

## 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 the citizen 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/tr5214a2.htm>

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## 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 28<sup>th</sup>, 1996.

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

## Research

### Professor David Kopel on Magazine Bans

David Kopel, Second Amendment expert, author, law professor, and Director of Research at the Independence Institute, has addressed the claim that magazine size limits might reduce casualties during spree killings, because potential victims might be able to overpower or escape a killer or a terrorist, while that person was reloading a firearm with smaller capacity magazines. Professor Kopel:

“Advocates of a ban on standard-capacity magazines assert that while the attacker is changing the magazine, an intended victim might be able to subdue him- yet they cannot point to a single instance where this actually happened. They cite a trilogy of events that happened in Tucson, Arizona (2011), Aurora, Colorado (2012), and Newtown Connecticut (2013). In fact, all of those events involved gun jams, not magazine changes. At Newtown, the criminal changed magazines seven times and no one escaped, but when his rifle jammed, people did escape. Clearing a gun jam takes much longer than changing a magazine. Fixing a gun jam involves all the steps of a magazine change (remove the empty magazine and insert a new one) plus all the intermediate steps of doing whatever is necessary to fix the jam. Similarly, in the Luby’s cafeteria murders (24 dead), the perpetrator replaced magazines multiple times. In the Virginia Tech murders (32 dead), the perpetrator changed magazines 17 times.

Advocates of banning magazines larger than 10 rounds call them ‘high capacity.’ (15 rounds, according to the Colorado ban) “Again, this is incorrect. The standard manufacturer-supplied magazines for many handguns have capacities up to 20 rounds; for rifles, standard magazine capacity is up to 30. This has been true for decades. Indeed, magazines holding more than 10 rounds constitute 47 percent of all magazines sold in the United States in the last quarter century. There are tens of millions of such magazines. A law that was really about high-capacity magazines would cover the after-market magazines of 75 or 100 rounds, which have minuscule market share and which are not standard for any firearm. As of 2011, there were approximately 332 million firearms in the United States not in military hands. With the rough estimate that one-third of guns are handguns, most gun owners owning at least two magazines per gun, and 47 percent of magazines holding more than 10 rounds, the number of large magazines in the United States is at least in the tens of millions. When one also takes into account rifle magazines, the number of American magazines holding more than 10 rounds could be more than 100 million. That in itself is sufficient, according to the Supreme Court’s *Heller* precedent to make the ban unconstitutional.” (Heller ruled that the government could not ban a firearm or related item that is in widespread common use.)

In addition, with the benefit of advanced planning, criminals and terrorists have the advantage of bringing multiple guns to the anticipated scenes of their crimes, allowing them uninterrupted firepower in the unlikely event that they decide to comply with a magazine restriction law.

Defenders, on the other hand, are constrained by the amount of ammunition that they can carry outside a firearm on a regular basis by weight factors and other considerations. Remember, the criminal or terrorist will always have the advantage of planning and surprise.

Kopel, David, *Costs and Consequences of Gun Control*, Cato Institute Policy Analysis # 784, 12-01-2015.

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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.

Sources:

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## Research

### Professor David Kopel on Defensive Gun Uses

There is usually some discussion concerning defensive gun uses by armed defenders that stop potential spree killings. We sometimes hear that defenders have not stopped a single mass shooting. This is not the case.

Since most spree killings occur in “gun free” zones, more properly named, “criminal-safe free fire zones,” it is remarkable that defenders have been able to react at all in time to defend innocent would-be victims; however, David Kopel, Second Amendment expert, author, law professor, and Director of Research at the Independence Institute, has identified a number of cases where armed citizens have stopped spree killings. To quote Professor Kopel at length:

“Over the last 25 years, there have been at least 10 cases in which armed persons have stopped incipient mass murder: a Shoney’s restaurant in Alabama (1991); Pearl High School in Mississippi (1997); a middle school dance in Edinboro, Pennsylvania (1998); Appalachian School of Law in Virginia (2002); Trolley Square Mall in Salt Lake City (2007); New Life Church in Colorado (2007); Players Bar and Grill in Nevada (2008); Sullivan Central High School in Tennessee (2010); Clackamas Mall in Oregon (2012; three days before Newtown); and Sister Marie Lenahan Wellness Center in Darby, Pennsylvania (2014).

Gun prohibitionists insist that armed teachers, or even armed school guards, won’t make a difference, but in the real world, they have- even at the Columbine shooting, where the armed school resource officer (a sheriff’s deputy, in that case) was in the parking lot when the first shots were fired. The officer fired two long-distance shots and drove the killers off the school patio, saving the lives of some of the wounded students there...

The contrasts are striking and tragic. The attempted massacre at New Life Church in Colorado Springs was stopped by a private citizen with a gun; the massacre at South Carolina’s Emanuel AME wasn’t. The mass murder at Pearl High School was stopped by a private citizen (the vice principal) with a gun; the mass murder at Newtown’s elementary school wasn’t stopped until the police arrived. The shootings at Appalachian Law School ended when private citizens (armed students) subdued the gunman; the shootings at Virginia Tech continued until the police arrived. More licensed-carry laws that reduce the number of *pretend* gun-free zones are an effective way to save lives.”

Some arguments put forth by proponents of “criminal-safe free fire zones” rest on the premise that innocents will be caught in a “crossfire” between the defenders and the criminal or terrorist involved in a spree killing. The most deadly position for an innocent adult or child is to be at the mercy of a killer without effective opposition by defenders, who has the time to select his or her victims and slay them without regard for his or her own safety. Even individuals protected by upper body armor are vulnerable to wounds to the pelvic region and legs, or to well-directed head shots. Even rounds deflected by body armor may confuse and distract the criminal or terrorist and allow potential victims to escape.

Kopel, David, *Costs and Consequences of Gun Control*, Cato Institute Policy Analysis # 784, 12-01-2015.

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## CDC- Limits on Research?

David Kopel: Testimony before the Colorado House State, Veterans, and Military Affairs Committee on 02-02-2015

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have never been prevented from doing research on gun control by the National Rifle Association, or any other group promoting individual rights. The CDC has been denied funding to advocate for gun control for a number of years by amendments to the congressional budgeting process.

David Kopel is an adjunct professor of law at Denver University, the author of several books on the Second Amendment, was at the plaintiff's table during the DC v. Heller Hearing before the US Supreme Court, and is a recognized expert in the field of law related to the Second Amendment. He is a former Assistant Attorney General for the State of Colorado.

There have been previous indications of bias against the right of individuals to own guns for self-protection from crime, corruption, tyranny and genocide on the part of individuals associated with the CDC. Two examples are included below.

In 1994, Dr. Mark Rosenberg, former head of the CDC National Center for Injury Control and Prevention, stated, "We need to revolutionize the way we look at guns, like what we did with cigarettes... Now (smoking) is dirty, deadly, and banned."

In 1993, Arthur Kellerman, in a study funded by the CDC, purported to show that possession of a gun made the resident of a domicile almost three times more likely to become a victim of violence. (This same study indicated that renting, rather than owning, increased risk factors for becoming a victim of so-called "gun violence" by almost five times.) Subsequent examination of this study casts serious doubt on its conclusions, in part, because of a lack of adequate controls on the potentially confounding variables of likely gun ownership by residents in high crime areas, drug involvement and gang membership by some study subjects, and the probable under-reporting of gun ownership during telephone surveys by members of the control group.

Kellerman, Arthur, et al, "Gun Ownership as a Risk Factor for Homicide in the Home," *New England Journal of Medicine*, October 7, 1993, Vol. 329 No. 15, pp. 1084-1091.

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