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Will Gun Control Work to Stop the Shootings?

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On March 14, 2018, one month after the Parkland, Florida, school shooting, activist groups are planning walk-outs and protests around the country to demand gun control, especially banning "assault weapons," to avoid a repeat of last month's murders.



While the concern for life is notable, if the protesters get their way, America will see more murders, not less. Here's why:

- 98 percent of all mass shootings in the United States have occurred in gun-free zones, and new laws emphasizing increased gun control will almost certainly mean that little is done so that people in these zones can defend themselves, leaving them targets.
- Both the National Academy of Sciences and the U.S. Centers of Disease Control — anti-gun groups — scrutinized the world's gun-control laws and found that no gun-control measure in the world actually reduced violent crime and murders. None. The *New York Post* had this to say about the report by the Academy of the Sciences: The 328-page report entitled *Firearms and Violence: A Critical Review*, which was "based on 253 journal articles, 99 books, 43 government publications, a survey that covered 80 different gun-control measures and some of its own empirical work ... couldn't identify a single gun-control regulation that reduced violent crime, suicide, or accidents."
- Shootings, including mass shootings, and violence are products of societal culture, not gun culture. Switzerland, a country where shooting is the national pastime and where able-bodied young men must be part of the country's militia and keep military weapons in their houses, has a **homicide rate** of .69 per 100,000 people, one of the lowest in Europe (and most violent crime in that country is committed by foreigners). In Mexico, Brazil, and South Africa, which each have stringent gun-control laws to prevent shootings, the homicide rates are 16.3, 26.7, and 34.3 per 100,000 people, respectively. In the United States, it is 4.9, 84th in the world, according to the United Nations. A mere few decades ago, guns were so accessible in the United States that Americans could literally order them through the mail from catalogs, and kids regularly brought them to school — either to target shoot after school or merely to leave in their vehicles — and mass shootings in this country were virtually nonexistent.
- The United States has a particularly violent underclass. Even U.S. jails and prisons, where the convicts are under near full-time scrutiny by guards, have a larger percentage of homicides than many countries in Europe have in total. According to the U.S. Department of Justice's study entitled "Mortality in Local Jails and State Prisons, 2000–2013 — Statistical Tables," 3 out of every 100,000 prisoners in jails and state prisons will fall victim to homicide (and 479 will commit suicide each year). This compares to Norway's total **homicide rate** of .56 and Sweden's 1.55 rate, as well as the U.K.'s .92, Italy's .78, Austria's .51, France's 1.58, and Germany's .85, according to the United Nations' Office on Drugs and Crime. And America as a whole also has a murder rate of **3.2 per 100,000** without counting homicides done with guns.
- The proliferation of guns, even "assault rifles," cannot be stopped by legislation. Consider the experience of Israel, a country the size of a small U.S. state, where there's a military or police presence nearly everywhere and civilians must prove a reason to own a gun. A 2012 *Haaretz* article entitled "**How Easy Is It to Get Hold of Illegal Firearms in Israel?**" quoted a senior police official as saying, "Whoever wants to get a weapon illegally in Israel will be able to get one." The same article noted that the previous year an illegal weapons and explosives factory was uncovered, creating weapons based on instructions downloaded from the Internet. (Anyone with a good 3D printer can download designs and print guns by the dozen.) Likewise, the *Washington Post* related, in gun-restrictive France, Philippe Capon, the head of UNSA police union, told Bloomberg that military weapons, such as the AK-47, "are everywhere in France." Even in Communist China, where defying the government very often means the death sentence, the [website gunfacts.info](#) relates, "Chinese police destroyed 113 illegal gun factories and shops in a three-month crackdown in 2006. Police seized 2,445 tons of explosives, 4.81 million detonators and 117,000 guns."
- Violent crimes, including homicides, go up dramatically when citizens don't have access to guns for self-protection. [As Politifact has pointed out](#), though we can't make exact comparisons between crime rates in the U.K. and the United States, we can see the U.K.'s rate is much higher: "For England and Wales, we added together three crime categories: 'violence against the person, with injury,' 'most serious sexual crime,' and 'robbery.' This produced a rate of 775 violent

crimes per 100,000 people. For the United States, we used the FBI's four standard categories for violent crime that Bier cited. We came up with a rate of 383 violent crimes per 100,000 people." In Australia, which is praised by gun-control advocates because most guns, including rifles, shotguns, and pistols, were confiscated by authorities in 1996, though homicides with guns did decrease to 17 percent of all homicides after the confiscation (homicides with guns had been declining steadily since 1969 already), the overall number of homicides climbed, as did armed robbery, unarmed robbery, assaults, and sexual assaults. Sexual assaults increased by about four percent per year.

- As criminologist John Lott says, "More guns mean less crime." Across the United States, as laws were passed in most states legalizing concealed carry and the right to protect oneself with force, crime plummeted. For instance, as the website disastercenter.com showed, when Floridians were allowed to carry concealed in 1987, both total murders and violent crimes as a total dropped dramatically. In the 1960s, Florida averaged 9.7 murders per 100,000 people and 308.1 violent crimes. In the 1970s, it had 12.6 murders and 650.6 violent crimes. In the 1980s, it had 12.3 murders and 976.9 violent crimes. In the 1990s (after numbers of Floridians began carrying concealed guns), it had 8 murders and 1092.7 violent crimes per 100,000 people. From 2000 to 2010, Florida had 5.7 murders and 726.6 violent crimes. And 2010 to 2016 saw 5.1 murders and 480.5 violent crimes. Blood did not flow in the streets because as John Lott stated in the book *More Guns Less Crime*, a major study "indicates that about 95 percent of the time that people use guns defensively, they merely have to brandish the weapon to break off the attack."

- The areas in the United States with the least restrictive gun-control laws are usually the safest areas of the country, and most murders in this country are done by gangs in cities that have very strict gun control, such as Detroit, which in 2013 had 45 homicides per 100,000 people. There's also Chicago, Oakland, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and more.

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Besides wishful thinking, there is no reason to believe that more gun-control laws will lessen murder and violent-crime rates in the United States, including lessening mass shootings. In return for losses in liberty, Americans would get more murders and more crime — and a whole lot more hypocrisy. Many of the same people who are pushing gun-control laws are also against reinstating alcohol prohibition and are for the legal use of marijuana. Yet both are linked to increased fatal car crashes, and [alcohol is involved in most homicides](#). The gun-controllers are also often people who support sexual promiscuity for all Americans, [though according to the Centers for Disease Control](#), in 2016 34,800 Americans got AIDS from sex, and in 2014, 6,721 people died of AIDS. It is estimated that since 1981, 630,000 Americans have died from AIDS. Too, there are about 20 million cases of sexually transmitted disease in America, half of which are caught by people from 15 to 24 years of age, which lead to sterility, infant deaths, ovarian cancer, and more. And many people who have these diseases knowingly pass them on to others. They are sexual murderers.

To avoid being complete hypocrites, gun-controllers need to be for freedom for all Americans, or for none at all.

To end on a better note, there are actions we can take to reduce mass shootings. We can arm adults in schools; Israel has had good results with this even though it is literally surrounded by people who wish its destruction. We can fix welfare laws to stabilize families, as fatherless children are much more likely to commit crimes. We can follow the constitutional gun laws we have now, as many mass murderers, including Nicolas Cruz, have committed crimes that should have meant their guns were taken away. And more.

Since everyone in the country should be on board with effective plans to reduce not only mass shootings, but homicide in general — and not merely playing politics — this should be uncontested.

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