, or fun, because those outcasts and loners are often assholes. Frequently, they’re victims of abuse themselves, and grew up in a warped childhood environment. Harking back to criminals and “Honor Culture”, they don’t see appeal to authorities for things like bullying, to be effective or worthwhile. They view asking for help, as a sign of weakness. There are, of course, others out there who are bat-guano crazy. Some have no connection with reality. Others are sociopaths, or narcissists, or both. Keeping them from becoming mass murderers is both the best, AND the hardest, thing to do.

That said, nothing in the world will prevent people from trying to commit mass murders. There are things that can be done, to deal with them. A lot of mass-killers will break off and flee if resisted, or if they’re frustrated in their goals. We can harden the targets, teach practical reactions, and teach and practice resistance.

People complain about inner-city schools “feeling like prisons”, with locking doors and metal detectors. When was the last time some loser shot up one of those schools? I’m speaking here, about mass killings by active shooters, not stray rounds from nearby gang violence. Analyze the likelihood of threat, and compare to the financial and social costs of hardening up.

So-called “Gun Free Zones” are targets. The Aurora, Colorado perpetrator bypassed two theaters nearer to his home, because the one he wound up targeting had “No Guns” signs, and the closer ones didn’t. This was explicitly mentioned in his planning for the

attack. This speaks to the fastest way to stop one of these [expletive]s: Shoot back. Consider, for example, the recent Texas church shooting. Three shots fired, two victims, and the third shot took out the killer. In six seconds.

If we're talking about schools, that whole "armed teacher" thing is not crazy or stupid. First off, nobody is talking about forcing teachers to be cops. That's propaganda from opponents of the idea. Every armed-teacher program out there, STARTS with teachers who have some form of concealed-carry permit. In other words those teachers are *already* carrying guns everywhere they want to, and can legally, outside of school.

Once you have a teacher with a CCP who wishes to participate, they volunteer. What happens next, depends on the jurisdiction. In places like Florida, they become virtual deputy law enforcement. Texas requires about twice as much additional training, and vetting, as they went through to get their permits in the first place. Utah just lets anyone with a CCP, carry in schools.

There have, over a decade-plus with some of these programs, and thousands of person-days of carrying, been few or no problems to speak of. One incident in Utah got a huge splash of publicity – a teacher had a negligent discharge in a bathroom, before school started. No students were present. The only major damage was a destroyed toilet. The only injuries were porcelain-shrapnel cuts on the teacher. Contrast this with NYPD, where they experience about 20 negligent discharges, per year.

Teaching effective resistance: So-called "drills" that only teach "Hide in the corner and cry, while waiting to die", are worse than incompetent. They are *evil*. I sometimes wonder if those "drills" are deliberately designed to turn children into hoplophobic PTSD sufferers.

I've had professional training, courtesy of my employer, with ALICE (<http://alicetraining.com>). ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate. They totally scrambled the actions out of order-of-preference, to get a cute acronym. In order: Evacuate; Lockdown; Counter, and Alert companions / Inform authorities, as and when you are able.

Evacuation is the best, IF you have a safe way to get out of the killer's range. If you can't, Lock Down your refuge to the best you're able, and hide. Shooters go for quick targets, they won't usually waste a minute or two trying to get through a barricade. If those two fail, Counter.

Spread out, to diffuse the target. Everyone who's willing, should grab objects to throw. Paperweights, staplers, massive key rings, and such would be best. When the bad guy

comes through your barrier, THROW. The object is to mess up his concentration, and aim. Then, bum-rush him. Tackle him. I disagree with the ALICE people on one aspect of this – they want to assuage resisters’ consciences by teaching methods that would restrain the shooter without hurting him. I’m totally okay with stopping the threat as thoroughly as possible, injury and death (of the shooter) be damned.

Here's my promised diatribe, on Predatory Policing

My usual response to a news story of someone suing cops is: "Crush the Department. See it driven to financial obliteration. Take its assets and its budget, and hear the lamentations of the bean-counters." There needs to be a lot more in the way of draconian consequences, for civil rights violations.

Put an end to "qualified immunity". In civil rights violations, there IS no such thing as a "good faith error – he didn't know it was bad" situation. If they don't know enough about civil rights, not to violate them, they shouldn't be a cop.

