

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 we 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 a round).

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."

Mr. Lott also 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 expiration of the 1994 Semi-automatic Firearms Ban. According to Mr. 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 advocate the registration of those 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."

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).

Please see the Firearms Coalition of Colorado Information Sheet on Mr. Lott's work.

Lott, John R. Jr., "Facts about Assault Weapons and Crime," *Wall Street Journal*, NYC, NY, 01-18-13, page A-14.