

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.

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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.

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2013 JAMA Study from Harvard shows no effect of Firearms Laws on Gun Deaths

The study, "Firearm legislation and firearm-related fatalities in the United States," was published 03-06-2013 in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA).

The study purports to demonstrate that states with more gun control laws experience fewer firearms'-related deaths. However, there are problems with the methodology of this research. These problems include the origin of the criteria for the study, as well as with data collection and analysis.

The criteria for the evaluation of the data for this study come not from independent research, but from The Brady Center, previously known as Handgun Control, Inc., and the Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence, formerly The Legal Community Against Violence, both gun control organizations. The "scorecard" used to measure the supposed benefit of the gun laws has not been scientifically validated

The study left out the states of New Hampshire, Vermont, and North Dakota. The study also omitted data from the District of Columbia, which has strict gun laws and high crime rates.

The study only deals with the number of laws per state, and not with specific laws. The study's authors admit that the study appears to show correlation, but not causation.

Dr. Garen Wintemute, himself an advocate for gun control, writing in JAMA, critiques the study and calls for more research by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the National Academy of the Sciences (NAS). He seems to be unaware of the massive 2003 CDC review of the literature and the even more extensive 2004 NAS study that indicate that gun laws have no effect on crime, and that there is no causative relationship between gun ownership and crime, respectively.

In summary, the 2013 JAMA study by Fleegler and colleagues is based on an untested scoring system from demonstrably-biased organizations. The study only suggests correlation between more gun laws and reduced crime by cherry picking data sets. Causation remains an elusive goal for these advocates of gun control.

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Problems with the Violence Policy Center "Concealed Carry Killers" Study

The Violence Policy Center (VPC) claimed in its initial study that 636 people were unjustifiably killed nation-wide over a period of seven years by concealed carry permit holders. There are errors in their claims. Data from Michigan illustrated problems in the report. Subsequent VPC updates have failed to resolve these problems.

In 2007 and 2008, the report cited 20 pending cases and 14 convictions of persons with concealed carry permits. The Michigan State Police listed a total of 14 pending cases and 11 convictions during that time period. Some of the cases may have originated before 2007, since it can take years for a murder trial to reach court.

The VPC Michigan data combined pending cases with convictions. Every arrest does not result in conviction. Dr. Gary Kleck indicated many justifiable homicides are not reported as such, due to issues with the FBI definition of justifiable homicide. Other cases may be found justifiable following investigation. Combining categories more than doubles the number of "Concealed Carry Killer" cases in Michigan in the VPC dataset.

The current VPC report counts **suicides**. Why? Even if their raw numbers were correct, permit holders still offend at a lower rate than the general population.

John Lott of the Crime Prevention Research Center cited data from Texas and Florida, which keep detailed records on concealed carry permit holders. The data indicated that permit holders offend at a very low rate. Lott reviewed information from October 1987 to February 2011. During that time, Florida issued about 1.96 million permits. During the same period, 168 permits were revoked by the state for firearms-related violations.

The most common gun-related offense was accidentally carrying a concealed handgun into a prohibited area. Texas reported a similar experience.

D.U. Professor, Attorney, and Author David Kopel dismissed the VPC Study as "junk science," during testimony before a Senate Committee on 02-13-2017.

The Violence Policy Center is a gun control advocacy group that is known for the biased nature of their research. Their conclusions should be viewed with skepticism.

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Problems with the Stanford Study on the Effects of "Shall-Issue" Concealed Carry Laws

John Lott and John Donohue have debated for about two decades on whether "Shall-Issue" concealed carry laws reduce or increase crime. We hear that the 2014 update of the previously published *Stanford Law and Economic Working Paper No. 461*, (Donohue, et. al.) settled the argument in favor of a resultant increase in crime. Not so fast! John Lott rebuts Donohue's claims. Other observers question the methods and conclusions of the Stanford Study.

The study's authors admit that their "imperfect" data provide "suggestive" evidence that Shall-Issue, or "Right-to-Carry" laws, "may" be associated with increased crime. A larger point, is that correlation is not causation. We should also note that Shall-Issue laws do not, per se, increase the number of guns available to a population. Such laws merely affect the legal transportation mode of certain firearms. (Criminals, by definition, ignore laws.)

There have been problems with data in some states cited by various versions of the Stanford Study. "Post-passage" crime rates from Kansas were included in Donohue's calculations from 1996, when the Shall Issue law was passed in that state in 2006.

Lott points out, in answer to Donohue, that the 2014 Stanford Study update relies on a statistical model that Donohue himself had previously argued could be misleading, and that another model might be "statistically preferable." Lott also says that the Stanford Study fails to account for the actual number of permits issued in Right-to-Carry states, as opposed to the mere passage of statutes. Donohue accused Lott of failing to factor in the effects of crack cocaine as a confounding variable, then Donohue, himself, does not account for this issue. In addition, Lott reports that Donohue fails to consider the effects of other gun control laws on the crime rates in Shall-Issue states. Lott advises that he dealt with both factors in his research.

By 2013, Lott's work had been the subject of 29 peer reviews. 18 studies confirmed his findings. 10 showed no change in crime rates following Shall-Issue laws. One study, Donohue's previous work, showed an increase in crime. The massive National Academy of Sciences review of the literature, which was conducted by a panel overwhelmingly biased toward gun control, reported no increase in crime following passage of Shall-Issue laws, with a minority report that agreed with Lott's findings.

Clearly, the Stanford Study is not the final word on the question of the possible benefits of Shall-Issue concealed carry laws. We should be wary of reliance on its conclusions.

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Tiny Fraction of Armed Citizen Accounts- Up to 2.5 Million Defensive Gun Uses, per Year

Most do not involve the discharge of a firearm

Being aware of your surroundings is one of the best ways to keep trouble at bay, as a case involving an armed citizen shows. An Ortonville, Mich., man noticed that the windows on his car were fogged up one morning, tipping him off that something was awry. Then he noticed that someone was under a blanket in the backseat. The resident, who was armed, pulled out his gun, opened the door and ordered the stranger to lie on the ground. He called 9-1-1 and held the bad guy at gunpoint until the police arrived. Police arrested the trespasser and charged him in connection with the earlier shooting of his estranged wife and her friend. (*Detroit Free Press*, Detroit, MI, 11/16/17)

Situational awareness goes a long way in diffusing a potentially bad situation, as it did when a legally armed citizen intervened in a burglary in progress. Late one night, a homeowner heard a vehicle slow down and idle near the local armory, which was adjacent to his residence. As he went to investigate, two individuals, who were wearing camouflage and bandanas over their faces, exited the vehicle. The armed citizen confronted the masked suspects and held them and the driver, who had returned to the vehicle, until police arrived. Facts later revealed that the armory had been broken into and the burglars had guns stashed the stolen guns in their vehicle as well as in an abandoned nearby cabin. One of the burglars was charged with third-degree burglary, second-degree theft of property and third-degree criminal mischief. The two other suspects are juveniles and were transported to Youth Services. The sheriff thanked the good Samaritan for his actions and assistance in the case. (*The Andalusia Star-News*, Andalusia, AL, 1/22/18)

Odell Teague was on the way to open his Cleveland café when he saw two burglars hauling cases of whisky through the smashed window of a state dispensary. When the robbers said, "Beat it; this is none of your business," Teague drew the revolver he began carrying after two holdups of his place and held the thieves until police arrived. (*UPI*, Cleveland, OH, Feb. 1960)

<https://www.americanrifleman.org/the-armed-citizen/>