I'd give the department the option to save itself from obliteration, and have the punitive damages reduced from "destructive" to "painful", by publicly holding a 19th-Century style drumming-out ritual to fire the rights-violating officer. If the officer shot a dog or other pet, hold a full police funeral for the pet. Once the offending officer has been drummed out, publish his name on a blacklist, and disseminate to all law-enforcement agencies in the country.

Other side's Proposals, and my opinion of them:

Red Flag Laws: These sound good, and have potential. However, most have little or no due-process protection for the respondent gun owner. There are few or no penalties for false reporting – any one who can lie convincingly to a cop (or find a cop that wants in on the fun) could SWAT a gun owner over a grudge, or just malicious glee. The bills I've seen also grant immunity to the police for “damage, deterioration, loss or theft” of guns in their custody. Not acceptable. Also, if an appeal is sustained, the state and/or the reporting person should be liable for the respondent's legal costs.

Waiting periods: Worthless. In one study, waiting periods had a minor effect in reducing firearm suicides in older males. That was it. There were, however, increases in suicide by other means in that demographic. Meanwhile, abuse and stalking victims have been murdered, while waiting for permission to pick up their already-purchased guns.

Registration: Worthless, and in most cases (NY, NJ, DC) designed expressly to make it as much of a pain in the ass as possible, to own a gun. It's also an enabler for future, planned, confiscations.

License-to-own: Too much risk of arbitrary denial (NY, NJ, MA)

Mandated Safety Course to Own: As long as it's free / taxpayer funded, and not the \$300 you have to pay to own a handgun in DC.

Here's some ideas: All schools teach Eddie Eagle in elementary school. All schools teach a no-hardware (to soothe the hoplophobes) version of NRA Home Firearm Safety. In high school Phys Ed, everybody gets a pick of Basic Rifle and/or Basic Shotgun. End of problem.

Semi-auto firearm, and magazine bans: Worthless and STUPID.

No mass shooting has ever been stopped by bum-rushing the attacker while he was reloading. So-called "reloading" stoppages were none of the kind. Rather, the bad guys were trying to clear jams. Pretty much all of the malfunctions were caused by their fancy, "extended", magazines. That's right -- oversize, aftermarket, larger-than-factory mags, tend to be jam-o-matics.

Semi-auto rifle bans are based on a scam. To quote Josh Sugarmann, of the Violence Policy Center (vpc.org) on the subject: "*Assault weapons—just like*

armor-piercing bullets, machine guns, and plastic firearms—are a new topic. The weapons' menacing looks, coupled with the public's confusion over fully automatic machine guns versus semi-automatic assault weapons—anything that looks like a machine gun is assumed to be a machine gun—can only increase the chance of public support for restrictions on these weapons."

Let's look at an actual, proposed law. Discussing a couple of specific firearms, I've listed them by drilling down through section and paragraph headers.

From S.66, "The Assault Weapons Ban of 2019":

SECTION 1. Short title.

This Act may be cited as the "Assault Weapons Ban of 2019".

SEC. 2. Definitions. **[items specifically banned]**

(a) In general.—Section 921(a) of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

“(H) All of the following rifles, copies, duplicates, variants, or altered facsimiles with the capability of any such weapon thereof:

“(xix) Sturm, Ruger & Co. Mini-14 Tactical Rifle M–14/20CF.

(e) Appendix A.—Section 922 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

APPENDIX A—FIREARMS EXEMPTED BY THE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN OF 2017

VCDL Group (Virginia Citizens Defense League)Centerfire Rifles—autoloaders

“Ruger Mini 30

“Ruger Mini-14 (w/o folding or telescoping stock or pistol grip)



That's right. The same, exact gun -- the Mini-14 -- is explicitly banned in one section, for having a pistol grip, and is specifically exempted in another section, for having a wooden stock and being a "semiautomatic hunting rifle". The Mini 30, by the way, is a Mini-14 that fires 7.62x39mm rounds, the same as an AK or SKS.

In the above picture, the top one is specifically exempt, and the bottom one is specifically banned. *They are the same, exact gun.*

Banning firearms for having *pistol grips*?! As I said above, it's a scam.

Psychological Testing for ownership: Come up with a 100% objective, accurate assessment that will predict violently insane behavior, and we'll talk.

"Universal Background Checks": <http://www.3fgburner.net/ubcproposal.pdf>

Note that when people like the Demanding Mommies and others of Bloomberg's Useful Idiots say "Gun Safety", they're trying to re-frame the debate. In their mouths, "Gun Safety" is a euphemism for Gun CONTROL.