

Police Officers and Citizens on Gun Use and Crime

We often hear how citizens can't use guns effectively and safely for self-defense. We hear horror stories about the Empire State Building Shooting Spree, where police injured more bystanders than the perpetrator. Of course, common citizens would be less responsible than the police. We hear about how many concealed carry permit holders are involved in crimes. We hear from legislators things like, "Honest citizen is not a permanent condition." Let's look at a few examples that contradict the above "facts."

Dr. Gary Kleck, a respected college professor, a Democrat and member of the ACLU, asserted in his book *Point Blank*, (Pages 111-116, 184) that armed citizens shoot and kill twice as many criminals as the police do in some years.

Jeffrey Snyder, in "Are We a Nation of Cowards?" *The Public Interest*, Fall 1993, n 113 p40 (16), indicated that in 1993, only two percent of civilian shootings mistakenly targeted an innocent bystander. The police rate for the same period was eleven percent.

In 1994, according to a *Washington Post* article, "D.C. Police Paying for Hiring Binge," 08-28-94, page A01, there were 19 officers out of 1,000 who were arrested in Washington, D.C. that year. In Florida, during the same period, there were nine concealed carry permit holders out of 1,000 who suffered the revocation of their permits. Apparently in some cases, being a law-abiding law enforcement officer is not a permanent condition, either. The rogue ex-LAPD officer and mass murderer Chris Dorner, who was hunted down in California in February of 2013, is a case in point.

Former Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich is another example of a government official who strayed from the honest path. As a society, we don't punish all police officers for the actions of a few bad apples. We don't punish all governors for the wrongdoings of a small minority. We often seem all too ready to punish 98 or 99 percent of gun owners for the actions of a tiny percentage of the community of people who own guns.

According to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports during the years 1988 to 1998, the homicide rate in Florida fell 39% following passage of a concealed carry law in 1987. Interestingly enough, according to information from Florida State Public Officials in 1998, a Florida resident was almost more than twice as likely to be attacked by an alligator than by one of the nearly half-million Florida concealed carry permit holders.

The mere deterrent effect of citizens with guns was graphically pointed out in Orlando, Florida in 1966 following a series of vicious rapes. The Orlando Police Department established an armed self-defense training program for women. Six thousand women participated in the program over a five-month period. The number of rapes in Orlando fell from 36 in 1966 to 4 in 1967. (Quigley, Paxton, *Armed and Female*, E. P. Dutton, New York, New York, 1989, Page 12.)

Information from Zelman, Aaron, *Will "Gun Control" Make You Safer?* Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, Hartford, WI, 2000, pages 6-9, 12.