

GUNS. Guns are fascinating - for some as much as racing cars, motor bikes etc. Guns are most efficient in providing adrenalin rushes. **B**ut guns kill. Gun-lobbyists claim it's not guns that kill, but people - and they present justifications for using deadly weapons for sport, where the health of the legal gun-owner's mind is taken for granted. **Y**et, often it is not criminals who cause havoc with guns; instead it is otherwise law-abiding gun-owners, who become mass-murderers.* **F**urthermore, it is often claimed guns are needed for self-defence, notwithstanding the fact that home defenders are killed more often with their own weapon than with one the intruders brought along. **T**hen there are calls to arm citizens so they can shoot criminals first before they shoot; surely a return to the bad old days of the Wild West. **G**un-ownership supporters also make the point that gun-ownership and gun-club membership - especially of young people - teaches the correct use of weapons. One may add: So as to kill more effectively.* **T**he right to gun ownership is claimed to be an expression of freedom. But the freedom argument needs to be rejected in the strongest. Freedom can only be granted when it doesn't violate others; no one is free to kill others. Besides, our 'freedom' is curbed at every traffic light. **T**he point with guns is - their purpose is killing. Guns are for police, farmers and (maybe) security personnel**; in other hands guns cause the destruction of innocent lives, families and the fabric of society.*** **I**t's just not in the public's interest to have firearms in the community.

**In the Finland School shooting - on 7 Nov 2007 - nine people were killed. The gunman's weapon had been legally obtained and registered to the killer - he had no criminal record and was a member of the local shooting club.*

**In the 2011 Norway terrorist attack 69 youth were killed. The gunman could legally obtain a semi-automatic rifle and a pistol, since he had a clean criminal record, a hunting licence and was a member of the Oslo Pistol Club.*

**The 2017 Las Vegas shooter bought 47 guns legally, many of them military-grade. He was a law-abiding citizen, an average, good American - no criminal history, unknown to police. He killed 59 people. Why? Because he could.*

***But should even security guards be armed? Their brief is: 'Don't risk your life; if in danger, hand over the money.' And often they are forced to hand over their guns as well - and there will be yet more firearms in the community.*

**** In 2009 a manslaughter case went to court in Sydney - a boy had accidentally killed his friend with a shot-gun he found in his father's closet. That gun had carelessly been stored loaded - and it utterly destroyed two families.*

For a counter argument to my staunch anti-gun view, go to my blog 594 The Riddle of the Gun, about a podcast by Sam Harris. Ever the rationalist, he makes a strong case for guns in America ... but an even stronger one for strict gun laws.

